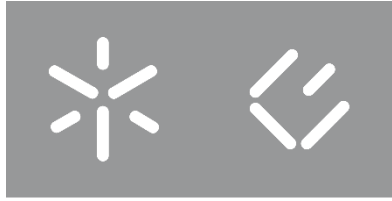


**Universidade do Minho**  
Escola de Economia e Gestão

Luis Carlos Fonseca Martins

**Attending trade fairs: a study of the antecedents  
and outcomes of visitor's satisfaction**



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and outcomes of visitor's satisfaction**

Dissertação de Mestrado  
Mestrado em Marketing e Estratégia

Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação da  
**Professora Doutora Ana Maria Soares**  
**Professora Doutora Maria de Lurdes Sarmento**

Abril 2023

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*“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”.*

*Thank you all!!*

## **STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY**

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration.

I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Code of Ethical Conduct of the University of Minho.

# Resumo

## **Attending trade fairs: visitor's satisfaction**

A importância e o poder das feiras aumentaram substancialmente nos últimos anos, e com isso surgiu a necessidade de se destacar entre as centenas de outras empresas num recinto de feira no que diz respeito à satisfação e intenção comportamental positiva, que para este estudo foram revisitar e “word of mouth”. O objetivo deste estudo foi perceber o que mais impacta os visitantes na interação com os expositores. Ainda, levando em consideração o design do stand e a equipa de vendas do stand do expositor, este estudo visa entender, do ponto de vista do visitante, a satisfação e suas intenções comportamentais.

Este estudo foi dividido em duas questões de pesquisa, “Até que ponto o design do stand e a equipa de vendas impactam na satisfação dos visitantes?” e “Qual é o impacto da satisfação do visitante nas intenções comportamentais positivas?”

Relativamente ao anterior, foi desenhado um modelo conceptual e várias hipóteses foram apresentadas e estudadas com recurso ao programa SPSS. Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionário, com um total de 61 respostas, sendo todas consideradas para o estudo. Ser capaz de pesquisar pessoas e coletar dados dentro do ambiente da feira provou ser um trunfo para as conclusões deste estudo.

Os resultados mostram que o design do stand e a equipa de vendas têm impacto na satisfação dos visitantes que, por sua vez, impacta a intenção de revisitar e o WOM positivo. No entanto, a análise do efeito de cada uma das subdimensões destes dois construtos apenas confirma o impacto das capacidades do staff. Assim, as capacidades dos funcionários do stand são o fator que mais impacta na satisfação dos visitantes. Estes resultados proporcionam importantes recomendações para as empresas para melhorar o resultado da sua participação em feiras.

**Palavras-Chave: Feiras de Negócios, Design do Stand, Funcionários do Stand, Satisfação, Intenção Positiva de Comportamento**

# **Abstract**

## **Attending trade fairs: visitor's satisfaction**

Trade Fairs' importance and power has increased substantially over the last few years, and with it arose the need to stand above other companies amongst the hundreds at a trade fair ground when it comes to satisfaction and positive behavioural intention, which for this study were revisit and word-of-mouth. The purpose of this study was to understand what impact visitors the most when interacting with exhibitors. Further, taking into account the exhibitor's Booth Design and Booth Sales Staff this study aims to understand from a visitors' point of view, the Satisfaction, and its Behavioural Intentions.

This study was divided into two research questions, "To what extent the Booth Design and the Sales Staff impact visitors Satisfaction?" and "What is the impact of visitor's satisfaction on Positive Behavioural Intentions?"

Concerning the previous, a conceptual model was designed, and several hypotheses were presented and studied using the SPSS program. The data was collected via survey, with a total of 61 answers, all of them being considered for the study. Being able to survey people and collect Data within the Trade Fair environment has proved an asset to the findings of this study.

The results show that the stand design and the sales staff have an impact on visitor satisfaction which, in turn, impacts the intention to revisit and positive WOM. However, the analysis of the effect of each of the sub-dimensions of these two constructs only confirms the impact of staff capabilities. Thus, the capabilities of the stand staff are the factor that most impacts on visitor satisfaction. These results provide important recommendations for companies to improve the result of their participation in trade fairs.

**Key Words:** Trade Fairs, Booth Design, Booth Sales Staff, Satisfaction, Positive Behavioural Intention

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**B2B** – Business-to-Business

**B2C** – Business-to-Consumer

**WOM** – Word of mouth

**CVPA** - Centrality of Visual Product Aesthetics

**SPSS** - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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# 1. Introduction

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This study focuses on trade fairs. Within the thematic of trade fairs, the topic of this study is the result of a thorough literature review on the topic of trade fairs. The review showed that there is a dearth of studies on the visitors' satisfaction perspective (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018). This finding suggests the visitor is neglected when it comes to its needs, satisfaction, and the influence it has in the outcomes of a trade fair.

Moreover, looking into the stakeholders of trade fairs and its industry, exhibitors have been the object of the majority of studies followed by the visitors and the organizers being last. This calls for more studies on the visitor's perspective. However, the number of studies tackling trade fairs issues has been increasing in the past 20 years, due to its importance in the B2B context (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018; Tafesse & Skallerud, 2017).

Hence, the following problem was defined for this research.

## 1.1 Problem Definition

---

Based on the literature review, it was possible to identify a gap concerning visitors' perspective and their roles in the B2B context. With the increasing number of trade fairs and the increasing power of marketing, it is getting harder for firms to decide which Trade Fairs to take part in, to increase efficiency, and afterwards, it is necessary to assess visitors' satisfaction with the exhibitors as well as positive behavioural intentions. Extant research suggests that Booth design and Sales staff have an impact on visitors' satisfaction (Bloch et al., 2017; Bloch et al., 2003; Lee & Kim, 2008 Machleit et al., 1994; Trinh, 2019).

A research question is the "core" of the research and guides the researcher's journey throughout the research and the writing.

Taking this into consideration, the research questions proposed for this study are the following:

1. To what extent the Booth Design and the Sales Staff impact visitors Satisfaction?
2. What is the impact of visitor's satisfaction on Positive Behavioural Intentions?

## 1.2 Objectives of Investigation

---

This investigation has as central objective analyse visitor's perspective at a Trade Fair ground by evaluating their perceptions of the booth design and sales staff and the impact of them on their satisfaction and behavioural intentions. By doing so, this study aims to provide better insight for exhibitors in order to keep their visitors, and possible customers, satisfied and to invite them into engaging in positive behavioural intentions (revisit and/or WOM). Having established the research problem and research questions, the next step is to set objectives to follow a path and stay on it. With this in mind, the research objectives can be divided in two parts:

The research objectives are:

- Evaluate the impact of booth design (layout, aesthetics, use of space) in visitor's satisfaction.
- Evaluate the impact of sales staff (capabilities, friendliness) in visitor's satisfaction.
- Evaluate the impact of visitor's satisfaction in behavioural intentions (revisit, word of mouth)

To deeply understand the proposed subject, the first step is a broader investigation to get knowledge on the size of the market being studied, what a trade fair is, how it is conducted and finally, choose and understand the variables. In order to answer all this, a literature review has to be done to have a deeper insight on the subject "trade fairs" and the variables that are addressed throughout the study. As a final objective, this study is intended to make the literature richer and to help exhibitors satisfy their visitors.

## 1.3 Structure

---

This study is divided in six chapters numbered as followed:

- **Chapter 1** – Introduction – Here are presented the reasons why this study was done as well as the objectives and the research questions it seeks to answer.
- **Chapter 2** – Literature Review and research model – Section meant to clarify the studied concepts. Starting by giving a background on the B2B market, trade fairs and its definition. The importance and the different objectives they hold and the different ways to be successful. This chapter ends with definitions and different point of views regarding the variables in Figure 1
- **Chapter 3** – Methodology – Explaining research design and paradigm chosen for this study, the sampling technique, the questionnaire design (scales), targeting and sourcing.
- **Chapter 4** – Data Analysis – Discussion about hypotheses and explanation of results
- **Chapter 5** – Conclusion – Answer of proposed objectives. Implications for trade fairs in B2B context, limitations, and suggestions for future investigations.



## 2. Literature Review and Research model

### 2.1 Business-to-Business Market (B2B)

This study is undertaken in a B2B context. Products and services in this type of market are sold by companies/organizations and bought by other companies/organizations to use or sell (Hutt & Speh, 2007).

B2B context requires a strategic analysis of competition, this comprises the company itself, the industry, competition, and all stakeholders.

This type of market demands a deep understanding of consumer's needs, as it is a market where the customer search for information process is different from the final consumer's (Business to Consumers- B2C). It's a B2B market, so before acquiring any type of products and/or services, collecting information is carefully done of all aspects related to the purchase.

Table 1 presents a summary of the differences between B2C (on the top, the "goldfish" archetype), and B2B (on the bottom, the "Doorknob" archetype).

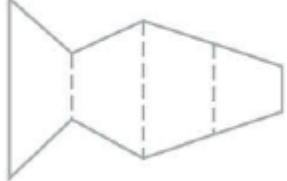
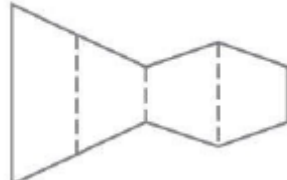
Archetypes		Customer	Industry
A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 	B2C	- Associated with past experiences and low brand attachment	- Aggressive marketing and competition.
A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 	B2B	- Thorough evaluation prior the purchase. - Multiple stakeholders involved in the purchase process	- Commoditized offerings. - Competitors with similar positioning.
(A1) Awareness – (A2) Appeal – (A3) Ask – (A4) Act – (A5) Advocate			

Table 1: Customer and Industry differences between B2B and B2C Markets (Kotler, 2021)

Konečný & Kolouchová, (2013) note that B2B market has several characteristics that are unique such as the selling and the buying procedures, whereas in the B2C market, companies work actively in marketing while the customer is passive and waiting for the supply.

Companies, as clients, have a more careful behaviour and selection criteria when choosing their products and services. Buying decisions may involve multiple people and professionals, with technical knowledge that seek the best product/service for the need at hand (Kotler et al., 2016). Communication with everyone involved in the buying decision and action, should be done accordingly to with the level of knowledge they have. The time devoted to the decision-making process may be longer, and it may be necessary to keep track of the customer progress in each stage of the purchase funnel in order to optimize spending of resources at the right time (Habibi et al., 2015).

A more complex purchase process/decision results in a closer relationship between buyer and seller and creates a dependency of one towards another for the success of the buying process/decision. The product/service seller can be the turning point to help the buyer understand the problem it has and so, find a solution to overcome the problem together, faster, and more customized. (Kotler et al., 2016).

