Exploring the motivations for people ages 18-30 attending music festivals and the role of social media in the decision making process.

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Signed Statement

“I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.”

Signed:                  Date:
Abstract

This research project will explore the motivations of people between the ages of 18-30 attending music festivals and the influence social media has on an individual’s decision to attend an event or not.

The findings of this search are based on two focus groups that have been conducted with participant’s who are between the ages of 18-30 and have attended at least one music festival, in addition to being active social media users. The questions asked were related to the literature explored earlier on in the project, to ensure the responses were relevant to the study and the data collected could be compared to previous research – in order to recognise relationships between theory and the current data collection. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected in order to identify key themes that emerged from the discussion within the focus groups. Participant quotes were used throughout the discussion to support the findings.

The research project found that there are a number of factors that motivate an individual to attend a music festival. The main motivating factors were identified as socialisation, experience, entertainment and seeking. The stages of a potential attendee’s decision making process were discussed and the findings were consistent with the literature, and the use of social media throughout the process influences customers in varying ways. Offering both event organisers and customers a platform to promote content and share experiences.

Based on the findings obtained in this study, the researcher was able to make recommendations to areas that could be explored further, in order to continue the rate of attendance at music festivals in the future.

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# Contents

Title Page .............................................................................i  
Declaration .................................................................ii  
Abstract ........................................................................iii  
Acknowledgements ......................................................iv  
List of Figures ....................................................................vii  

1.0 Introduction ........................................................................1  
1.1 Size and Scope of the Music Festival Industry .........................1  
1.2 Event Attendance and Motivation .......................................2  
1.3 Social Media .....................................................................2  
1.4 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions ..............................3  

2.0 Literature Review ..................................................................5  
2.1 Introduction .......................................................................5  
2.2 Theory of Motivation .........................................................5  
2.3 Motivation for Music Festival Attendance ................................7  
2.4 Event Attendance Decision Making Process ..........................9  
2.5 Social Media Influences ....................................................10  

3.0 Methodology .......................................................................13  
3.1 Quantitative Research ........................................................13  
3.2 Qualitative Research ........................................................13  
3.3 Focus Group Structure .......................................................14  
3.4 Desk Research ..................................................................15  
3.5 Data Analysis ....................................................................15  
3.6 Ethical Considerations ........................................................16  

4.0 Results, Analysis and Discussion ........................................17  
4.1 Introduction .......................................................................17  
4.2 Focus Group Results and Analysis ......................................17  
   4.2.1 Event Attendance Frequency .......................................17  
   4.2.2 Motivation For Attendance .........................................19  
   4.2.3 Social Media, Event Information and Marketing ......23  
   4.2.4 Consumer Buying/Decision Making Process ............28  
4.3 Chapter Overview ..............................................................30
5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations..................................................31
5.1 Summary of Findings........................................................................31
5.2 Limitations................................................................................................32
5.3 Recommendations for Future Research...............................................32
6.0 Appendices................................................................................................34
7.0 References...............................................................................................56
List of Figures

**Figure 1**: Circle of influence on motivation to attend an event..........................11

**Figure 2**: As social media users, what type of posts would you engage with?.........25
1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this research project is to investigate the motivations that influence individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 to attend music festivals and the extent of influence social media has on the decision making process. The research project will aim to explore the dissertation title through five chapters; Introduction; Literature Review; Methodology; Results, Analysis and Discussion; and finally Conclusion and Recommendations. Using primary research through the means of focus groups with event attendees and active social media users. Secondary research relevant to the project was also used such as online databases, textbooks and case studies. For the purpose of the research, the author will concentrate specifically on the motivations to attend music festivals.

1.1 Size and Scope of the Music Festival Industry

Getz and Page (2015, p. 67) define a festival as a “themed, public celebration”. The rise in festivals surrounding music has seen a tremendous growth from the original Isle of Wight Festival (1968) and Glastonbury (1970) to the present day. An article by the NME (2017) stated that in the UK alone, approximately 30 million people attended a music festival in 2016. Whilst music festivals are continuing to grow in the UK, the growth of these specific events is now being recognised as an influencing development in relation to tourism and event industries (Axelsen, 2007). Hence, music festivals overseas have seen an expansion of such events, attracting thousands of tourists each year.

Festivals, in particular the area of music is a major sector of the events industry, and are marketed specifically to attract an audience with an interest in music, whilst providing entertainment and new experiences to people celebrating the art of music on both a local and national level. “Music festivals are also sites for transformative – event spiritual – experiences for their participants” (Lea 2006; Partridge 2006; Larsen and O-Reilly 2009) cited in (Webster and McKay, 2016). These specific events now appeal to a wider audience and the nature of the events is expanding to provide much more than just the music, but to create entertainment and new experiences for attendees.
1.2 Event Attendance and Motivation
Event attendees are fundamentally one of the most important aspects of a successful event, and each individual has their own motivations for attending an event (Wale et al. 2010), therefore it is the role of the event organisers to understand the different motivations and create appropriate content to meet the needs and desires of their consumers. For music festivals in particular, the importance of event attendees contributes to the development and continuing running of the festival each year. The concept of motivation varies throughout research and can be used to help understand the reasons why people attend events. Despite previous research surrounding event attendance and motivation, due to the growth of the sector, there are a number of factors that lack current research in order to contribute to the reasons why people attend music events. The motivation is more than just the festival experience, attendance at music festivals is to seek novelty, socialisation and culture (Webster and McKay, 2016). Exploring both the needs and expectations of the customers will enable events to attract new attendees and maintain loyalty with repeat consumers. The influences that form both the interest, choices and event attendance or participation are antecedents, some of these influences include; the needs, expectations and lifestyle (Getz, 2007). It is therefore the requirements of the researcher to discover where appropriate the links between the influences of a consumer being interested in attending an event to actually attending, and whether or not that decision is influenced by social media platforms.

1.3 Social Media
The researcher focused this part of their search on the decision making process that a person would go through in order to make a decision on whether they will attend the event or not based on the influences of social media. Firstly, “marketers need to gain an understanding of what motivates consumers to attend events in order to create, improve and market event effectively by selecting appropriate marketing channels” Wale et al. (2010, p.138). From this the research aims to explore social media as both a marketing channel and consumption of use by individuals as influencing factors in the decision making process.

With the number of social media users growing, and approximately 91% of 16-24 years olds now being engaged in social networking sites (Prescott, 2016), it suggests that the popularity of it is growing through both people and organisations. The power of social media platforms to enhance the engagement with attendees and attract participants is continuing to grow and
has been used over many years for the marketing and promotional aspects of music festivals. According to (Lewis and Moital, 2013) the effective marketing of a festivals products, services and experiences via social media requires an in depth understanding of how it affects the consumers purchase and consumption decisions. Music festivals are largely marketed online through the following of event specific content by those with an interest in the event. The process of finding an event on social media, showing interest in the event and most importantly making the decision to attend, are the key areas that will be discussed and identified throughout this project. It was a fear that the expanding use of event content online would in fact discourage new attendees from actually coming to events (Heinz, 2012) however it has become apparent that individuals are being influenced by what others are doing online, and through the content posted on social media streams, there has seen an increase in interest and discovery of events that is increasing attendance. Yeoman et al. (2015) identifies that there is potential for consumers to put negative pressure on an organisation and the products and/or services via social media streams. Therefore, the need to create appropriate content through the opportunities that arise in the future development of social media features and engage regularly with customers is essential. Festival organisers should understand the motivations for customer attendance in order to create effective marketing strategies and overall festival planning, therefore recommendations will be made in the final chapter of this research to assist in the success of future events.

1.4 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions.

Dissertation Aim: To evaluate the motivations surrounding event attendance at music festivals and the influence social media has on the decision.