Habibi et al., (2015) and Kotler (2016) also point out some differences between B2B and B2C markets. B2B has more decision makers, slower buying decision cycles, higher costs when it comes to change suppliers, a closer relationship between buyer and seller, more rational and functional decision criteria, and more complex products/services, requires more knowledge of the industry from both parties and the ways of communication and passing on a message is slightly different when addressing a B2B crowd. Due to these B2B particularities, it is important to gather information about the companies one wants to do business with in order to meet each other's expectations (Habibi et al., 2015 ; Kotler et al., 2016).

The ability to build long-term relationships with customers requires a careful attention to details, the ability to follow promises/deadlines and provide fast, efficient, accurate answers to new requirements (Hutt & Speh, 2007). To this extent, purchase stages in B2B markets are a key factor in marketing since the follow-up will help create long-term relationships between supplier and buyer (Holliman & Rowley, 2014).

The current business marketing is mostly based on this efficient management of long-term trade relationships, where a good one with key elements and the development of joint strategies with partnerships may be the key of a long and advantageous partnership for both sides (Hutt & Speh, 2007). As mentioned, before, the ways of communication in a B2B market are different. Buyers and the target to whom the message is addressed, seek to inform themselves through whatever means they have available, blogs, internet, LinkedIn etc... The communication strategy to these professionals has to be customized and informative. These professionals are also experts in their areas/industries therefore they seek reliable information from trustworthy sources and with some established authority on the question at hands (Habibi et al., 2015).

Despite that, the nature of conducted sales in B2B markets sometimes bears the necessity of a more direct contact and a face-to-face interaction (Järvinen et al., 2012).

## 2.2 Trade Fair Background and History

---

Trade fairs are inherently a form of “face-to-face” interaction. Trade fairs originated in on-the-spot markets after public worship in a church in medieval Europe and there have now been 31,000 fairs, 4 million attending firms, and 60 million participants around the world by 2012 according to the Global Association of Exhibition Industry (UFI, 2014). Trade Fairs are far from being a new promotional tool or marketing, but instead, should be treated as a complement. For many years, several companies have integrated trade fairs with success with other elements of the marketing/communication mix and the reason why is that trade fairs play the role of an impulse to economic productivity both at national markets and foreign ones (Hansen, 2000).

In general, the trade fair is a workspace where it is possible to gather information about the last trends of the sector and the market (Hansen, 1996; Smith et al., 2003) and can influence considerably a company's ability to compete in the global business marketplace (Seringhaus & Rosson, 1998). Most Trade Fair events are specific to a sector and gathers a large number of people under the same roof that may be possible buyers and are related to a specific market or industry. Further, trade fairs are events where a huge number of companies can present their new products and sell them to potential customers. That results in a large number of people and a concentration of interested buyers. Participating in trade fairs is an important mechanism to gain and develop business networks (Harris & Wheeler, 2005; Measson & Campbell-Hunt, 2015) and information about where to export.

## 2.3 Importance of Trade Fairs

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The reason trade fairs are important is, as the customer approaches the final buying decision process, which is the purchase, there is an increasing necessity for a more personalized communication. However, to have a better achievement on the goals of the marketing communication, the majority of managers responsible for marketing use a mix of communication techniques. Those include personal and non-personal techniques. Importantly, trade fairs are a perfect combination of direct selling (which are usually characterized by the person selling at the booth) and advertising (Kellezi, J. 2014).

In addition, according to Carman (1968), the role of a trade fair as a place to encounter people in the new field should not be underestimated, as both parties interested in the deal are represented at the same time in the same place (Blythe, 2010). Luís (2001) corroborates that by saying that trade fairs are

usually attended by business people due to the impact it has in generating trade leads and sales. The importance of communication augmented significantly in recent years due to an increasing competition in the market.

According to Keller (2003), marketing communication is the voice through which firms can start a dialogue with their target markets and other stakeholders. Not only that, but marketers are also investigating the benefits of the other aspects of the communication mix (Kotler, 2003). The main advantage of trade fairs is that they allow visitors to engage and interact with exhibitors/sellers (Kirchgeorg & Kastner, 2009). Kotler (2003), states that the small firms use a more informal marketing practice, and, considering this situation, Yuksel and Voola (2010) state that trade fairs have become an important marketing tool for these companies, and they are now considered part of their marketing strategy. In this context, trade fairs as a communication technique focus on a creation of a direct and personal connection/interaction between the company and its target markets, creating unique and lasting bonds (Kirchgeorg & Kastner, 2009), taking into account the nature of the business, the sector in which it operates, and the target audience.

Kirchgeorg and Kastner (2009) state that to have successful trade fairs, a meticulous planning of all related activities during preparation, execution and follow up stages is required. Importantly, this technique must be integrated in a firm's communication mix strategy.

#### 2.4 Objectives of Trade Fairs

---

Trade fairs allow companies to interact directly with customers, sharing information about their products and receiving direct feedback for improvements in new product development (Bettis-Outland et al., 2010). According to Santos and Mendonça (2014, p. 1957), trade fairs also allow to “reinforce the international market presence of the firm, the possibility of finding new ideas and test new products”.

Trade fairs can be a marketing platform with good information that enables firms to grow and spread out to different countries and markets (Evers & Kingh, 2008) and are an important tool promotion ally for the marketing of most products and services (Hansen, 2004).

Setting up objectives is the first step for choosing a suitable trade fair for the company. The question “What do I want to accomplish with this trade fair?” should be answered. The main goals of the exhibitor are usually to show, and to promote his products/services to visitors (Haon et al., 2020). On the other hand, visitors may have multiple motivations to attend trade fairs, such as purchasing, searching for information, trends, and so much more. (Rittichainuwat & Mair, 2012). When a company has a well-structured set of product/market objectives, trade fair assessment can be conducted more easily and

effectively (Bellizzi & Lipps, 1984; Cavanaugh, 1976). Managers usually set clear and specific goals for exhibiting, but these goals are rarely put into quantifiable objectives (Blythe, 2000; Blythe & Rayner, 1996). Before a firm undertakes to exhibit in a trade fair, it should have good and well formulated reasons for doing so or it should not waste money and have no need to participate.

Sarmiento et al. (2015) reviewed on reasons/objectives to attend a B2B trade fair. Findings suggest that the most valued reasons mentioned by visiting companies are: to search for new products, meeting new suppliers and obtain information about the industry. Their study also shows that buying at trade fairs was the least mentioned objective, reinforcing the idea that visitors consider participating at B2B trade fairs for reasons that go far beyond the purchase itself.

## 2.5 Choosing a suitable Trade Fair

---

The interaction in a trade fair can have three different parties: exhibitors, visitors, and organizers (Lin et al., 2015).

Trade fair can be divided into two categories: vertical and horizontal. Vertical trade fairs refer to promotion of products and services to a single industry or sector, whereas horizontal trade fairs allow to promote products or services to a variety of industries (Kijewski et al., 1993). The primary goal of fair evaluation is selecting correctly which trade fairs to take interest and part in. Trade fair selection is a crucial step in developing a strategy. There are some differences between the preferences of visitors and exhibitors for choosing a suitable trade fair (Haon et al., 2020). Exhibitors tend to choose trade fair participation based on the traits of the target market (vertical or horizontal), the profile of some relevant competitors and the geographical focus of the event (whether it is regional, national, or international) (Shoham, 1992).

Visitors are interested in the contents of the exhibition (Jung, 2005; Sarmiento & Farhangmehr, 2016), i.e., the exhibitors' value offer (Gopalakrishna et al., 2019). In fact, the group of exhibitors is the core of a trade fair, it gives shape, reputation, quality, consequently, its size (variety/quality of exhibitors) and also the real content of the exhibition, such as presenting innovations. These factors are critical for the survival/frequency of any trade fair (He et al., 2020).

The Exhibitors and the visitors aim to attend events when trade fairs organizers provide business opportunities and a good quality service (Jin et al., 2010). The trade fair' organizers are responsible for providing accurate past attendance statistics. Due to this, there are companies specialising in audition trade fair attendance.

## 2.6 Evaluation of Trade Fairs

---

Customer satisfaction is usually linked with positive performance in marketing (Fornell et al., 2006). Companies need to understand how, and why is satisfaction considered one of the determinants of performance (Olsen, 2007; Alegre and Cladera, 2009).

In the beginnings of trade fairs, the aim was to sell (Kałduński 2002) and so, when accessing performance, the only indicate was sales volume. Later, different criteria were used in order to evaluate performance, benefits, cost, efficiency when it comes to personal and the effectiveness of the trade fair and booth (Drab 1995).

When reaching the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the opinion was such that new indicators were needed to account for marketing and brand effects, such as awareness, image, and relationship from the exhibitor point of view at different stages of its process (Ling-Yee, 2007).

Today the approach has changed as trade fairs are treated as a multi-dimensional event that combines entertainment, demonstration of products and purchase facilitation for visitors (Gottlieb et al., 2014). Thus, the performance evaluation should be multidimensional as well, which makes is difficult and ambiguous, implying an organizer-exhibitor-visitor triangle (Lin et al., 2014).

## 2.7 Satisfaction with Exhibitors

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Kotler (2000) defines satisfaction as pleasure or disappointment, as a result of the comparison between the perceived performance and the expectation, or, can also be defined as what a customer anticipates and what they actually receive to fulfil a need to the changeable attributes of a service or a product. In a trade fair, service quality and visitor satisfaction are key success factors (Jin et al., 2012). Moreover, Morrison and Huppertz (2010) state that, if customer satisfaction results in financial outcome, its value is of most significance. Providing a service in a satisfactory way to others may influence the visitor's behavioural intention towards a product/exhibitor (Chien & Chi, 2019). Visitors might enjoy a service provided by the trade show organizer and still consider the whole experience unsatisfactory if they had few interactions with exhibitors, causing a negative word of mouth (Gottlieb et al.,2011; Jung, 2005). Satisfaction has great importance as it can influence positively or negatively behavioural intentions and WOM. The overall satisfaction may result in the possibility of the customer revisiting or recommending an exhibitor (Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2013). Customers that leave satisfied, also help to build up the company's image positively as they will provide positive WOM. Eggert and Ulaga (2002) go further and claim that satisfaction is strongly connected and can strongly predict behavioural intentions like positive WOM and revisit intentions with the same supplier.

## 2.8 Research variables and relevance

In this section, we explain the proposed conceptual model illustrated in Figure 1. The model includes the following research variables: Booth design (layout; aesthetics; use of space), Sales staff (friendliness; capabilities), Behavioural intention (intention to revisit; word of mouth). The rationale for the proposed research hypotheses is based in the literature review. Table 2 summarizes previous research covering the topic and involving these main constructs. The following subsections detail the reasoning behind the formulation of each of the research hypotheses.

Variable	Study	Findings
Booth Design (Layout)	Bloch et al., (2017)	Booth's Design plays an important role when it comes to attract visitors while providing a positive business atmosphere
	Jung, (2005)	Booth's Layout outweighed Booth's Management even though the literature emphasizes the latter more
Booth Design (Aesthetics)	Bloch et al., (2003)	Findings indicate that the aesthetics of a product have a weight and concerns customers'
Booth Design (Use of space)	Machleit et al., (1994)	Perceived retail crowding (on this study the variable name is "Use of space") has spatial and human dimensions that affect satisfaction in its own way.
	Van Rompay et al., (2012)	Results find that task-oriented shoppers (i.e., visitors in a Trade Fair) prefer spacious stores and are less affected by ambient variables.
	Albrecht et al., (2017)	Task-Oriented shoppers are more likely to abandon without purchasing

Booth Sales Staff (Capabilities)	Trinh, (2019)	Booth Sales Staff capabilities has an undeniable contribution for exhibitors' performance. Represents the only human-to-human contact between them and visitors
Booth Sales Staff (Friendliness)	Albrecht et al., (2017).	The behaviour of a customer is influenced by the perception of (un)friendliness of employees and other customers
Satisfaction With Exhibitor	Kang & Schrier, (2011)	Findings reported the positive impact of Social Value, and how it impacts Satisfaction
Revisit	Tanford et al., (2012) Lee et al., (2015)	Satisfaction is a key determinant for Positive Behavioural Intention  Satisfaction leads to Behavioural Intentions
Word of Mouth	Daugherty and Hoffman, 2014	WOM has the power to greatly influence decision making

Table 2: Summary of relevant - research covering the main variables of the study.

## 2.9 Booth Design

In order to maximize performance in a trade fair, it is necessary for exhibitors to attract visitors to their booth (Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995). One technique to this end is Booth Design (Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 2012). It can help exhibitors to entice visitors into the booth (Lee & Kim, 2008 ; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2004) and then let the Booth Sales Staff do their job. There has been an increase on the number of studies on this topic, with the majority being conducted on a B2C context. Bloch et al., (2017) research's finding have shown that design issues matter in a B2B context as it affects the willingness of a visitor to choose one booth over another. The important thing is that the booth is presented with an attractive design, capable of "inviting" customers in.



B2B trade fairs exhibitors must work with booth design to attract visitors, just like B2C sellers use store design to captivate window shoppers (Gopalakrishna et al., 2010), It needs to be both creative and practical. It is important to consider that the booth is, after all, a workspace and it should have the basics to allow the staff to work efficiently. Design costs can reach up to 30% of the budget set aside for the trade fair, which includes pre-fair set up, display and furniture (CEIR, 2007; Drapeau, 2012). The quality of the interaction between booth's sales staff and visitors, as well as the number of said visitors, is affected by the architecture of the booth (Baker et al., 1988 ; Baker et al., 1994 ; Baker et al., 2002).

### **H1: Booth design has a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.**

Literature suggests that there are three dimensions in booth design: layout (Chebat et al., 2005; Bloch et al., 2017; Jung, 2005; Stevens, 2005), aesthetics (Bloch et al., 2003; Bloch et al., 2017), use of space (Bello and Lothis , 1993; Machleit et al., 1994; Van Rompay et al., 2012; Albrecht et al., 2017). We discuss each of them below.

#### 2.9.1 Layout

Booth Design (Layout) involves attracting visitors, for example, deciding on the inviting look of the booth or the arrangement of the products. According to Stevens (2005), communication and images, such as logos, colours, and brand designs, which facilitates identifying the brand, it helps sending a message and grasps the customer attraction. When at a Trade Fair, there is a large number of companies, so it is important to "stand above the crowd". A confusing layout inside the booth prevents the visitor from finding desired information/product which can lead to customer costs (Chebat et al., 2005), who may read the confusion as a threat (Lazarus, 1984) and leave. With this in mind, we suggest the following:

#### **H1a - Layout has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor**

#### 2.9.2 Aesthetics

Visual aesthetics can influence the perception of a customer. Bloch et al., (2003) introduced the concept of Centrality of Visual Product Aesthetics (CVPA) which can be defined as the perception that visual aesthetics holds on the mind of a particular customer and their relationship with the product. The higher the CVPA of an individual, the more thorough the evaluation of design is, and the same goes with sensibility. Bloch et al., (2017) affirmed that aesthetic design elements, such as colours and shapes, have an impact on the decision of entering and preferring one booth amongst the existing ones.

Considering this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

## **H1b - Aesthetics has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor**

### 2.9.3 Use of space

According to Gopalakrishna and Lilien (2012), very little research on the impact of the design on booth traffic has been done, for it is difficult to conduct and there is hardly any data collected for those variables. Bello and Lothis (1993) proposed that designing attractive and comfortable booths with a good conference area can bring benefits to the exhibitor. Also, special layouts allied with functionality of the surrounding areas are important (Bitner, 1992). Customers have ways of perceiving a situation as restrictive by looking at it and seeing too many objects in a small and confined space (Machleit et al., 1994). Customers may also feel pressured and stressed when facing a person in a cramped space and feel reluctant into going in because of expected customer roles (Uhrich & Tombs, 2014). It is the company's trade show agent responsibility to find the funds and create a good display to ensure that the booth has an adequate use of space (Trinh, 2019).

With this being said, the hypothesis created was:

### **H1c – Use of space has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor**

### 2.10 Sales Staff

There are some factors that can influence the performance of the company at a Trade Fair. Hansen (2000) notes that selecting a good team and developing its skills are key. Training, attitude, knowledge, and behaviour are factors to have in mind when preparing the team/fair. When assembling a team, the number of salespeople and the training they have in order to have good booth results are decisions that have to be made. Rosson and Seringhaus (1995) also report that a booth with an effective staff will be remembered. Tanner Jr. and Chonko (1995) stated that in order to perform well in a trade fair exhibition, the sales staff should have a person who's responsible for the team, and training that team impacts positively the overall image and performance (Lee & Kim, 2008).

### **H2: Sales staff has a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.**

Literature suggests that there are two dimensions in sales staff: capabilities (Trinh, 2019; Miller, 2000) and friendliness (Albrecht et al., 2017; Cialdini et al., 1990; Dudenhöffer & Dormann, 2013; Sliter et al., 2010).

#### 2.10.1 Capabilities of the staff

It is crucial to have an efficient team on board for it is a vital force for the company strategy and can be the difference between success and failure (Miller, 2000). Capabilities are one of the best resources to gain competitive advantage due to the fact that it is very hard to develop, and it involves the human factor (Trinh, 2019). Booth Sale Staff's Capabilities are an undeniable contribution when evaluating the performance of exhibitor at trade fairs, and the reason is that booth staff is responsible for the human-to-human interaction between the company and visitors. The similarity between the experience at a booth at a trade fair and retail experience is big, and for that reason, companies want visitors who choose to stop at their booths to have the full experience of a great service and to create a relationship between that experience and the company (Trinh, 2019). Thus, the following is hypothesized:

#### **H2a - Sales Staff capabilities have a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor**

#### 2.10.2 Friendliness of the staff

Descriptive norms can shape a person's behaviour in the service encounter and can be described of what the majority of people perceive in a specific environment (Cialdini et al., 1990). Cialdini et al. (1990) state that descriptive norms also refer to different human motivation sources, which means, that descriptive norms are motivated by social groups and the desires to conform with acceptable behaviour, or the behaviours of others (Schultz et al., 2007). By behaving in a specific way, for example, friendly or unfriendly, employees and other customers are establishing the descriptive norms of acceptable behaviour, which will/should guide the subsequent behaviour of the customer. These descriptive norms are temporal and specific to the situation (Cialdini et al., 1990). Descriptive norms that are set by both employees and other customers can affect a customer's behaviour, specifically, how a friendly/unfriendly behaviour of the employee or other customers affects the friendliness/unfriendliness of the customer. It is considered friendly behaviour, for example, greeting and thanking (Dudenhöffer & Dormann, 2013; Sliter et al., 2010). Thus, to test the impact of the staff friendliness the following hypothesis was created:

#### **H2b - Sales Staff friendliness has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor**

## 2.11 Behavioural Intention

Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) defined behavioural intention as “a measure of the strength of an individual's intention to perform a specific behaviour” (p.288). Later, Oliver (1980) defined Behavioural Intention as the possibility of engaging in a particular behaviour. Attitude loyalty, which is "a degree of dispositional commitment," is a good example of how behaviour intentions can manifest (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Attitude or behaviour loyalty is a perfect result of an outcome that results from customer satisfaction (Morrison & Hupperz, 2010). In 1996, Zeithaml, and Parasuraman brought up that the way customers perceive service quality is directly connected with behavioural intentions after the interaction. When a customer assesses service quality as high, their behavioural intentions will be positive. On the other hand, low assessment on service quality relates to a negative behavioural intention and a weak bond between customer and company. Behavioural outcomes can be assessed with the intention to revisit, WOM and recommendations (Sarmiento et al., 2015). When it comes to Trade Fairs, visitors' satisfaction positively influences their behavioural intention, including positive WOM (Zeithaml et al., 1996), recommendations (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Zeithaml, 1988; Liu et al., 2001), and remaining loyal to said exhibitor (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Rust & Zahorik, 1993). i.e. revisit intention (Jung, 2005 ; Kang & Schrier, 2011; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Dube et al., 1994 ). When an exhibition in a trade fair has been successful in the past, and there is an increased possibility of it being successful in the future, the uncertainty for exhibitors is reduced, and the likelihood of them returning to that trade fair, increases in contrast (Kang & Schrier, 2011). Studying such behaviours will increase market value and as well as the number of repeated visitors (Huang & Hsu, 2009). In the present study, we considered behavioural intention comprised of intention to revisit and word of mouth.

### 2.11.1 Intention to Revisit

Usually, the satisfaction of visitors is the measurement used by organization/businesses to assess performance. The ratio of retention of customers and customer loyalty can also be indicators used by exhibitors to measure performance of a trade fair or the market of trade fairs. It can be used to measure the desire of a visitor to attend a specific trade fair in the future, or, in other words, to revisit that trade fair (Kirchgeorg et al., 2010).