Dissertation Objectives:

1. To critically review the literature on the motivations to attend music festivals.
2. To investigate the decision making process for purchasing and consuming.
3. To establish the extent of social media use and the influence it has on an individual’s decision to attend a festival.
4. To discuss the benefits of social media in increasing attendance at music festivals, and make recommendations to event organisers.
Research Questions:

1. Why do these people attend?
2. What role does social media play in influencing their decision to attend?
3. How can organisations utilise social media to increase attendance?
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction
There has been a range of research conducted on events and event management. Getz, 1949, 2007; Bowdin et al, 2011; Shone and Parry, 2004 are all researchers particular to the subject who all identify the importance of understanding the motivations behind event attendance. Enabling event organisers to successfully implement events and create effective event marketing strategies to engage with the audience. The attendance and participation at events is crucial (Aulton, 2018) without them experiences would not be created and therefore those experiences can not be shared and events would ultimately not exist. Research has been previously conducted on the subject of motivation to attend events; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Severt et al., 2007; Li and Petrick, 2006; and Getz, 2005. However, since music festivals have been identified as becoming evermore popular and competitive in recent years, Crompton and McKay (1997) considered that exploring the motivations for festival attendance was significant in ensuring festival organisers designed an offering suitable for the attendees, whilst ensuring they are satisfied and can be used to determine the decision making process. Current research should be undertaken to determine if individual needs and expectations have shifted, and how important the role of social media is in influencing those changes in trends. This chapter will look in-depth at the literature surrounding motivation for event attendance, consumer decision making and social media use by both customers and festival organisers. Event managers need to identify the motivations behind attendance to their events in order to create events that fulfil the needs of the customers and provide a satisfying experience – with the constant growing of social media networks, it is useful for festival organisers to create the best image online that will attract new and returning customers each year.

2.2 Theory Of Motivation
There are a number of definitions of motivation. According to Nicholson and Pearce (2001) cited in Gelder and Robinson (2013) state that “motivation is a state of need, and a condition that exerts a ‘push’ on the individual towards certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction”. Consequently, motivation can be linked closely to behaviour, since an individual’s motivational needs and wants combined can influence their behaviour. Motivational theories are the best way to understand why individuals do what they do. There are a number of studies on motivation theory and concepts, for example Maslow’s Hierarchy
of Needs (1943), Hertzberg’s Two Factor Theory (1959) and Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964). Each theorist has taken a different approach to the research they have conducted, however, there are a number of similarities throughout the studies that give an overall representation of motivation as a whole. This identifies that each individual has different needs and therefore the satisfaction is unique. According to (Mills et al, p. 209):

“Motivation has to do with a set of independent/dependent variable relationships that explain the direction, amplitude, and persistence of an individual’s behaviour, holding constant the effects of aptitude, skill and understanding of the task, and the constraints operating in the environment”.

The implications of this on an individual’s behaviour would be that the external factors have a significant impact on an individual’s behaviour, for this study that would suggest that potential event attendees are influenced by their surroundings so their decision to attend or not is based on what they understand, perceive and are influenced by - which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943) classifies human needs into five different categories; physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation. The model illustrates the fundamental needs of an individual through the stages of the hierarchy – to understand that the presence of one need is determined by the satisfaction of another. For the researcher, this particular theory does not provide a real picture of why people attend events (Shone and Parry, 2004). It is suggested by Maslow that at a higher level, the needs have a greater influencer on motivation (Mullins, 2005). Shone and Parry (2004) suggest examples of personal motives as; individuals seeking new experiences, learning and fulfilment of ambitions.

Thus led to the further development of motivational theories, such as Hertzberg’s Two Factor Theory (1959). This model is based on research conducted in a working environment, suggesting that if hygiene and motivating factors were absent, it could lead to dissatisfaction (Mullins, 2016). The theory suggests that individuals are more motivated if they are satisfied by certain factors, including the working environment, conditions and policies, however the ‘hygiene’ factors will not motivate an individual on their own. If they are not up to satisfactory standards they will therefore act as de-motivators. It is suggested that the factors which motivate an individual are in fact the job role and responsibility within the work place for example. It is important for events to not only consider the personal motives related to event
attendance, but subsequently the hygiene factors surrounding the individual which if satisfied will motive customers to attend (Wagen, 2015) if the hygiene factors are found to dissatisfy an individual it could result in a decision to not attend the event. The relevance of this model in relation to event attendance is that events are able to offer benefits that cater to each individual’s needs.

Expectancy Theory of motivation began with the work of Lewin and Tolmon and was later extended by Atkinson and Vroom (1964) that focused primarily on expectations (Edward, 1975) and how a person perceives an action. In relation to event attendance, the theory recognises that the intrinsic motivations surrounding this approach reflect how someone perceives what the event will be like, which could therefore impact on an individual’s motivation to attend the event or not. Unlike other theories, this model considers the perceptions of individual’s, rather than collectively and assuming all attendees are the same. For the purpose of this study, this specific model contributes to the understanding of the actions taken by a potential attendee based upon their expectations – the action will be discussed in more depth when looking at the decision making process.

2.3 Motivation for Music Festival Attendance

An in-depth review of the literature surrounding the motivations for individuals attending events is required in order to understand the needs, attitudes and expectations towards events, through not only the experience but also the influences surrounding the decision processes and on future behaviour. Crompton (2003) cited in Gelder and Robinson (2013) acknowledges that one of the primary reasons for putting on a festival is to create an event that offers attendees a satisfying experience. There are a number of reasons why people attend music festivals in particular, according to researchers Crompton and McKay (1997), there are three main reasons why individuals attend music festivals:

The first reason is the event offering - the motives behind the expectations of the event experience that are triggered by the needs of the individuals; these motivations are intrinsic, since an individual will attend an event based on the benefits it has for them. According to Milohnic et al. (2016, p. 207) “attendees expect the fulfilment of certain needs; they expect benefits” when they attend events. This suggests that if an event attendee makes the decision to attend a specific event, they would hope to gain something out of it. Many event studies address the motivations for event attendance in relation to the benefits a customer will gain by
attending the event, Getz (2005) suggests the benefits are essential and should be explored. The personal benefits to an individual, for example change can be referred to as escapism that can act as a motivator in terms of attending events. Often associated to these specific motivations, is not only attendance but the participation at events. Since the consumer is seeking to gain benefits from attending the event, that it could result in the participation of activity. It is therefore important to determine the expectations and their motives. Secondly, the relationship between motivation and satisfaction – the experience gained at a music festival occurs after the motivation to attend and therefore resulting in satisfaction. Getz (2005) refers to the event as an experience. With festivals becoming increasingly competitive, the need for attendees to return each year is high, so the correlation between the satisfaction gained from the experience is essential in recognising the needs of the attendee. However, Maslow, cited in Mullins (2016) argues that once the need is satisfied, then it is no longer a motivator and could therefore be seen to influence an individual’s decision to not attend an event. Finally, it is understood that the decision process surrounding an individuals motive is influenced by a number of factors that will be discussed in the following section.

Seeking and escaping have been suggested as key factors that result in festival attendance – escapism is defined as escaping everyday life (Foster and Robinson, 2010). The term seeking is referred to as individuals who are seeking out new experiences and a sense of shared socialisation. People are motivated to attend events by the idea that by attending a festival they will in fact be able to take themselves away from the struggles in their everyday lives. It is understood that not everyone sees this as an opportunity to escape and remove from something, but more so to seek out new and exciting opportunities that they have not experienced before, therefore escaping to something. Iso-Ahola cited in Crompton and McKay (1997) divides both seeking and escaping into personal and interpersonal, therefore an individual is motivated by the idea that festivals can be used to get away to a place that is able to cater to their personal needs, and is seen as an opportunity to escape the personal world. In addition, people are motivated through the idea of social interaction, and interacting with those friendly, like-minded people who are also seeking person rewards and thus will not judge the individual’s behaviour. This is reflected in research that suggests attendance at festivals by an individual on their own is increasing. The theory and concepts surrounding seeking and escaping share many similar characteristics to the concept of push-pull model. Both elements are used to identify key motivations for individuals attending festivals, which can be linked to Maslow’s (1954)
Hierarchy of Needs who suggests individuals who look to seek from a festival experience will find satisfaction of their personal needs.