Behavioural intention can be studied by examining WOM and revisit intention, two important variables in behavioural intention. Swan and Combs (1976) have confirmed that satisfaction plays a huge role in future decisions. Customer satisfaction is considered an attitude related with post-purchase of products

or services. Customer satisfaction is a factor that influences one's future behavioural intention (Kirchgeorg et al., 2010; Rosson & Seringhaus, 1995). Studying the behavioural intention of visitors makes it possible to gather data of their evaluation and feelings towards the environmental experience of the event and learn how it affects their intention to revisit and recommend. Some authors believe that the intention to revisit a trade fair is not a reason for the decision-making process (Seoho et al., 2006), but instead, a measurement of customer satisfaction (Kirchgeorg et al., 2010). Thus, for the trade fair B2B context it was hypothesized the following:

### **H3 - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on intent to Revisit.**

#### 2.11.2 Word of mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) goes way back as one of the oldest forms of passing on information (Dellarocas, 2003). In 1966, Katz and Lazarsfeld defined WOM between consumers as an exchange of marketing information to an extent of shaping behaviour and change attitudes regarding a product or a service. In the year after, Arndt (1967) defined WOM as a communication tool between two people, communicator, and receiver, who perceive the information as non-commercial. More recently, in 2008, Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan defined that communication tool between consumers as one where the sources are absent of commercial influence. This provides information about the consumption of products or services which goes beyond the advertised message done by companies and have the power to greatly influence decision making, being at the top of the list of influential factors that shape consumer behaviour (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). WOM is seen as the most vital source of information in consumers' decisions and intents (Litvin et al., 2008; Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). Also, some prior research shows that customers see WOM as a more reliable source than traditional ones (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). People trust more in one another more than they trust sellers (Nieto et al., 2014), making WOM a more reliable source regarding products and services to influence the listeners (Lau and NG, 2001; Lee and Youn, 2009). However, Huete (2017) claims there is a gap regarding credibility in multiple communicators and receivers' scenario, for instance, a situation where there is an intermediary involved, meaning the message can suffer and differ from the original one. Trying to figure out the impact of satisfaction on WOM, it was hypothesized the following:

### **H4 - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on Word of mouth.**

## 2.12 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model presented in figure 1 shows the variables chosen to conduct the study and the hypotheses presented above.

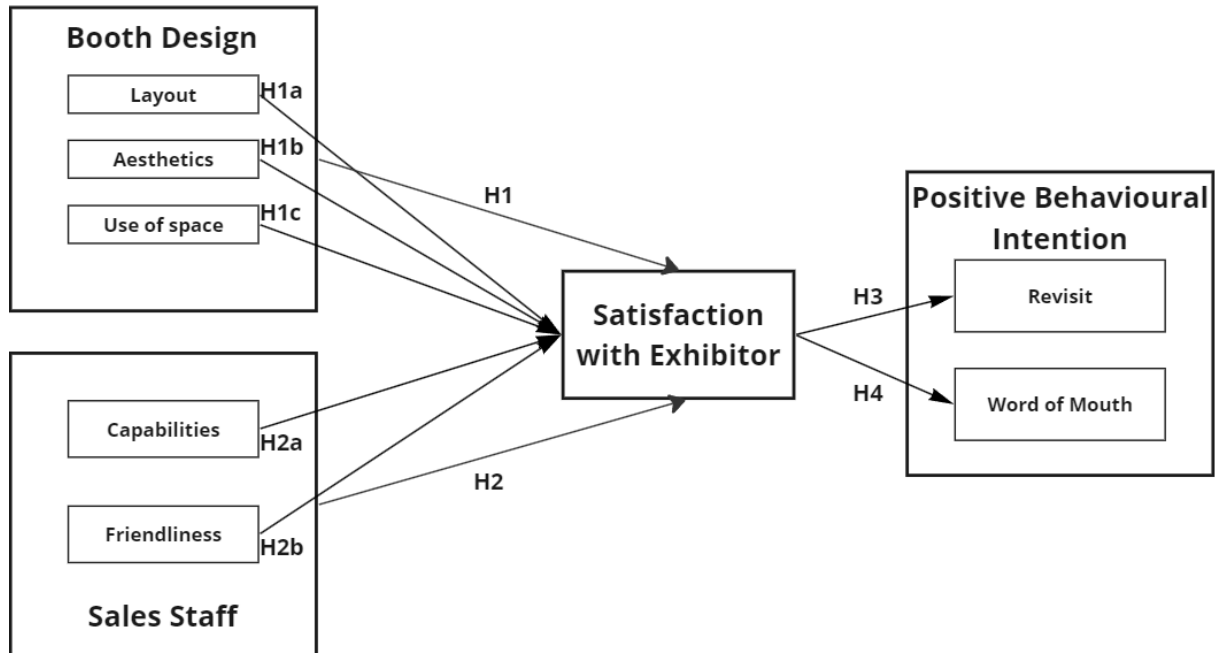


Figure 1: Antecedents and outcomes of visitor's satisfaction– Own Elaboration

### 3. **Methodology**

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This section presents the research paradigm, the research design, the objectives, in order to test the proposed research model.

#### 3.1 Paradigm Discussion

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In this subsection, different paradigms are discussed. There are four main different paradigms a researcher can use to develop the research: positivism, realism, interpretivism and constructivism (Malhotra et al., 2017).

**Positivism** paradigm assumes that natural and social sciences measure facts about a reality that can be known and categorized. The goals of such research include measurements and analysis of causal relations between consistent variables throughout the context.

**Realism** seeks an understanding of common reality, believing there is a real world to discover even if that particular world is not perfect. Realistic researchers know the difference between the world and the particular perceptions of that world.

What refers to **interpretivism** and **constructivism**, the research's goal is to criticize and transform values that will be object of long-term research.

The research question as well as the objectives of this research call for quantitative research where the focus is to test hypotheses, and so, the paradigm adopted for this study is **Positivism**.

Considering the nature of the variables, the research chosen to tackle this issue is a quantitative one. It is considered the most adequate looking at the problem in hands.

#### 3.2 Research Design – Problem-identification research

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A research design is the structure that the researcher must follow. It specifies the details of the procedures needed to get valuable information to understand or to solve marketing problems. As previously mentioned, Trade Fairs are a growing marketing tool, and with it also comes expenditures and optimization. The interest in the subject has increased, as we have more and more literature about it. The majority of previous research about this topic are quantitative, and so, this study will follow this approach. This investigation has as central objective understand the impact of booth and sales staff in satisfaction and subsequent positive outcomes, namely revisit and WOM. That will be conducted via survey and by evaluating their perceptions, satisfaction, and intents.

A research question was formulated for guiding this research. A good research question identifies the problem and serves as a guide. It is one of the first steps of the research process (Kishore et al., 2011; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Bryman, 2007).

According to Ratan et al., (2019) a research question should:

- Detail the problem
- Describe the problem being studied
- Guide collection and analysis of the data
- Set some context for the research

The research question proposed for this investigation is, "How does the Booth Design and the Sales Staff satisfies visitors, and what's the impact of those aspects on the Behavioural Intention?". Particularly, the research objectives are:

- o Evaluate the impact of booth design (layout, aesthetics, use of space) on visitor's satisfaction.
- o Evaluate the impact of sales staff (capabilities, friendliness) on visitor's satisfaction.
- o Evaluate the impact of visitor's satisfaction on behavioural intentions (revisit, word of mouth)

With that in mind, the present research had two steps. First, a Literature review has been conducted, in order to get further insight on the state of the art about the topic. Information was gathered in a broader way by reading articles in order to understand in depth the problem in hands.

The following next step in the research followed a **Conclusive Research** design. According to Malhotra et al., (2017) the objective of a Conclusive Research is to aid decision making process, to evaluate and select the best course of action in a specific situation. Conclusive research is used to test specific hypotheses and test relations between variables. The information has to be clearly specified, it follows a structured and formal process, and the sample is wider and usually representative. The analysis is also quantitative, and the results can be used to jump to conclusions.

Conclusive research can also be divided into **Descriptive research** or **Casual Research**. What refers to **descriptive**, the name says it all, it is used to describe. **Causal** research is used when the researcher wants to get evidence of cause-effect, or causal, relationships. Both Descriptive and Casual use a structured and planned design, the bigger difference being the manipulation of independent variables, and control of the ones that may affect dependent ones, and therefore, experimentation methods.



A survey was designed to be applied to visitors of trade fairs. Surveys are a structured technique of data collection where the person being surveyed answers a pre-designed set of questions. The surveys are easy to conduct, reasonably cheap and easy to analyse and to interpret. However, they are limited by the amount of information being collected as well as the number of errors that can occur (Malhotra et al., 2017).

Surveys also need consent, and so, everyone has to be legally asked for permission. All answers are classified, and so, the data collected can only be used in the present study in order not to compromise privacy and integrity.

### 3.3 Questionnaire development

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As mentioned, this study follows a quantitative approach, and so, a survey was designed with scales already tested in literature. Different scales were considered in order to choose the ones that best fit the study.

Some of them were conducted in a B2C context, and, for the purpose of best fitting of the B2B context and to be able to have a bigger focus on the variables being studied, some (minor) changes/adaptations were made to the original scales. Those changes consisted of eliminating some items, word modification and adapting to the context. In addition, we also replaced reversed items by rephrasing some sentences. All original scales used were in English, meaning translation had to be done. The Spanish translation was done by a Spanish speaker, and reviewed by a third person, which is Spanish native (appendix 2). The Portuguese translation was done by a researcher and a third person familiar with the topic and was reviewed by two academic experts (appendix 3). The survey was also reviewed by a practitioner with a vast experience in trade fairs participation, both as exhibitor and visitor (about 5 trade fairs a year for the past 29 years). The variables studied here were all measured on a 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree (1)” to “Strongly agree (7)”. The final version of the questionnaire is shown in appendix 1.

#### 3.3.1 Booth Design (Layout) – Scales

The scale to measure booth layout was adapted from the Store design (confusing interior design) scale which was developed to measure the difficulty of finding products due to the store’s layout, as seen in table 3. The scale was adapted to fit the study by changing shelves into booth and changing the scale from negative to positive statements. The scale used in this study is shown in table 3.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Original Items</b>	<b>Adapted items</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Booth design (layout)</b>	In the store, it was difficult for me to find the product required because of the arrangement of the shelves.	It was easy for me to find the product required because of the arrangement of the booth.	Albrecht et al., (2017) adapted from Dickson & MacLachlan, (1990)
	The store layout did not really make it easy for me to find certain products.	The booth layout made it easy for me to find certain products.	
	The arrangement of the shelves in the store did not make it easy to find my way.	The arrangement of the booth made it easy to find my way.	