Research conducted by Crompton and McKay (1997) identifies an important motivation, referred to as Known Group Socialisation. This theory refers to the influences individual or group behaviour and decisions can have on others within a social groups. In relation to festival attendance, this could mean that an individual might not want to attend the event for personal motivations, although if there are friends who are interested, then their decision might change and they will want to go in order for them to also feel part of the experience and not miss out. According to Abreu-Novais and Arcodia (2013) socialisation is one of the most common motivations for attendance. The concept of socialisation is linked to a persons need to socialise and interact with others, for music festivals in particular, known group socialisation is an important influencer for attendance, in comparison to socialisation at other events. Further researcher considers the importance of varying events in attract a different group of people, for example music events that attract younger people and groups, compared to cultural activities that might be more attractive to a family. This is where the term family togetherness is concerned, it is a sub-category within socialisation and is related to the idea of spending quality time with family in a leisure environment, in order to create stronger bonds (Abreu-Novais and Arcodia, 2013).

2.4 Event Attendance Decision Making Process

According to Crompton and McKay (1997, p.21) “motives are the starting point that launches the decision process”. Mackellar (2014) therefore suggests that it is not only the personal motives of the attendees that should be considered, but also the social and psychological factors, such as ability and knowledge (Dibb and Simkin, 1996) that contribute to the decision making process.

Across the leisure sector, the push-pull model can be used to determine the factors that influence an individual’s decision to make a purchase – in this instance the model is used for motivation purposes. For example, a push factor could be the desire to attend a new festival or seek recognition among like minded people in a social setting such as a music festival. The push factors are those that are intrinsic to the individual, they are intangible and linked to the psychological benefits the individual believes they will obtain by attending the event (Milohnic et al, 2016). The pull factors are related to the other aspects of the event, the characteristics of
the event that ‘pull’ an individual to attend, for example the performers and the style of the festival. This is supported by Wale et al (2010) who states that these factors are tangible and therefore closely linked to Herzberg’s hygiene factors, whereby if they are removed the individual would be dissatisfied and ultimately make a decision to not attend the event.

Shiffman et al. (2012) proposes a model of consumer decision-making that illustrates the stages of a consumer’s decision making process from the decision through to making a purchase. The model identifies three key stages; the input stage, the process stage and the output stage. At the input stage, the need for the product is recognised. This stage has two key influences in terms of information about the product; the social influences in the external environment for example friends, reference groups and culture, and the marketing activities of the event organisation, such as the promotional strategies and price. It is the influence from both of these sources that will impact on a consumer’s decision whether to attend an event or not. Secondly, the process stage involves a consumer considering all of the information and making a decision based on their own individual motivations, attitudes and perceptions (Shiffman et al. 2012) of the product. Therefore, the external influences that are recognised by the consumer are likely to impact on the overall need/desire for the product and will ultimately carry out their own research for key information and alternative products or events in this instance. This is a key part of the decision making process since it shows that the consumer is interested in purchasing and attending an event. The final stage of the model is made up of the purchase behaviour and the post-purchase evaluation. The purchase behaviour is influenced by the cost of the product (Shiffman et al. 2012) so if the cost of the product is high, the consumer is suggested to have a higher involvement in the buying behaviour and therefore, if the product cost is low, the buying behaviour will be of a lower involvement. For the higher cost products, the purchase is often pre-existing and thorough research will have been carried out prior to the purchase.

2.5 Social Media Influences
The research previously conducted identifies why individuals are motivated to attend an event, this section will aim to look at how they are influenced to attend events through the means of social media. Mackellar (2014) identifies a circle of influence that can impact on an individual’s motivation to attend an event (see Figure 1).
From this the researcher was able to identify that the internet, in particular social media networks are one of the key influencers of event attendance today. “Attendees are often more receptive to marketing messages and images with the event than those presented via other methods” (Rajan, 2015, p.263). So it is therefore necessary to look at the fundamentals of social media and the ways in which varying event stakeholders are presented online. The influences that form both the interest, choices and event attendance or participation are antecedents, some of these influences include; the needs, expectations and lifestyle (Getz, 2007).

Marketing of events can have a powerful influence and therefore an organisations presence online is key to the engagement with customers, it is suggested by Preston (2012) that the internet, in particular social media has changed the way organisations create relationships with attendees and potential attendees. When looking specifically at social media marketing in a contemporary society, the AIDA model can be used to establish marketing actions at the various stages of a customers journey to purchase, or in this instance the decision to attend an event. (Charlesworth 2009) recommends adding an additional T because it is at this stage that the customer will tell someone about it and share their experiences online. Schmitt (1999) cited in Rajan (2015) suggests that event marketing is used as a tool for experiential marketing on the consumers experience, since experiences often evolve through emotion, behaviour and other values. Therefore if the marketing activities are designed appropriately to the audience, then they will overall add value and will contribute to the consumer experience.
Social media is also used by attendees to interact with the event, therefore, providing customers with a platform to connect and share their interests with people online. In many cases this has been seen to encourage others to interact and gain interest in an event. The younger generation today are interested in seeking information about a product or event online before making a purchasing decision (Rajan, 2015). If people can see that an event is generating a large audience online, or they have identified that friends for example are attending, then they will want to be a part of it also. The term post popularity is referred to the number of likes, shares and comments related to a post (Chang et al. 2014), these posts have the potential to affect an individual’s preferences and routes. This can be shown through the means of Facebook event pages, which are used to engage with an audience and allows individuals to interact with the event by checking-in, liking and sharing the page (Solaris, 2014). It is common for attendees to broadcast the events that they attend online – commonly used to make a statement that they are there, particularly well known music festivals that are popular among that specific audience. The effect of this is that others want to be a part of the experience and therefore customer satisfaction, or in some cases dissatisfaction will influence the attendance of others in either a positive or negative way.
3.0 Methodology

The following methodology was applied in this study by the researcher - it outlines the research methods that were conducted in order to answer the proposed research title; exploring the motivations for people ages 18-30 attending music festivals and the role of social media in the decision making process. In order to collect the most appropriate data, the researcher must know what data is required and the suitable method techniques to use (Crowther, 2008). The quantitative aspects of this research project focused on numerical areas of the study such as event attendance figures and data associated with social media activity by both attendees and event organisers. Whilst the qualitative aspects of the research aimed at explore the motivations for event attendance and the role of social media in the decision making process. Data collection methods included: focus groups and desk research.

3.1 Quantitative research
Quantitative research looks at data that is numerical and can be used to make generalised assumptions about previous behaviours, gather current opinions or predict new models (Franklin, 2013). Many research projects use data that is available to the public, such as government statistics as they are deemed a reliable source. Surveys and questionnaires are the most commonly used quantitative methods since they gather a lot of information from a wide range of sources at one time. However, if questionnaires are not administrated well, it can result in a low response rate, poor quality of responses and therefore resulting in poor data collection (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001). Consequently, the researcher decided against creating a questionnaire since they anticipated finding a substantial number of participants would be challenging which could have impacted on the validity of the data if there were few respondents, and could have made analysing the data difficult.

3.2 Qualitative Research
In comparison, qualitative methods aim to gather an in depth understanding of a topic in their natural setting, where it can be interpreted and given meaning to (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3 cited in Guest et al, 2013). The methods include; interviews, observations and focus groups. Interviews are commonly used by researchers to engage a person’s attitude, behaviour and emotions both face to face and via phone call, it is a time consuming process and if it isn’t carried out effectively problems with intrusion may arise. Observation of participants is
generally used to help develop the focus of research to then consider further data collection activities (Guest et al, 2013). Merriam (2009) identifies that throughout observations, the researcher is able to gather a first-hand account of interest in the topic instead of relying on someone’s interpretation of the findings. Consequently, the process allows for real life situations to be observed and therefore the data collected will be a true representation, ensuring that the data is not bias or perceived incorrectly.

Similarly, for focus groups, questions are constructed and a moderator probes responses and is able to manage the interaction between participants (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015). Unlike individual interviews, they are designed to engage multiple people and often use incentives to gather participants, since the researcher is an undergraduate student collecting the data, the safety of the individual was an important consideration. Bloor et al (2001) cited in Barbour (2007) suggests that this method should be used for research purposes related to the study of group norms and processes, stating particularly the suitability of focus groups for studies related to decision-making processes (Barbour, 2007). Therefore, a suitable method for the purpose of this research project – where the researcher wished to collect data to do with the motivations for people attending music festivals.

3.3 Focus Group Structure

The researcher conducted two focus groups that investigated further the reasons into the motivations for attending music festivals and the influence social media has on an individual’s decision on whether or not to attend an event. Each focus group involved 5 participants who were suitable for the research project; all participants were between the ages of 18-30 and active social media users. It was a requirement when recruiting participants that they had attended one or more music festivals – this ensured it was specific to the research title and they were familiar with the topic being discussed.

A preliminary set of questions were put together in order to establish 1) current trends in event attendance; 2) the individual motivations for people attending music festivals; 3) the factors that influence on a person’s decision making process; and 4) the influence of social media on their decision to attend. The questions were developed based on the information that emerged from previous literature and case studies. The moderator began by gathering background information on the participant’s involvement with festivals; using a combination of generic and open ended questions the researcher was able to explore in depth the personal motivations of
the participants, followed by illustrations of social media activity to prompt discussion. Wilkinson (1999a) cited in Barbour (2007) suggests that focus groups open up a window of discussion surrounding processes, that can often be difficult to penetrate in other situations. This allowed the researcher to gather the desired information from the participants in order to gain the specific data needed for this research project.

Prior to the primary data collection process, a pilot interview was conducted to ensure the questions were not misleading or confusing. This process benefitted the researcher as they were able to alter the questions to ensure the data collected was relevant to the purpose of the research. If the time frame of the project was longer, the researcher would have used a larger sample to ensure the data collected was a true representation.

3.4 Desk Research
Secondary data alone is unable to provide all the necessary information to address the research objectives (Crowther, 2008) so in addition to the primary data collected, it was necessary for the researcher to gather further information surrounding the current trends and data that emerge from prior research to do with social media and event motivations. This was carried out through desk research, looking specifically at web information, previous research, social media sites and official statistics. The researcher had to determine what specific data they were looking for prior to undertaking any research, to avoid collecting inappropriate and irrelevant data – an important aspect for such a current research project.

3.5 Data Analysis
Data analysis ultimately aims to reduce the amount of data collected in order to provide capsule statements (Hardy and Bryman, 2009) that can then be used to address the findings or drive the direction of the literature review. For the purpose of this research project, the time frame and the use of focus groups, a systematic analysis process was taken. This process allowed the researcher to begin analysing throughout by tape analysis and immediately after the focus groups by identifying themes that arose during the discussions and comparing to the literature previously found. Each individual focus group was recorded, therefore the researcher was able to refer back to each tape to listen, make further notes and then finally compare the results. It is important to note that the researcher will not be bias towards the data collected as the project must create an honest representation of the data found. The data collected from the quantitative
research was analysed statistically and therefore will be narrated in a range of tables and charts to distinguish the results.

3.6 Ethical Considerations
It was important throughout the process for the researcher to consider access to the participants involved. Access could affect the sampling, design and carrying out of the research (Hammond, 2013) if not considered carefully - in particular when carrying out interviews and focus groups, as there may be restrictions to the information given that could then impact the project. Data collection was conducted, when appropriate, on the Cardiff Met site in order to protect the participants and the researcher’s personal safety. If for instance that was not possible, it was agreed between the researcher and their supervisor that a public location will be decided. The participants involved in the study have the right to remain anonymous and confidentiality will be retained.
4.0 Results, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter will present and analyse the findings of the primary data collected by the researcher through two focus groups. The full focus group transcripts can be found in Appendix 4. The process will be done using thematic analysis, identifying the main themes surrounding the motivations to attend a music festival and the extent of influence social media has on the decision making process, whilst also recognising sub-themes that can be related back to the literature review in chapter 2. The sub-themes will be discussed within the key themes.

Main findings - focus group themes;

1. Event Attendance Frequency
2. Motivation for Attendance; Experience, Socialisation, Escapism, Destination and Price
3. Social media, Event information and Marketing; Before, During and After
4. Decision Making Process and Consumer Buying Behaviour

4.2 Focus Group Results and Analysis

4.2.1 Event Attendance Frequency:

It is important for the researcher to begin by gathering an overall picture of how often the participants attend music festivals and whether that is the type of event they attend the most regularly or not. The participants were presented with the question ’briefly outline your most recent music festival experience, which festival it was, who did you go with and what was the most influential factor in your decision to attend that specific festival? Which identified Reading, Glastonbury, Latitude, Board Masters and Boomtown as commonly attended festivals amongst the participants; these festivals are all highly attended and popular in the UK according to an article in the Evening Standard (Smyth, 2018). The researcher was able to immediately obtain key factors crucial to this project, these included; the variety of music, repeat attendance and attending with friends.
The response noted was similar across both focus groups, with the majority of participant’s acknowledging they had attended between 1 to 3 different music festivals within the past 2 years. More recently, it appeared music festivals specifically had been attended more frequently by all participants, and they had attended them on multiple occasions. This information was not surprising since all of the participants were over the age of 18 so their first encounter of a festival would have been more recently in their life. Across both focus groups, it became apparent that music events, not necessarily music festivals were the most commonly attended events. This included attending night clubs, which similarly to music festivals are attended predominantly for social reasons according to the Student Living Index (2017), whilst concerts at both a small scale and also those on a larger scale were also music events attended by the participants on a less regular basis. The frequency of attendance at these events was usually as a result of the location and price:

‘Trying to get tickets for concerts these days is impossible, they sell out in minutes.’

‘I find the location of the concerts are always limited and not easily accessible for me and I don’t see the point in spending all that money on transport to watch someone for a couple of hours. It usually costs me more to get there than the ticket cost me.’

Among the participant’s, it was identified that Reading Festival was the most commonly attended music festival, with 8 out of 10 participant’s declaring they had attended the festival at least once. Some responses to the question, what were your reasons for attending that festival? included:

‘I went with my best friend but we knew other people who would be there that we met up with. We had been a few times before and enjoyed it so wanted to go back.’

‘I haven’t actually attended a music festival in a few years, but the last one I went to was Reading because a group of friends were going.’

‘That’s the same as me, I went the same year with the same group of people.’
These findings create an assumption that Reading Festival are somewhat understanding their customers and the market in which they are competing in to stand out and gain such an interest. In some ways, it could be suggested that people have created a loyalty to the festival, by making a decision to return each year. If a customer is satisfied by their experience, they are likely to return again.

4.2.2 Motivation for Attendance:

In both focus groups, the participant’s discussed the range of factors that motivate them to attend those music festival, these motivations were dependent on the festival/type of event they were attending. The participants of both focus groups were asked what the main motivator was for them to attend a music festival was. The data collected from these questions was similar between the two groups which will be discussed throughout the key themes in this section.

**The Experience**

The participants were asked whether they attend music festivals more frequently than other events, there was a common response to the question between both focus groups in terms of both the frequency and reasoning. With the majority of participant’s stating that they have attended more events than music festivals, however further comments were made that suggest participant’s prefer attending a festival because of the whole experience, not just the music. Some of the responses were as follows:

‘I have attended quite a few music concerts but I prefer the whole experience of a festival.’

‘I think festivals offer so much more than just the music. Especially Latitude, I went there not really knowing what to expect and it was a whole different experience to anything I had been to before. That’s what I liked most about it, [I] would definitely say it’s unique.’