Table 3 Original scale for Booth design (layout) - Own elaboration

### 3.3.2 Booth Design (Aesthetics) – Scales

The scale for the Aesthetics of the booth was initially designed for product design. However, looking at the alpha of the scale ( $\alpha=0,91$ ), we decided to adapt it to a booth rather than a product (table 4) . The original scale had the same question “The design of the\_\_\_\_\_ is...” given the same three options and the same Likert scale. The only adaptation was adding “booth” to the blank space of the original scale.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Booth Design (Aesthetics)</b>	The design of the Booth was appealing.	Kaiser et al., (2017)
	The design of the Booth was attractive.	
	The design of the Booth looked great	

Table 4 Booth Design (Aesthetics) - own elaboration

### 3.3.3 Booth Design (Use of space) – Scales

The last one in Booth Design is “Use of space”. Similar to the layout scale, this one was in the negative form, so it was changed into positive statements. It was also initially designed for stores, however, for this study, it was adapted to a booth (table 5).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Original items</b>	<b>Adapted items</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Store Design (Use of space) Original scale 'Cramped'</b>	There was not enough space between the shelves in the store.	There was enough space in the booth.	Albrecht et al., (2017) adapted from Machleit et al., (1994)
	The arrangement of the shelves and counters in the store did not allow the customers enough space for shopping.	The arrangement of the booth allowed the customers enough space.	
	The store was not designed to be spacious.	The booth was designed to be spacious.	

Table 5 Original scale for Booth Design (Use of space) - own elaboration

#### 3.3.4 Booth Sales Staff (Capabilities)

The capabilities of the staff were measured with an existing scale which was adapted to our study by removing one of the items due to the fact that it could be interpreted as “Friendliness” and not “Capabilities”. The item removed was “The booth personnel had outgoing and sociable personalities” where personnel was also replaced with staff (table 6).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Booth Sales Staff (Capabilities)</b>	The booth staff could answer questions about new products/services.	Trinh, (2019) and adapted for the purpose of the study
	The booth staff could arouse product interest of the fair's visitors.	
	The booth staff could handle existing product's related questions.	
	The booth staff could listen carefully to the fair visitors.	
	The booth staff had knowledge of other departments' operations.	
	The booth staff had experiences attending other fairs.	

Table 6 Booth Sales Staff (Capabilities) - own elaboration

### 3.3.5 Booth Sales Staff (Friendliness)

To measure Booth sales staff friendliness, we used the Employee unfriendliness scale from Albrecht et al., (2017). In this case, we had to make several adaptations. Firstly, because the scale was designed for one employee, and not for a team. Secondly, because the scale was negative, it contemplated the unfriendliness of the person as opposed to the friendliness, as shown in table 7. The scale was then adapted and the final scale is presented in table 8.

Variable	Items	Reference
<b>Employee Unfriendliness</b>	The employee in the shop was friendly toward me. (r)	Albrecht et al., (2017).
	The employee in the shop was unfriendly toward me.	
	The employee in the shop behaved in a friendly way toward me. (r)	
	The employee in the shop had a friendly smile. (r)	
	The employee in the shop showed an unfriendly facial expression.	
	The employee in the shop talked to me in a friendly way. (r)	
	The employee in the shop greeted me friendly. (r)	
	The employee in the shop thanked me when it was appropriate. (r)	
	The employee in the shop had friendly eye contact with me. (r)	

Table 7 Original scale for Booth Sales Staff Friendliness - Own elaboration

Variable	Items	Reference
<b>Booth Sales Staff (Friendliness)</b>	The booth staff were friendly toward me.	Albrecht et al., (2017). and adapted for the purpose of the study
	The booth staff behaved in a friendly way toward me.	
	The booth staff had a friendly smile.	
	The booth staff talked to me in a friendly way.	
	The booth staff greeted me friendly.	
	The booth staff thanked me when it was appropriate.	
	The booth staff had friendly eye contact with me.	

Table 8 Adapted scale for Booth Sales Staff (Friendliness) - own elaboration

### 3.3.6 Satisfaction with exhibitors

We used for the scale the following item “I was satisfied with this exhibitor.” from Lin et al., (2018).

### 3.3.7 Revisit

We used for the scale the following item “I will attend this exhibitor in the future.” from Lin et al., (2018).

### 3.3.8 Word of mouth

We used for the scale the following item “I will recommend this exhibitor to others.” from Lin et al., (2018).

Finally, the questionnaire included demographic questions.

This survey was “pre-tested” before being applied in order to reduce errors and to make sure they access what is intended. This “pre-test” was just made to two or three people in order to record their reaction to the questions. If after the test some sort of deviation were found, the survey would have been re-written so that the real focus of the issue was answered. This process was done in order to find the perfect survey, with just small changes to words to reduce confusion and misinterpretation.

The questionnaire is included in Appendix X

## 3.4 Target Population and Sampling

The target of this study are professional Visitors attending Trade Fairs, Data was collected in a Trade Fair ground as it is being conducted with the help of a (physical) survey.

Considering the nature of the data, the sampling is conducted using a non-probability random sampling named “Judgement/purposive Sampling”. A non-probability sampling offers arbitrary decision to the researcher to choose/decide which elements to include in the final sample. The major problem with non-probability sampling is the generalization of the population, which cannot be done (Malhotra et al., 2017). Judgement/purposive sampling is a non-probability random sampling based on the researcher's assessment of which participants will be most helpful in achieving the goals of the study (Sharma, 2017). In order to get the necessary data and find people who are prepared to provide it, the researcher must concentrate on those who share their viewpoints (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

### 3.5 Data collection

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The population of interest for this study were professional visitors attending trade fairs. We started by contacting Exponor to verify the possibility of conducting the survey in their facilities. Exponor is an exhibition center in Leça da Palmeira, Matosinhos, Portugal that is the home to a lot of trade fair throughout the year. We were in contact with the person in charge, and after a few e-mails we were accepted to apply the questionnaire. The trade fair selected was IDF FALL that took place in Exponor from 8th to 11th September 2022. IDF Fall is a “Interdecoreção Fair”, a trade fair for professionals of various industries focused on design and decoration. There were various exhibitors throughout the trade fair ground, both national and international. Visitors were allowed to purchase items, but being a specific trade fair targeting professionals, it is only possible to buy in bulk.

Despite being one of the firsts trade fairs after covid, they had a lot of attendance. This trade fair had no fees attached, the entrance was free, which might have brought more visitors.

From all visitors attending this fair, we selected those who had companies or influence in the buying decision, i.e., visitors attending the trade fair for professional purposes. A survey was conducted via tablet (60) and paper (1) with participants that accepted to take the survey, resulting in a total of 61 answers. The data collection took place on four different days. On two of those days, in addition to the author, there was another person helping to distribute the questionnaire. Potential respondents were approached when they were getting ready to leave the fair in order to have their opinions shortly after they had completed the visit. Both researchers were identified with an identifying badge from the organization of the fair organizers, as shown in the appendix.

## 4. Data Analysis

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This chapter presents the results. First there is a sample characterization, then a descriptive analysis of the variables. After that, the consistency of the scale was accessed, along with the normality test and correlation test for all variables. Finally, the test of the hypotheses using multiple regression analysis made by using the IBM SPSS.

### 4.1 Sample Characterization

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These questions were asked in the questionnaire in order to have a better idea of the sample with which we were dealing. Table 9 shows the summary of the Gender, Age, Frequency of attendance and company size.

#### 4.1.1 Gender

From the 61 answers collected, 28 were male and 32 were female, and one respondent checked the “I would rather not say” box. This tells us that close to 53% were woman, against 46 men.

#### 4.1.2 Age

Age was measured from 18 to 61+ in intervals of 10, to the exception of the first interval, which went from adult age (in Portugal) to 30, and over 61.

Of the 61 answers, we get to see that 25 individuals, 41% was in the 18-30 interval. 16 people were between 31 and 40, equals to 26,2%. 41 to 50, 11 people, which represents 18% of the sample, followed by the 51-60 interval, 11,5%. Only 2 people were over 61, 3,3% of the sample.

#### 4.1.3 Frequency of attendance

Looking at how often people in the sample attended trade fairs, we can see that “once a year” and “twice a year” got the same number of answers, 19 answers, equivalent to 31,1% of the total sample. “Three times a year” comes next with 12 answers, 18,7%, followed by “Five times a year”, with 6 answers, equivalent to 9,8%. Last but not least, the number of people attending trade fairs “four times a year” were 5 representing 8,2%.

#### 4.1.4 Company Size

This sample size was mainly composed by “small companies”, with 42 people working in a company with less than 5 people, corresponding to 68,9% of the sample. 14 people, 22,9% of the sample, answered saying they have a company within the interval of 6 to 20 people, and only 1 person had a company with more than 21 people and less than 50, 1,6% of the sample. 4 people decided not to answer.

#### 4.1.1 Nationality

We chose not to ask nationality, since the majority of them would be Portuguese, and only the English form, which had no answers, had a question for nationality. However, based on the language of the questionnaire, we can say that 59 answers were made by Portuguese citizens, and 2 answers were given by Spanish people.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	28	45,9
Female	32	52,5
I would rather not say	1	1,6

<b>Age</b>		
18 to 30	25	41
31 to 40	16	26,2
41 to 50	11	18
51 to 60	7	11,5
61 or more	2	3,3

<b>Frequency of attendance</b>		
Once a year	19	31,1
Twice a year	19	31,1
Three times a year	12	19,7
Four times a year	5	8,2
More than five times a year	6	9,8

<b>Company Size</b>		
≤5	42	68,9
6-20	14	22,9
21-50	1	1,6
Did not answer	4	6,6

Table 9 Sample profile



## 4.2 Descriptive analysis of variables

Descriptive analysis of variables consists of making an analysis for every item of each variable. The variables studied here were all measured on a 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree (1)” to “Strongly agree (7)”. Considering everyone answered all questions, the sample size is 61 (N=61) in all items.