The event experience occurred as one of the key factors for event attendance on multiple occasions, with many of the respondents referring to the ‘event experience’ as a primary motivator for them attending the previous music festivals they have been to. The ‘experience’ and ‘atmosphere’ were significant terms used throughout both focus groups by the participant’s in relation to motivations to attend music festivals. Getz (2005) refers to events as experiences,
and many of the participants are strongly influenced by the desire to experience something new. A number of the participants had stated at the beginning of the discussion that they had attended the same music festival more than once – whilst discussing the motivations to attend, it was clear that the event experience was the main motivator for them attending the same festival again. “Creating memorable, transforming event experiences is the goal of many event producers and if people really do enjoy and recollect events they are more likely to return or seek out comparable experiences” (Milohnic et al., 2016, p.207). The researcher believes that the satisfaction the participants gained from attending those events resulted in them returning. Festival attendees can be classified as first time visitors and repeat visitors (Lau and McKercher, 2004) cited in (Kiitterlin and Yoo, 2014) and it is the repeat visitors that have previously discovered the festival and were satisfied with the experience so therefore wanted to return again.

However, this may not always be the case as one participant responded with a bad experience that left them dissatisfied and therefore resulted in them deciding not to attend the festival again:

‘It was my first festival experience so I was nervous anyway but the atmosphere whilst watching the performances was not what I expected. I think for my first festival, it was too big and it was obvious people were there for other reasons than to just watch the acts, which is fine, they get their enjoyment from other things. But it made me feel uncomfortable and uneasy the whole time I was there. I’ve not returned to that specific festival but I have attended others since and they were a lot more chill which made the experience so much more enjoyable.’

Socialisation

The social aspects of music festivals were a key theme that emerged among this research and a factor that has been explored over many years by theorists such as Getz (2005) who refers to known-group socialisation discussed within the literature. The theory acknowledges that individual’s and groups of people will have an influence on others. It was a common factor that occurred that the participants would be unlikely to attend a music festival unless their friends were going also, one participant indicated that they had recently sold their ticket to a festival they wanted to attend, for the main reason being that their work colleague could not
attend and stated ‘the experience would not be the same without her’. The results gathered from this question were expected since a number of the participants were from the same friendship group and had previously attended music festivals together. The main factor taken from this was that the majority of participants enjoyed spending time with their friends. On the other hand, one participant mentioned attending a festival with their family, in relation to the theory surrounding socialisation, family togetherness can be indicated as a sub-theme in this research, suggesting that the participant was motivated to attend a festival that allowed the family to spend time together and bond. Since it is the second most commonly explored motivational dimensions in existing literature (Abreu-Novais and Arcodia, 2013) it is not surprising that it emerged in the research.

The social aspect of attending events was approached differently by the oldest participant of the focus group (2) who was aged 30. They proceeded to explain that although they too would be unlikely to attend a festival alone, their decision to attend with other people is not essential and they would attend based on the idea of being around people who have similar interests to them.

‘I share a different music taste to my friends so probably not, I like to experience the festivals and do my own thing, that doesn’t necessarily mean I will spend time with random people, but I know everyone is there for the same reason’.

In relation to the literature explored earlier, it is suggested that the interaction between those with similar interests and characteristics can greatly impact on an individual’s decision to attend an event. In addition, the work of Shiffman et al. (2012) acknowledges the existence of reference groups that allow similar individuals to associate with like minded people. The impact of reference groups and social acceptance has been explored and proven throughout the literature review in this research project.

**Escapism**

Escapism was identified as a primary motivating factor throughout the focus groups and responses given by the participants. The relevance of this factor to this research project is significant throughout the literature (Crompton and McKay, 1997) and current data collection,
as it proves that events such as music festivals are providing attendees with an experience that they want. In this instance, it is the opportunity to experience something new, socialise with new people and escape normality. One response represented the idea of escapism:

‘..but the idea of being away from everyday life and chilling out with friends, listening to your favourite music and not really worrying about life, which as a student is essential. That is what intrigues me about festivals and is the reason I am motivated to attend more festivals’

It was identified early on in the study that music festivals are becoming more competitive and attracting attendees is more challenging. Through the idea of providing participants with an experience they might not be able to get elsewhere, festival organisers can capture those individuals who are seeking something more from life. One participant mentioned:

‘As a student, and I’m sure it is the same as those of you who work full time, the chance to take a break from that revives me. It’s the reason I look forward to the summer holidays so much, festival season takes me to my happy place where I can be carefree and get away from work and people who bring me down.’

Other Motivators

When looking at pull factors such as the destination and the price of the event, these factors were not initially mentioned by the participants, however, when it was brought up in discussion, many of the participants stated that the cost of travelling abroad to attend festivals is often what has put them off. However, the desire to travel abroad and seek out new experiences is a motivating factor for them. One respondent discussed the destination as a factor that attracts them to festivals:

‘Some of the most amazing looking festivals are abroad, especially the ones that are on a beach with guaranteed warm weather.’

This indicates that although it is still an important factor in terms of an individual’s motivation to attend, price still plays a part in determining whether they would be able to attend the event or not. These factors were considered both by individual participant’s and agreed collectively
as a group. Herzberg’s (1959) two factor theory of motivation acknowledges both hygiene and motivating factors, these factors have both been evident throughout the research. For the participants of both focus groups, it was apparent that the main concern for them were the motivating factors, for example the line up and experience. One participant who talked about a bad festival experience really considered the hygiene factors which would suggest that they were dissatisfied and those factors are now important to them when deciding whether to attend a festival or not.

‘Information is important, following that it is location but dependant on the date, cost and artists, location doesn’t matter – it could be abroad.’

This issue was not necessarily explored throughout previous literature. Since the majority of the participants are still students, it is not surprising that the cost would be a considerable factor to them. Individual’s are putting a lot of their time and money in to attending festivals all around the world. Event organisers must ensure they are able to attract and fulfil the needs of their target audience, this is supported by the the individual needs identified in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1954).

4.2.2 Social media, event information and marketing:

**Social Media use before, during and after the event**

Event Marketing via social media streams has been identified throughout the literature review as an important aspect of events and gaining attendees. It is the information provided and the various ways in which they are created which will be discussed in more depth further on in the study.

From this, the discussion moved on to focus on the social media aspect of the research. All focus group participants reported that they are active social media users on platforms such as Facebook, the most commonly used, followed by Instagram and Twitter. This was not surprising since Facebook is considered as one of the most popular social media sites, with over half of the world’s population using it (Buchanan, 2015). Therefore, it is important than event organisers create a presence online and engage continuously with their customers. By
doing this, organisations must capture their audience and invite them to participate and engage with activity online (Tuten, 2008) in order for the consumers to share and create their own content that will inevitably benefit the event/organisation. One participant stated that their reason for using those specific sites on social media allowed them to follow (e.g., friends, organisations, artists, events, groups) whilst also creating a following of their own, that is used as a platform to broadcast their interest in events and event experiences to others – therefore becoming an influencer on social media themselves. The term influencer emerged from the use of celebrity endorsers for many years online (Lee, 2018) it is now referred to in marketing as notable people who create memorable impressions of an organisation or a brands products and services. For this research, it can be viewed as having a positive impact on potential attendees who are influenced by people similar to them online.

Based on these findings, it could be suggested that social media sites such as Facebook are the most commonly used among this age group, 18-30, since all of the participants that took part are between those ages. In addition to that, both Instagram and Twitter were recorded as being the most popular forms of social media used by the respondents. This is supported by ADWEEK (2016) that presented statistics of 320 million users in 2016 and expected those figures to keep growing.

The question ‘do you follow the events you have attended on social media?’ received a collective response from both groups, with all participant’s agreeing that they do follow those events. The majority of the participant’s specified that they follow the events social media pages, for example on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram prior to attending and post event in order to receive notifications of future events and line ups as information is released. One response stated:

‘The line up is the most important part for me, even if it is only one act I want to see and I like to be the first to know about it – it gives me a buzz, especially when it is someone I have not seen before. The year The Red Hot Chilli Peppers performed at Reading, that created such a buzz on social media when it was announced, everyone was excited.’

Following this response, the researcher asked both groups ‘do you engage with music festivals on social media?’ which developed a mixed response. Approximately half of the respondents
engage with social media before the event. Whereas other respondents engage with social media during the festival period. From this, the researcher is able to identify that the engagement on social media is significant both prior to the event and during the event so that customers are able to access the information they need such as line ups, site map and event specific details and is not used as a way of experiencing the event virtually.

Figure 2: As social media users, what type of posts would you engage with?

Figure 2 shows the type of posts the participants typically engage with on social media, including; line up and announcements, photos/videos of past events, competitions, tickets and event countdowns. The majority of participant’s stated that they engage with line ups and act announcement, in particular the announcement of a headline act.

‘It’s the anticipation of waiting to find out who is headlining that is exciting and Reading doing that very well through social media, with a countdown and they create quite a build up on the radio where it is first announced.’

Photos and video content, including previous festival clips were also some of the most popular posts. It is not surprising that posts involving photos/videos were one of the most commonly engaged with, since the majority of the participants had previously discussed that they are users of Instagram. Instagram is now the number one social media platform for photos (Sammis et
The purpose of the app is to broadcast content visually for the followers and other online users to see, for this research the content that attracts the participants is the showcasing of an events products/services through special imagery and videos that are original to that event. Sammis et al. (2016) continues to acknowledge that some of the best Instagram feeds are those that capture snapshot moments, these moments can be captured by both attendees and event organisers and posted online for others to either share the experience or attract them. The researcher believes these posts create a buzz and are informative to those who have not attended before – they represent the festival and provide a glimpse of the festival before attending. In addition to that, one of the participant’s said they engaged with social media posts that involved competitions.

‘Competitions are always something me and my friends get involved in, why not, nothing to lose.’

The participants were presented with an example of social media activity used by Reading Festival as part of their marketing activities for their upcoming 2018 festival (shown in appendix 4), the Facebook post is presenting the first line up for the festival – providing the audience with a list of acts. The interviewer asked the participants how they perceived it? One respondent stated:

‘The use of colours and images draws me to that, it would stand out to me if I was scrolling through my Facebook page.’

‘What I like about music festivals is that they give what their audience want. I mean there is obviously some sort of build up on social media because they want to hype it up, it creates a buzz and people will ultimately start talking about it over all social media platforms. And it’s clever because they give enough away in their first act announcement for the majority of people will buy tickets straight away, before waiting to hear who else is performing.’

‘Lets be honest, the bigger music festivals like Reading and Glastonbury don’t struggle to sell tickets. People might only like one act from the whole line up but still pay all that money to go. I’m not sure if that’s something to do with the experience and the festival itself? Or their love for that one act?’
In terms of marketing and promotion, content such as the one observed here are designed to catch the attention of the audience and the content is created to share and engage with. By the effective use of bright colours that reflect the style and branding of the event, the promotional material can be easily recognised and associated with the brand image and logo. According to Smith and Taylor (2004, p. 554) “colour affects perception” in this instance the image has portrayed a positive perception for the potential consumers. It is clear from the first focus group that the participants were more interested in the content put out on social media by the organisations. This can be supported by Deloitte and Touche’s “The State of Media Democracy” Report, found in Tuten (2008) that reports approximately 51% of online users observe the content put out by others online, with an even higher percentage reported as younger users. Both the imagery and language of the content used in social media marketing is knowingly assessed by customers to evaluate the extent in which the event will potentially fulfil their needs and desires, these presumptions will in turn impact on their decision whether to attend or not. According to Barker et al. (2012) the effectiveness of photo sharing is overlooked in terms of social media marketing, however, is growing in use due to the features now available on social media sites, that are interlinked between the personal devices of the customers and organisations.

The discussions within the second focus group focused more on the actions of other people. For example, the comments that other attendees were saying surrounding the line up announcement and how many people were interested in going to the event. One respondent stated:

‘It is just interesting really, to see how many people have clicked going on the event page. If a music festival only had 50 potential attendees, I would be concerned.’

Consumers are now spending more time on social media, hence their purchasing decisions and behaviour and often reflected by the interactions they have had with other online users and influencers (Hudson and Hudson, 2017). The moderator asked if any of the other participants were interested in the number of people interested in an event on Facebook, or the number of likes and shares an event has received; many of the respondents hesitated with their response. The researcher believes that the participants seemed to understand the idea and intention of
social media for uses by both individuals and organisations for marketing purposes, however it became clear that they themselves did not realise how significant the influence of social media had on their own decision making process until they were questioned about it. In relation to the term influencer, it is not only social media that plays a part in influencing customers, it is the people on social media that impact on another’s views, opinions and perceptions. The internet has altered the way people communicate and interact (Hudson and Hudson, 2017) meaning the traditional methods of promotion are seen to be less effective than social media marketing.

4.2.3 Consumer Buying/Decision Making Process:

Lantos (2015) suggests a consumer is someone who purchases a product that will satisfy their own personal needs and wants. McKinsey & Co (2016) developed a model of new consumer decision making and the journey they go through. The model suggests that the stage of evaluation is extended, as consumers are able to reach out to organisations and similar events to capture a glimpse of what they offer, often through imagery and the marketing content published on their social media pages. It is therefore important for the researcher to consider how social media has altered the way consumers engage with events online and the extent social media has on connecting the awareness of an event through to the purchasing and attendance. It should be noted that after the purchase has been made, consumers often take to social media to share their experiences with others and allow relationships to form by liking, sharing and interacting with social media activity. It is through the sharing of experiences that have an impact on an individuals buying decision, McKinsey & Co cited in Hudson & Hudson (2017) suggests that approximately 50-60% of customers look on social media for recommendations of products. Based on the comments made, the consumer will weigh up the pros and cons and reflect before making a decision.

The discussion surrounding the consumer’s decision making process began with the researcher asking how the participants typically hear about music festivals. The responses predominately reflected that social media was the primary platform for promotional activity.

‘I would say social media. I use it everyday so it’s the first thing I see and my friends are usually sharing the events they are interested in.’
‘I’m the same, I don’t have time to look elsewhere so it’s probably the easiest way for me to find out about these things.’

On reflection this is an important influence on the decision making process, the use of social media has many benefits to the consumer as they are able to easily access information based on their individual needs and wants, especially when it is presented in a way that captures the attention of the consumer. Followed by word of mouth that was also a popular means of finding out information. According to Blythe (2013) an organisation’s marketing efforts tend to have a direct impact on a consumer’s buying behaviour. The following questions, including ‘at what stage do you make the decision to attend an event?’ aimed to gather information regarding the pre-purchase behaviour of the participants, looking specifically at the process of researching for specific information regarding the event, before making a decision to attend. A common theme among these questions were that many participants had generally made the decision to attend the event prior to undertaking any research. A number of the participants acknowledged they undertake some general research before purchasing the ticket, this involved information regarding the price of the ticket and the line up.

‘Normally I have already decided I want to go so once I have double checked the details when they are released online, I will purchase a ticket.’

The availability of information is found to have an impact on an attendees’ emotions and consumer buying behaviour (Kitterlin and Yoo, 2014). Surprisingly, this shows that many attendees have already made a conscious decision to attend the event before taking into account marketing activities, this stemmed from the element of already being aware or told about the festival, or if they had previously attended it so the need to search for information was not necessary. The participants discussed that they use various social media platforms both prior and post decision making process, in order to obtain event specific information. Facebook, similarly to Twitter and Instagram allows users to post frequently, however, unlike other social media sites, Facebook groups comments into a timeline (Sammis et al. 2016) providing a platform for discussion in an event specific context. The ability for the participants to search for an event on Facebook, find the information and in most cases directed to the website where
a purchase can be made, suggests that the influence is present from the start of a consumer’s decision making process, through to the end, and is therefore continued.

The information provided on social media platforms was identified as one of the most important aspects in relation to the participant’s decision to attend the event or not, with one participant stating that ‘if the information is not clear and easily accessible then it puts me off’. It was made clear that the process of purchasing was made easier if connected to social media streams, for example when booking the tickets to the event.

4.2 Chapter Review

In order to understand the motivations fully, the researcher asked both groups if the motivations they had discussed throughout the focus groups would also influence their decision not to attend an event. The majority of the participant’s in both focus groups responded yes to this question. Those that responded, surprisingly indicated that the decision to not attend would be based on more than one factor:

‘If the festival experience was not great and cost a lot then I would not look to go back.’