### 4.2.1 Booth Design – Layout

Table 10 provides descriptive analysis for layout showing a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 7 as well as a mean of 5,51 for two of the items. The item “The booth layout made it easy for me to find certain products.” shows the highest mean and the lowest standard deviation.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
It was easy for me to find the product required because of the arrangement of the booth.	1	7	5,51	1,433
The booth layout made it easy for me to find certain products.	2	7	5,69	1,272
The arrangement of the booth made it easy to find my way.	1	7	5,51	1,349

Table 10 Booth Design - Layout - Descriptive statistics

### 4.2.2 Booth Design – Aesthetics

Looking at the Aesthetics (table 11), the minimum value is the same for all items (1) as well as the maximum value (7). “The design of the Booth looked great” had the lowest mean (5,07) whereas “The design of the Booth was attractive” was scored the highest with 5,39. All items present a deviation over 1,5.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
The design of the Booth was appealing.	1	7	5,36	1,623
The design of the Booth was attractive.	1	7	5,39	1,563
The design of the Booth looked great.	1	7	5,07	1,632

Table 11 Booth Design - Aesthetics - Descriptive statistics

#### 4.2.3 Booth Design - "Use of space"

This variable shows very similar values for all items, and all three under the score 5, which suggests that visitors value space when visiting a booth (table 12).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
There was enough space in the booth.	1	7	4,89	1,674
The arrangement of the booth allowed the customers enough space.	2	7	4,84	1,675
The booth was designed to be spacious.	1	7	4,87	1,765

Table 12 Booth Design - Use of space - Descriptive statistics

#### 4.2.4 Sales Staff – Capabilities

Analyzing the capabilities of the staff, we can see that visitors value "product knowledge". The ability of answering product related questions was valued the highest, 5,85. "The booth staff could arouse product interest of the fair's visitors." has the highest standard deviation, suggesting that visitors perceive some variance in skills of the sales staff to capture their attention. The results are shown in table 13.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
The booth staff could answer questions about new products/services.	1	7	5,80	1,289
The booth staff could arouse product interest of the fair's visitors.	1	7	5,26	1,549
The booth staff could handle existing product's related questions.	2	7	5,85	1,181
The booth staff could listen carefully to the fair visitors.	3	7	5,82	1,218

The booth staff had knowledge of other departments' operations.	1	7	5,38	1,344
The booth staff had experiences attending other fairs.	1	7	5,59	1,465

Table 13 Sales Staff – Capabilities - Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.2.5 Sales Staff – Friendliness

The variable “Friendliness” has the highest mean of all variables (table 14). Being a B2B context, this indicates that visitors appreciate sympathy as well as professionalism. “The booth staff behaved in a friendly way toward me.” had the highest mean and the lowest deviation. This could mean that the overall staff of the booths/exhibitors reported in visitors’ response was nice.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
The booth staff were friendly toward me.	1	7	6,11	1,170
The booth staff behaved in a friendly way toward me.	3	7	6,23	0,973
The booth staff had a friendly smile.	3	7	6,00	1,155
The booth staff talked to me in a friendly way.	3	7	6,16	1,113
The booth staff greeted me friendly.	3	7	6,03	1,251
The booth staff thanked me when it was appropriate.	3	7	6,05	1,132
The booth staff had friendly eye contact with me.	3	7	6,08	1,115

Table 14 Sales Staff – Friendliness - Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.2.6 Satisfaction with Exhibitor

Being a single item question, it was “expected” such big deviation. The minimum value being 1 and the maximum value being 7. The overall satisfaction with exhibitors was 5,28 (table 15).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I was satisfied with this exhibitor.	1	7	5,28	1,733

Table 15 Satisfaction with Exhibitor - Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.2.7 Positive Behavioural Intention – Revisit

Also, a single item question with a deviation of 1,521 and a mean of 5,23 (table 16).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I will attend this exhibitor in the future.	1	7	5,23	1,521

Table 16 Positive Behavioural Intention - Revisit - Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.2.8 Positive Behavioural Intention – Word of mouth

Word of mouth is the last single item question, also with a high deviation value, 1,714. The mean is 5,11 (table 17).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I will recommend this exhibitor to others	1	7	5,11	1,714

Table 17 Positive Behavioural Intention – Word of mouth - Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.3 Internal consistency or reliability

Since the majority of our measures used multiple item scales, there is a need to analyse the internal consistency or reliability of the items. In order to accomplish this, we used Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ). It measures the internal consistency of the items, in other words, it measures how well the items work together. It goes from 0 to 1, and the close the alfa is to 1, the better the internal consistency of the scale items. George and Mallery (2003) established the rank shown in table 18. The “lowest acceptable number” is 0,7 meaning every value over that considers the scale reliable.

<b>Cronbach's Alpha value</b>	<b>Internal Consistency of the scale</b>
$0,9 \leq \alpha$	Excellent
$0,8 < \alpha \leq 0,9$	Good
$0,7 < \alpha \leq 0,8$	Acceptable
$0,6 < \alpha \leq 0,7$	Questionable
$0,5 < \alpha \leq 0,6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0,5$	Unacceptable

Table 18 Reading Cronbach's Alpha - Adapted from George and Mallery (2003)

Looking at table 19, and using table 18 as reference for interpretation, we can see that all scales show excellent or very good consistency.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Alpha value</b>	<b>Internal consistency</b>	<b>Original scale alpha value</b>
Booth Design - Layout	3	5,568	0,831	Very good	0,93 and 0,95
Booth Design - Aesthetics	3	5,273	0,958	Excellent	0,91
Booth Design - Use of space	3	4,863	0,944	Excellent	0.89 and 0,95
Booth Staff - Capabilities	6	5,617	0,922	Excellent	Not available
Booth Staff - Friendliness	7	6,096	0,965	Excellent	0,98 and 0,94

Table 19 Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha value for each scale

Also, we can take good conclusions about the scales, looking at column 4 (Alpha value) and column 6 (Original scape alpha). For Booth Design – Aesthetics, the scale used got a better consistency than the one from the original scale. Booth Design – Use of space and Booth Staff – Friendliness got a similar consistency, where Booth Design – Layout actually is slightly lower.

#### 4.4 Normality Analyses

This step is done in order to decide the tests to use after. This will tell us if the variables follow a normal distribution or not, and to evaluate that, we use normality tests. The study of variable distribution allows us to know if we use parametric or non-parametric statistics tests. Parametric tests are used when the variable follows a normal distribution. On the other hand, if the variables do not follow a normal distribution, non-parametric tests should be used.

For this purpose, was used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which provides better estimates in the curve fitting models (Massey, 1951). To proceed it was necessary to calculate the mean of all items of the variable scale, as shown in table 20. The results of the normality test are presented in table 20. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test uses two hypotheses:

H0 – The variable follows a normal distribution.

H1 – The variable does not follow a normal distribution.

The reference value of 0,05 was used as significance level. H0 is rejected if significance value is over 0,05. In table 20 it is possible to see that only one of the variables has a significance level over 0,05, and while the rest of the variables have values under 0,05.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Significance</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Booth Design - Layout	0.140	0,005	Does not follow a normal distribution
Booth Design - Aesthetics	0.135	0,008	Does not follow a normal distribution
Booth Design - Use of space	0.107	0,078	Follows a normal distribution
Booth Staff - Capabilities	0.113	0,049	Does not follow a normal distribution
Booth Staff – Friendliness	0.190	<0,01	Does not follow a normal distribution
Satisfaction	0,219	<0,01	Does not follow a normal distribution
Revisit	0,218	<0,01	Does not follow a normal distribution

WOM	0,173	<0,01	Does not follow a normal distribution
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Table 20 Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test

#### 4.5 Correlation test

Correlation tests are used, as the name indicates, to test the relationship between two or more variables. We conducted this analysis as an approach to explore the data before proceeding to test the hypotheses. Since normality test showed different distributions, it is required to use both parametric and non-parametric tests. Both will be presented, just to show the difference between the tests.

Correlation coefficient is analyzed on a scale of [-1,1], the 0 being possible, where there is no relation between variables. Values over 0 show positive relationships, when one increases the other one follows, whereas values under 0 show negative relationships, an inverse relationship, when one increases the other decreases (Schober & Schwarte, 2018). The same authors presented an approach to interpret said relationship, presented in table 21. The interval of [-1,1] is supposed to be read in module.

Correlation relationship	Interpretation
0-0,10	Negligible correlation
0,11-0,39	Weak correlation
0,40-0,69	Moderate correlation
0,7-0,89	Strong correlation
0,9-1	Very strong correlation

Table 21 Adaptation from Schoeber & Schwarte, 2018

Variable	Booth design			Booth sales staff		Independent		
	Layout	Aesthetic	Use of space	Capabilitie	Friendlines	Satisfactio	Revisi	WOM
	t	s		s	s	n	t	
Layout								
Aesthetics	0,421 ***							
Use of space	0,515 ***	0,374 **						
Capabilities	0,530	0,416	0,480					

	***	***	***					
Friendlines	0,459 ***	0,309 *	0,302	0,715 ***				
Satisfaction	0,526 ***	0,479 ***	0,350 **	0,673 ***	0,588 ***			
Revisit	0,398 **	0,359 *	0,210	0,621 ***	0,422 ***	0,790 ***		
WOM	0,419 ***	0,481 ***	0,375 **	0,683 ***	0,437 ***	0,887 ***	0,806 ***	
*p<0,05, **p<0,01, *** p<0,001								

Table 22 Spearman Correlation Coefficient - Own elaboration

Variable	Booth design			Booth sales staff		Independent		
	Layout	Aesthetics	Use of space	Capabilities	Friendlines	Satisfaction	Revisit	WOM
Layout								
Aesthetics	0,506 ***							
Use of space	0,562 ***	0,419 *						
Capabilities	0,602 ***	0,560 ***	0,549 ***					
Friendlines	0,531 ***	0,323 *	0,320	0,715 ***				
Satisfaction	0,545 ***	0,497 ***	0,398 **	0,673 ***	0,529 ***			
Revisit	0,460 ***	0,468 *	0,340 **	0,621 ***	0,399 **	0,816 ***		
WOM	0,482 ***	0,572 ***	0,451 ***	0,683 ***	0,411 ***	0,848 ***	0,802 ***	
*p<0,05, **p<0,01, *** p<0,001								

Table 23 Pearson correlation Coefficient - Own elaboration



#### 4.6 Hypotheses validation

In this section the hypotheses previously presented will be tested. There are some models to test hypotheses, in this case Linear Regression in SPSS was used. Linear regression is an analysis that can “predict” a dependent variable from one or more independent variables (Field, 2009).

**H1** – Booth design has a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.

**H2** – Sales staff have a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.

To test H1 and H2, we considered booth design as a second order variable comprised of layout, aesthetics, and Use of space; and sales staff as a second order variable comprised of capabilities and friendliness. We calculated factor scores for booth design and sales staff. Regression analysis was then conducted in order to identify the impact of these variables on satisfaction with exhibitors.

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted Square</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
0.680	0.462	0.444		1.293

Table 24 Model Summary

	<b>Unstandardized B</b>	<b>Coefficients Std. Error</b>	<b>Standardized Coefficients Beta</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	-1.620	1.007		-1.608	0.113
Booth Staff	0.779	0.213	0.451	3.654	<0.001
Booth Design	0.443	0.182	0.300	2.435	0.018

Table 25 Coefficients

Both results show significance ( $R^2=0.462$  ;  $p < 0.001$  and  $p < 0.018$ ). Both the staff and the design of the booth impact satisfaction (Beta = 0.451 and Beta = 0.300). Unstandardized beta shows that a unit increase in sales staff increases satisfaction by 0.779 and a unit increase in booth design increases satisfaction by 0.443.

**Hypotheses 1 is supported.**

**Hypotheses 2 is supported.**

To test H1a, H1b, H1c, H2a, H2b, we calculated factor scores for the first order constructs: layout, aesthetics, Use of space, capabilities, and friendliness. Regression analysis was then conducted in order to identify the impact of these specific variables on satisfaction with exhibitors.