By both the analysis conducted of the results of both focus groups, the data was able to identify the key factor for motivations and the significance they have on an individual’s decision to attend an event or not. The researcher believes that this data was able to support the literature explored in Chapter 2 and answer the research questions set out at the beginning. The following chapter will look further at the data collected and reflect upon the research to provide answers to the objectives set for this research project.
5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Throughout this final chapter, the author will reflect on the research conducted, drawing conclusions from the primary data collected in order to summarise the findings based on the aims and objectives set out at the beginning of the project. The aim of the research project was to evaluate the motivations surrounding event attendance at music festivals and the influence social media has on the decision to attend. The researcher was able to identify key literature and studies related to motivation and event attendance that assisted in producing a list of questions which were presented to two focus groups to further the research. The focus groups were successful and the researcher was able to gather information that was appropriate to the study. Finally, recommendations for further research will be made and the limitations of this study will be briefly discussed.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The key findings from both focus groups showed that nearly all participants had attended a music festival in the past year and the most important factor in terms of them attending that festival was the experience. It was evident that the majority of the festivals they had attended had provided them with a satisfying experience and therefore many of the participants had attended the same festival more than once and consider this factor to be one of the most important. Therefore, the findings show that offering customers/attendees something that they believe will satisfy them is necessary, however it is not enough to ensure they attend the event and return again. The customers must believe that what they want is what they will get – this is where social media plays a part in providing a platform to broadcast through imagery, videos and experiences.

Another finding that became clear throughout the process was that the majority of participants preferred to attend such events with their friends, or a large group of people instead of going on their own. It was not surprising that it was identified as one of the main motivators for attendance, since it had been largely explored in previous studies conducted on festival attendance. The idea of enjoying the festival experience with friends and socialising appeared to be a more significant motivating factor than a factor such as the artists, however, this was still considered an important factor in terms of motivation to attend a music festival.
In relation to the introduction, where it was stated that the use of social media is growing and therefore has the potential to influence new and existing customers – with the data collected from this research and the interpretations of the results, it can be said that the extent of social media is greatly influencing potential customers and their decision on whether to attend an event or not. It was apparent throughout the study that it is not only the image of an organisation and how they portray themselves on social media through their marketing techniques, but more so greatly influenced by the interest of other attendees and their experiences that they are able to broadcast on social network sites.

5.2 Limitations

It would have been beneficial to look specifically at certain music festivals, using case studies to identify the numbers of attendees since social media use, to identify if there is a correlation between the marketing efforts of the organisation, their following on social media and the event attendance. Researching whether the number of attendees has increased or not since marketing and engagement on social media streams was difficult without the collection of primary data from organisations – for this specific information, interviews could have been conducted with event organisers to gather relevant and up to date statistics.

In addition to that, nearly all participants had only attended festivals within the UK, therefore the motivating factors that influence their decision to attend a festival were limited. It is possible that the motivations would be varied between those who attend local and UK based festivals, to those who travel abroad to such events, based on the varying ‘hygiene’ factors previously discussed.

5.3 Recommendations For Future Research

The literature focuses more on social media as a marketing tool and the ways in which organisations are engaging with their customers via social media platforms. The findings of this study provides data that is important for the future in terms of social media use and the influence it has on potential customers. With the continuing use of social media, and the expansion of apps and features that allow customers to engage with events online, that has been
found to be a significant motivator for event attendance, further research could aim at looking specifically at the external factors that influence a customer’s decision whether to attend the event or not. It is clear that the area of social media has been given less attention in relation to influencing potential attendees to attend an event. Recognising the importance of social media and how the impact of other social media users as ‘influencers’ online is influencing both organisations and customers, since it is the influencers that are emerging who have the potential to steer customers away from marketing activities. Therefore, further research should be conducted in relation to the psychological and social factors surrounding consumer activity online.

The discussions surrounding experience created an assumption that events have the potential to become virtual through the means of social media. This could have a huge impact on event attendance as it could become more convenient for people to watch the event online, instead of going to it and experiencing it first hand. This is something that festival organisers must take into consideration when creating event content online and ensure they keep a constant engagement with their customers, to avoid shying away behind such sites. However, with the primary motivator identified throughout this search being the event experience, it would seem unlikely that this issue will create a huge impact anytime soon – if people are motivated to attend the event, they will go no matter what.

Furthermore, the results of the research revealed that overall there is a range of motivating factors that should be considered, this suggests that there is often not an individual factor that motivates an individual to attend a music festival. As a result of this, festival organisers must also consider the social and psychological factors, and therefore not rely on factors such as the artists. The organisers should focus their strategies on creating an atmosphere that will not dissatisfy their customers, by creating new experiences and social opportunities.
6.0 Appendices:

List of Appendix:

Appendix 1 – Approved Ethics Application

Appendix 2 – Participant Information Sheet

Appendix 3 – Example Participant Consent Form

Appendix 4 – Focus Group Transcripts

Appendix 5 – Focus Group Support Material

Appendix 6 – TurnItIn Receipt
# Appendix 1 – Approved Ethics Application

## Devolved Ethics Approval Application Summary

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<th>Supervisor Signature</th>
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<td>Participant information sheet</td>
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First Submission: [x]  
Resubmission: [ ]

Date: 24/1/18

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**For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:**

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CSM Ethics Committee Representative:  

Date: 24/1/18  
Date of Reassessment: [ ]

## Outcome:

Project Approved: [ ]  
Reference number issued: 2016-D5378.

Chair’s Action: [ ]

Application not Approved: [ ]

Comments for projects not fully approved:

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The original to be retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader.
In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document Ethics application guidance notes will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

PLEASE NOTE:
Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

PART ONE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of applicant:</th>
<th>Bethan Tucker</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Dewi-Jaimangal Jones</td>
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<td>Cardiff School of Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
<td>ST20093154</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme enrolled on (if applicable):</td>
<td>BA (Hons) Events Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>Exploring the motivations for people ages 18-30 attending music festivals and the role of social media in the decision making process.</td>
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<td>Expected start date of data collection:</td>
<td>01/01/2018</td>
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<td>Approximate duration of data collection:</td>
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<td>Funding Body (if applicable):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<th>Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain</td>
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Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human samples | No
---|---
Practice based not involving human participants (eg curatorial, practice audit) | No
Compulsory projects in professional practice (eg Initial Teacher Education) | No
A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS) | No

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required.
If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form.

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project

This project aims to analyse the motivations for people aged 18-30 attending music festivals. The author will conduct desk research to analyse existing theory on motivation, motivations surrounding music festival attendance, the decision-making process surrounding attending festivals and the role and influence of event organiser social media activity on event attendance. In addition, primary research will be conducted through 2-3 focus groups to gather information on what motivational factors influence individual’s decisions to attend music festivals and the role of event organiser social media activity in the decision process. The results of the research will be analysed and recommendations made as to how social media can be used to influence and encourage event attendees.

DECLARATION:
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework.

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant: Date:

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

Name of supervisor: Date:

Signature of supervisor:
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

Research Ethics Committee use only

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<th>Decision reached:</th>
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Project reference number: Click here to enter text.

Name: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter a date.

Signature: [Signature]

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:
Click here to enter text.

PART TWO

A RESEARCH DESIGN

A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project? No

A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used\(^1\)
N/A

A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project

Focus Groups:
- The researcher aims to gather information on motivations for event attendance and the influence of social media activity on event desirability, decision making and attendance.
- The opportunity for participants to express their opinions and discuss freely will allow the researcher to gather specific information.
- Participants will be prompted with questions, examples and images of social media activities to encourage a discussion.
- The focus group will be audio recorded by the researcher and will be approximately an hour in duration.

Sample:
- A sample of 5/6 participants per focus group.
- Participants will have attended one or more festivals in the past year, so they are familiar with the topic being studied.
- Participants must also be social media users and at least have Facebook accounts.
- The sample will include participants between the ages of 18-30 that represent the target audience for this specific research.