**H1a** - Layout has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor

**H1b** - Aesthetics has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor

**H1c** - A good use of space has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor

**H2a** - Sales Staff capabilities has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor

**H2b** - Sales Staff friendliness has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted Square</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
0.696	0.484	0.437		1.300

Table 26 Model Summary

	<b>Unstandardized B</b>	<b>Coefficients Std. Error</b>	<b>Standardized Coefficients Beta</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	-1.501	1.068		-1.405	0.166
Layout	0.274	0.204	0.185	1.344	0.184
Aesthetics	0.178	0.139	0.158	1.285	0.204
Use of space	-0.22	0.135	-0.21	-0.165	0.869
Capabilities	0.592	0.263	0.391	2.256	0.028
Friendliness	0.180	0.246	0.107	0.730	0.468

Table 27 Coefficients

Looking at the results in table 27, we can see that only booth staff capabilities have an impact on satisfaction ( $\text{sig} < 0.05$ ). We can see a Beta of 0.391 and also, we can affirm that by every point of increase in booth staff capabilities, satisfaction increases by 0.592 units.

All other variables tested showed no significant impact in satisfaction with the exhibitor.

**Hypotheses H1a is not supported.**

**Hypotheses H1b is not supported.**

**Hypotheses H1c is not supported.**

**Hypotheses H2a is supported.**

**Hypotheses H2b is not supported.**

**H3** - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on intent to Revisit.

Now into the “second” part of the model, this hypothesis had satisfaction with exhibitor as independent and Positive behavioural intention - revisit as the dependent variable. Regression shows significance ( $R^2 = 0.816$  ;  $p < 0.001$ ). It shows that satisfaction with exhibitor has a great impact on satisfaction (Beta=0.816 ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Also, by looking at unstandardized B, we can say that for every unit of increase in satisfaction with exhibitor, the intention to revisit increases by 0.716.

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted Square</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
0.816	0.666	0.661		0.886

Table 28 Model Summary

	<b>Unstandardized B</b>	<b>Coefficients Std. Error</b>	<b>Standardized Coefficients Beta</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	1.449	0.366		3.955	<0.001
Satisfaction	0.716	0.066	0.816	10.851	<0.001

Table 29 Coefficients

**Hypotheses 3 is supported.**

**H4** - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on Word of mouth.

Analysing the impact satisfaction with exhibitor has on positive behavioural intention - word of mouth. Regression shows significance ( $R^2 = 0.849$  ;  $p < 0.001$ ). It shows that satisfaction impacts word of mouth (Beta=0.848 ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Also, by looking at unstandardized B, we can say that for every unit of increase in satisfaction, word of mouth increases by 0.838.

**Hypotheses 4 is supported.**

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted Square</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
0.848	0.718	0.714		0.917

Table 30 Model Summary

	<b>Unstandardized B</b>	<b>Coefficients Std. Error</b>	<b>Standardized Coefficients Beta</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	0.692	0.379		1.824	0.073
Satisfaction	0.838	0.068	0.848	12.267	<0.001

Table 31 Coefficients

## 5. Conclusion

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This last chapter is where the discussion of the results takes place. It will also be the place dedicated to talk about the impact the study will have in the future for both academics and practitioners. Also, the chapter to point out some limitations and give suggestions for future research.

### 5.1 Discussion

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The review showed the lack of studies on the visitors' satisfaction perspective (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018). However, this number is increasing, due to importance it has in the B2B context (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018 ; Tafesse & Skallerud, 2017) .

This investigation focused on some central objectives that analysed visitor's behaviour at a Trade Fair ground by evaluating their perceptions, satisfaction, and intents:

- Evaluate the impact of booth design (layout, aesthetics, Use of space) in visitor's satisfaction
- Evaluate the impact of sales staff (capabilities, friendliness) in visitor's satisfaction
- Evaluate the impact of visitor's satisfaction in behavioural intentions (revisit, word of mouth)

Regarding the big goal of the study, the research questions that were proposed were the following:

1. To what extent the Booth Design and the Sales Staff impact visitors Satisfaction?
2. What is the impact of visitor's satisfaction on Positive Behavioural Intentions?

Looking back into the study, a literature review was conducted to understand the subject. The literature review showed that:

- The number of annual trade fairs is increasing every year, and such events are now taking a marketing approach.
- The Importance of trade fairs increases as the customer approaches the purchase action.
- Trade fairs have the ability to have visitors' interaction with exhibitors and/or organizers.

A research model entailing the impact of booth design and sales staff dimensions on satisfaction with the exhibitor and subsequently on the intention to revisit and word of mouth.

The summary of the analysis of the hypotheses are shown in table 32, where it is possible to see the results of the tested hypotheses, supported/not supported.

<b>Hypotheses</b>	
<b>H1</b> - Booth design has a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.	Supported
<b>H2</b> - Sales staff have a positive impact on satisfaction with exhibitor.	Supported
<b>H1a</b> - Layout has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor	Not Supported
<b>H1b</b> - Aesthetics has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor	Not Supported
<b>H1c</b> – A good use of space has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor	Not Supported
<b>H2a</b> - Sales Staff capabilities have a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor	Supported
<b>H2b</b> - Sales Staff friendliness has a positive impact on Satisfaction with Exhibitor	Not Supported
<b>H3</b> - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on intent to Revisit	Supported
<b>H4</b> - Satisfaction with Exhibitor has a positive impact on Word of mouth	Supported

Table 32 Summary of hypotheses tested and results

Looking at table 32, we can see that five hypotheses were supported, while four were not.

H1 being supported, is in line with the literature stating that the booth design plays a role in inviting people in (Lee & Kim, 2008 ; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2004) which consequently impacts the visitor (Chebat et al., 2005). A good combination of layout, aesthetics and use of space leads to a higher satisfaction.

H2 was also supported in this study, which is also the case of existent literature. Having a good team (Hansen, 2000), an effective team (Rosson and Seringhaus, 1995) can be the difference between success and failure (Miller, 2000).

H1a, H1b and H1c were not supported, this result is contrary to the literature, and may be due to measurement issues. It may also be due to the fact that there was not variability in this variable, In fact , since we collected data in a Decoration trade show, all booths might have had a carefully planned layout, and visitors might not have been interested in that, since customers tend to prefer spacious stores and are less affected by ambient variables (Van Rompay et al., 2012). The possibility of everyone thinking to the tiniest detail the layout, aesthetics and use of space, might have removed that variable from play.

Further, since the trade fair was directed to “designers” and “decorators”, visitors could have ignored that.

H2a is the one that showed the lowest significance and the highest Beta. This is perfectly in line with the literature (Trinh, 2019) that stated that personnel are the core element and have the power to take any resources and transform them into outcomes. A staff capable of answering all the questions is a big step to having a satisfied customer even though he might leave without making a purchase. Tanner (1994) reported that formal training of the staff decreases response time and a faster identification of needs which increases the chances of closing the deal.

H2b the friendliness of the staff was not supported in this study. This is most likely due to the fact that it is a B2B trade fair, and people are not really interested in sympathy rather than professionalism. Informal training of a salesperson may lead to an increase in small talk, which may result in a worse performance when compared to no training at all (Tanner, 1994)

H3 tested positively, hence, supported on the study. A satisfied customer is more likely to revisit in comparison to one who left unsatisfied (Chien & Chi, 2019; Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2013; Eggert and Ulaga, 2002)

H4 result as supported is also supported by the literature that state that an unsatisfactory experience usually causes a negative word of mouth (Gottlieb et al.,2011; Jung, 2005; Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2013; Eggert and Ulaga, 2002). On a trade fair, a positive satisfaction from visitors greatly influences word of mouth and recommendations (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Zeithaml, 1988; Liu et al., 2001)

## 5.2 Practical Implications

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According to Lilien (2016), the audience of this type studies, should not only be students, but, at the top of necessity should be practitioners, managers, as it is hard to justify an academic study that will have no real, practice implications.

### 5.2.1 For academics

For academics, this study helps with the literature it has, providing many insights on the topic for future research. Some of the scales were also enhanced and could be used in future research on the matter.

### 5.2.2 For practitioners

These results can help companies decide where to focus to have satisfied visitors at trade fairs. As shown in the study, satisfied visitors are more likely to engage in positive behavioural intentions.

That being said, this study will help companies to better allocate resources when it comes to a trade fair.

However, companies should not forget the costs a trade fair has, being at the top of marketing expenditures alongside with advertising. Further, the costs of training a professional and capable team should not be underrated, neither is the time it takes.

Looking back into the results, we can state that when it comes to satisfaction, the staff is the most important variable in a trade fair. Rather than focus on the booth itself, companies should focus on the correct training of the staff, taking into account the time and money it is required for the experience to show. However, it will pay off in visitors satisfaction, which will then reflect in visitors revisiting and spreading the word (WOM)

### 5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

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Being a B2B context, this comes with limitations attached, some of which are the following:

1. Sampling - Who is the Target? Who is the decision maker? The Sampling used was Judgement/purposive Sampling, but this limitation was overcome by simply asking "How often do you attend trade fairs?". If the answer were 0, the person would not be part of the sample.
2. Willingness/Time - Trade fairs are workspaces, and so, people go there to sell or to buy, they go there with a purpose. We offered to share the results, hopefully, this limitation was somehow reduced, but still, some people were still not interested.

Another limitation is the number of answers, the access to data. The B2B context is a professional one, most people do not have the time to answer long questionnaires, and the fact that trade fairs have a time limit does not help the subject. Sure, you can collect data in more than one trade fair, but would the result be the same? Would the design of the booth have the same impact had it been an automotive trade fair? So, the first suggestion would be to invest in data collection. After the data is collected there are infinite things you can do with it. Spend more time collecting, get help if needed, bigger samples offer better and more conclusive results.



It would be interesting to understand how the sample behaved after the study. Therefore, another suggestion for future research would be to use a Longitudinal Design to really understand and find out how and if the sample goes from "Behavioural Intention" to "action". A Longitudinal design consists of having a fixed sample and measure it repeatedly, and so, by having this, it would be possible to understand the final impact that Booth Design and Sales Staff have on behavioural intention.

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## 7. Appendix

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Appendix 1 – Identification badge for the trade fair



Appendix 2 – Questionnaire – English language

### Attending trade fairs: visitor's satisfaction

This study is part of a dissertation of the Master in Marketing and Strategy of the University of Minho and aims to examine visitor' satisfaction in trade fairs. Hence, it is very important to understand your perceptions as visitor about the booth design, staff capabilities and satisfaction with the exhibitor.

Thus, I kindly ask for your collaboration in filling in this questionnaire. Your contribution is completely voluntary. Any information provided by you is confidential and anonymous.

If you agree to participate in this study, please proceed to fill in this questionnaire. It should take no longer than 6 minutes. Your responses are very important to us.

If you want to receive the results of this study, please write down your e-mail at the end of this survey.

Thank you very much for your time!

Luís Carlos Fonseca Martins

## Booth Related Questions - 7 Questions

Please think about a booth that you have visited in this trade fair.

Answer the following questions by indicating your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements regarding your overall evaluation of the visit to that booth.

**1- It was easy for me to find the product required because of the arrangement of the booth.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**2- The booth layout made it easy for me to find certain products.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**3- The arrangement of the booth made it easy to find my way.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**4- The design of the booth was appealing.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**5- The design of the booth was attractive.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**6- The design of the booth looked great.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**7- There was enough space in the booth.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

**8- The arrangement of the booth allowed the customers enough space.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree

**9- The booth was designed to be spacious.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

### **Booth Staff Capabilities' questions - 6 Questions.**

**10- The booth staff could answer questions about new products/services.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

**11- The booth staff could arouse product interest of the fair's visitors.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

**12- The booth staff could handle existing product's related questions.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

**13- The booth staff could listen carefully to the fair visitors.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

**14- The booth staff had knowledge of other departments' operations.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree  
                 

**15- The booth staff had experiences attending other fairs.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly agree

## Booth Staff Friendliness' questions - 7 Questions

**16- The booth staff were friendly toward me.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**17- The booth staff behaved in a friendly way toward me.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**18- The booth staff had a friendly smile.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**19- The booth staff talked to me in a friendly way.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**20- The booth staff greeted me friendly.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**21- The booth staff thanked me when it was appropriate.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

**22- The booth staff had friendly eye contact with me.**

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○



## Final Questions - 3 Questions

23- I was satisfied with this exhibitor.

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

24- I will attend this exhibitor in the future.

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

25- I will recommend this exhibitor to others.

Strongly disagree    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Strongly agree  
                 

"Getting to know you" questions (statistic purpose only) - 6 Questions

E-mail (Optional).

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**Gender.**

Male                      
Female                   
Other                      
Prefer not to say  

**Age.**

18-30     
31-40     
41-50     
51-60     
61+

**Nationality.**

- English
- French
- Portuguese
- Spanish
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**How often do you attend Trade Fairs?**

- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Three times a year
- Four times a year
- More than five times a year

**Reason to attend trade fairs (Choose three reasons by order of preference).**

- |   | 1°                    | 2°                    | 3°                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| See new products                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Meet potential suppliers                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Gather industry-specific information    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtain technical or product information | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| General curiosity/interest              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Gather information for a purchase       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Contact current suppliers               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Attend special events/seminars          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Purchase a product                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Company Size (Number of workers - Optional).**

- ≤5
- 6-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-500
- 501+

## Ferias: satisfacción del visitante

Este estudio es parte de una disertación del Máster en Marketing y Estrategia de la Universidad del Minho y tiene como objetivo examinar la satisfacción de los visitantes en las ferias comerciales. Por lo tanto, es muy importante conocer sus percepciones como visitante sobre el diseño del stand, las capacidades del personal y la satisfacción con el stand de los expositores.

Por ello, le rogamos su colaboración en la cumplimentación de este cuestionario. Su colaboración es totalmente voluntaria. Cualquier información proporcionada por usted es confidencial y anónima.

Si acepta participar en este estudio, por favor proceda a completar este cuestionario. No debería tomarle más de 10 minutos. Sus respuestas son muy importantes para nosotros.

Si desea recibir los resultados finales del estudio, por favor anote su e-mail.

¡Muchas gracias por su tiempo y colaboración!

Luís

## Preguntas relacionadas con el Stand- 7 Preguntas

Piense en un stand que haya visitado en esta feria de negocios.

Responda a las siguientes preguntas indicando su nivel de acuerdo/desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones con respecto a la evaluación general de su visita con ese expositor.

### 1- Fue fácil encontrar el producto requerido por la disposición del stand.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 2- El diseño del stand me facilitó encontrar ciertos productos.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 3- La disposición del stand facilitó el movimiento en él.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 4- El diseño del stand fue llamativo.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 5- El diseño del stand fue atractivo.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 6- El diseño del stand fue genial.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 7- Había suficiente espacio en el stand.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

### 8- La disposición del stand dejaba suficiente espacio a los clientes.

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo

**9- El stand fue diseñado para ser espacioso.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**Preguntas relacionadas con las capacidades de los empleados del stand - 6 Preguntas.**

**10- El personal del stand era capaz de responder preguntas sobre nuevos productos/servicios.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**11- El personal del stand era capaz de despertar el interés por el producto de los visitantes de la feria.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**12- El personal del stand era capaz de responder las preguntas relacionadas con el producto existente.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**13- El personal del stand escuchaba atentamente a los visitantes de la feria.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**14- El personal del stand tenía conocimiento de las operaciones de otros departamentos.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo  
                 

**15- El personal del stand tenía experiencia en otras ferias.**

Totalmente de acuerdo    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Totalmente en desacuerdo ~

## Preguntas relacionadas con la amabilidad de los empleados del stand - 7 Preguntas

**16- El personal del stand fue amable conmigo.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**17- El personal del stand se comportó de manera amable conmigo.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**18- El personal de ventas en el stand tenía una sonrisa amistosa.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**19- El personal de ventas en el stand me habló de manera amistosa.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**20- El personal de ventas en el stand me recibió amablemente.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**21- El personal de ventas en el stand me agradeció cuando fue apropiado.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**22- El personal de ventas en el stand me miró amistosamente.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

## Preguntas finales - 3 preguntas

**23- Estoy satisfecho con este stand de exhibición.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**24- Asistiré a este stand de exhibición en el futuro.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

**25- Recomendaré este stand de exhibición a otros.**

Totalmente de acuerdo  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Totalmente en desacuerdo

## Preguntas personales (solo para estadísticas) - 6 Preguntas

**E-mail (Opcional).**

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**Género.**

Masculino

Femenino

Otro

Prefiero no decirlo

**Edad.**

18-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61+

**¿Con qué frecuencia participa en ferias comerciales?**

- Una vez al año
- Dos veces al año
- Tres veces al año
- Cuatro veces al año
- Más de cinco veces al año

**Motivo de asistencia a ferias comerciales (elija tres en orden de preferencia).**

- |  | 1°                    | 2°                    | 3°                    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ver nuevos productos                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Conocer proveedores potenciales                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Recopilar información específica de la industria | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtener información técnica o de producto        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Curiosidad/interés general                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtener información para una compra              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Contactar con proveedores actuales               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Participar en eventos/seminarios especiales      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Comprar un producto                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Tamaño de la empresa (Número de empleados - Opcional).**

- ≤5
- 6-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-500
- 501+



## Feiras de negócios: Satisfação do visitante

Este estudo é parte de uma dissertação de Mestrado em Marketing e Estratégia da Universidade do Minho, e tem como objetivo examinar a satisfação do visitante em feiras de negócios. Por isso, é muito importante compreender as suas perceções enquanto visitante sobre o design do stand, a capacidade dos funcionários e a satisfação com o expositor.

Portanto, peço a sua colaboração no preenchimento deste questionário. A sua contribuição é completamente voluntária e qualquer informação fornecida é confidencial e anónima.

Caso pretenda participar neste estudo, por favor prossiga para o preenchimento do questionário. Deve demorar cerca de 6 minutos. As suas respostas são muito importantes.

Se pretender receber o feedback sobre os resultados deste estudo, por favor escreva o seu e-mail no final do questionário.

Muito obrigado pelo seu tempo!

Luís Carlos Fonseca Martins

## Questões sobre o stand - 7 Questões

Pense num stand que tenha visitado nesta feira de negócios.

Responda às seguintes questões indicando o seu nível de concordância/discordância com as seguintes afirmações relativamente à avaliação global da sua visita a esse stand.

**1- Foi fácil para mim encontrar o produto que pretendia devido à disposição do stand.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**2- O layout do stand facilitou o encontro de certos produtos.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**3- A disposição do stand facilitou a minha deslocação.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**4- O design do stand era chamativo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**5- O design do stand era atrativo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**6- O design do stand era ótimo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**7- Havia espaço suficiente no stand.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**8- A disposição do stand permitia muito espaço para os clientes.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente

**9- O stand foi desenhado para ser espaçoso.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**Questões relacionadas com as capacidades dos funcionários do stand - 6 Questões.**

**10- Os funcionários do stand conseguiam responder a questões sobre novos produtos/serviços.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**11- Os funcionários do stand conseguiam estimular o interesse dos visitantes da feiras nos produtos.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**12- Os funcionários do stand conseguiam lidar com questões relacionadas com os produtos.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**13- Os funcionários do stand ouviam atentamente os visitantes da feira.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**14- Os funcionários do stand tinham conhecimento das operações de outros departamentos.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**15- Os funcionários do stand tinham experiência em feiras.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente

## Questões relacionadas com a simpatia dos funcionários do stand - 7 Questões

**16- Os funcionários do stand foram amáveis comigo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**17- Os funcionários do stand comportaram-se de forma simpática comigo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**18- Os funcionários do stand tinham um sorriso amigável.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**19- Os funcionários do stand falaram comigo delicadamente.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**20- Os funcionários do stand receberam-me com cortesia.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**21- Os funcionários do stand agradeceram-me quando era apropriado.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**22- Os funcionários do stand mantiveram um contacto amigável comigo.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente

## Questões finais - 3 Questões

**23- Fiquei satisfeito com o expositor.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**24- Irei visitar este expositor no futuro.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

**25- Irei recomendar este expositor a outros.**

Discordo Totalmente    1   2   3   4   5   6   7    Concordo Totalmente  
                 

## Perguntas pessoais (para estatística) - 6 Questões

**E-mail (Opcional).**

---

**Género.**

Masculino           

Feminino            

Outro                

Prefiro não dizer  

**Idade.**

18-30   

31-40   

41-50   

51-60   

61+

**Com que frequência participa em feiras de negócios?**

- Uma vez por ano
- Duas vezes por ano
- Três vezes por ano
- Quatro vezes por ano
- Mais de cinco vezes por ano

**Razão para participar em feiras de negócios (escolha três por ordem de preferência).**

- |   | 1º                    | 2º                    | 3º                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ver novos produtos                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Conhecer potenciais fornecedores                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Recolher informação específica para a indústria | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obter informações técnicas ou sobre produtos    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Curiosidade/Interesse em geral                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obter informação para uma compra                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Contactar atuais fornecedores                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Participar em eventos especiais/seminários      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Comprar um produto                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Dimensão da empresa (Número de funcionários - Opcional).**

- ≤5
- 6-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-500
- 501+