Participants:
- The researcher will only record the age of the participants and no other information that will make them personally identifiable.
- All participant quotes will be anonymous in the research write up and analysis of results.

\(^1\) An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

Analysis:
- As the research conducted will be qualitative data from the focus group, the researcher will observe impressions and analyse the recording of the data collected to help support the overall research findings through thematic analysis.

Consent:
- Participants will sign a consent form prior to any research to allow use of anonymous quotes throughout the research process.
- Recordings will be stored on password protected devices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE
B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?
The researcher has experience in involving human participants throughout their time in sixth form where they completed the Welsh Baccalaureate Independent Study – the project required both primary and secondary research, including a questionnaire that was carried out online.

In addition to this, throughout their time at Cardiff Met University, the researcher has conducted market research to help with the planning of events and starting up a business. The research that was conducted gave specific results that could be analysed and contributed to determining the wants and needs of the consumer.

B2 Student project only
What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?
Past experience of supervising student projects both at Undergraduate and Post Graduate level.

C POTENTIAL RISKS
C1 What potential risks do you foresee?
Focus Group:
- Participants might become anxious within the group setting about what is being talked/written about. This may result in disorderly or aggressive behaviour towards both the researcher and other participants.

- The participants may not want to answer questions that are confidential or personal.

- There is potential for a single participant to take over and therefore prevent the other participants from speaking out.

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?
Focus Group:
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

- All data collection will be conducted, when appropriate, on the Cardiff Met site in a private meeting room in order to protect both the researcher and participants personal safety. When this is not feasible, a public location will be decided and the researcher will give notice of all meeting details to a friend prior to the meeting and will make contact again after the meeting.
- The researcher will ensure they carry a mobile phone with them at all times when conducting the research, so that if a potential risk did occur then they are able to contact someone.
- All participants will receive project information and a consent form prior to conducting any research to ensure they are fully aware of their rights as a participant before agreeing and signing.
- All participants will be notified that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.
- Resources will be used to prompt discussion and allow all participants to contribute.

When submitting your application you MUST attach a copy of the following:
- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)
- An exemplar information sheet and participant consent form are available from the Research section of the Cardiff Met website.
Appendix 2 – Participant Information Sheet

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Motivations for attending music festivals

Cardiff Metropolitan University Protocol Number:

Project summary

The purpose of this research project is to understand the motivations for attending music events and the role social media has in influencing the decision to attend. Your participation will enable the collection of data which will form part of a study being undertaken at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you fit the profile of the audience being studied; you are between the ages of 18 and 30, attend music festivals and are a social media user.

During the focus group you will be asked questions regarding your previous event experiences in terms of why you chose to attend specific events and to examine a number of social media activities and give your opinion on these.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Project risks

The research involves the participation in a focus group interview that will be recorded for later analysis. We are not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you. We do not think that there are any significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that any of the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the study at any time – we will completely respect your decision.

How we protect your privacy

All the information you provide will be held in confidence. We have taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location by the research team. When we have finished the study and analysed all the information, the documentation used to gather the raw data will be destroyed except your signed consent form which will be held securely for 5 years. The recordings of the focus groups will also be held on a password protected device during the study and destroyed.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

Application for ethics approval v6 October 2016
Appendix 3 – Example Participant Consent Form

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Reference Number:
Participant name or Study ID Number:
Title of Project:
Name of Researcher:

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

4. I agree to the focus group being audio recorded.

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.

6. I agree not to reveal any personal information or details about others in the focus group.

______________________________
Signature of Participant

______________________________
Name of person taking consent

Applicant for ethics approval v6 October 2016

* When completed, 1 copy for participant & 1 copy for researcher site file

Signature of person taking consent

Applicant for ethics approval v6 October 2016
Appendix 4 – Focus Group Transcripts

Focus group 1

Molly, Charlotte, Katie, Sian, Hanna

Moderator: Afternoon all, so I would just like to start by saying thank you very much for coming and participating in this focus group, it is much appreciated. As you know, I am currently writing my dissertation and this focus group will be a huge contribution to the research. The discussion is open for each of you to give your opinions and feelings, so please do not be afraid to be honest and ask any questions, especially if you do not understand. Last thing to note, this discussion will be recorded and used only for this research project, is that okay with everyone?

Everyone: Yes that’s fine
*Nods in agreement*

Moderator: So, let’s begin. Briefly outline your most recent music festival experience, which festival it was, who did you go with and what was the most influential factor in your decision to attend that specific festival?

Katie: The last festival I attended was Boomtown with my boyfriend. It just looked like such a cool festival and we had always wanted to go.

Charlotte: Uh, I think Reading was the last festival I went to with my best friend but we knew other people who would be there that we met up with. We had been a few times before and enjoyed it so wanted to go back.

Sian: I haven’t actually attended a music festival in a few years, but the last one I went to was Reading because a group of friends were going.

Hanna: That’s the same as me, I went the same year as Sian did with the same group of people.

Moderator: What about you Molly?

Molly: Last summer I went to Board Masters in Cornwall with my family, we hadn’t been to one before and we love Cornwall so it seemed like the perfect location.

Moderator: How many music festivals have you been to altogether?

Charlotte: I have been to 3, but like I said before I have attended Reading a number of times now.

Katie: I have also been to 3

Molly: Just the 1

Sian: 2

Hanna: Same

Moderator: Would you usually return to the same festival again, or do you prefer to seek out new experiences?
Molly: This was my first festival and I would go back but I would also like to try different ones

Katie: Yes, but I do like to try different types of music festivals, based on the genre of music etc

Sian: I had a bad experience that put me off going back to the festival again. It was my first festival experience so I was nervous anyway but the atmosphere whilst watching the performances was not what I expected. I think for my first festival, it was too big and it was obvious people were there for other reasons than to just watch the acts, which is fine, they get their enjoyment from other things. But it made me feel uncomfortable and uneasy the whole time I was there. I’ve not returned to that specific festival but I have attended others since and they were a lot more chill which made the experience so much more enjoyable.

Hanna: Prefer not to follow the crowd so will see what else is out there but I have been to the same festival again

Moderator: Ok. Would you say you attend music festivals more than other events?

Katie: I have attended quite a few music concerts but I prefer the whole experience of a festival.

Charlotte: I agree, I think festivals offer so much more than just the music. Especially Latitude, I went there not really knowing what to expect and it was a whole different experience to anything I had been to before. That’s what I liked most about it, would definitely say it’s unique.

Moderator: So your motivations to attend a music festival are different to other events?

Charlotte: Yes I’d say so, I find the location of the concerts are always limited and not easily accessible for me and I don’t see the point in spending all that money on transport to watch someone for a couple of hours. It usually costs me more to get there than the ticket costs me.

Hanna: Festivals are definitely worth the money compared to other music events.

Participants: All agree

Moderator: So, would you say you attended those events based on your personal feelings? Or external factors? For example location, price etc.

Katie: It is usually personal to me because it depends on the artists I want to see, but factors such as cost and location are obviously important too.

Charlotte: um.. I’m not sure, it depends really

Molly: Attending events to me are based on my personal preferences, otherwise I won’t enjoy it.

Sian: Probably when I was a bit younger I would attend an event based on how I felt at that time. It’s probably the same now but I do take into consideration the factors around me
Moderator: In your opinion, how significant are the following factors in motivating you to attend music festivals? The experience, artists, location, size, price, or if your friends are going?

Sian: The experience is the main factor, after that I would say if friends are going, price and location are important.

Katie: To me, the artists are what draw me to certain festivals and I think the style of music at the festival plays a part in the experience.

Charlotte: I’d say the whole event experience is what is most important to me but I am a student so I want to be sure it is worth the money I pay.

Hanna: It is important that I know people who are going, I wouldn’t go on my own, but again location is important to me.

Molly: Compared to the girls I am an unexperienced festival goer, but the idea of being away from everyday life and chilling out with friends, listening to your favourite music and not really worrying about life, which as a student is essential. That is what intrigues me about festivals and is the reason I am motivated to attend more festivals.

Charlotte: I can understand that, as a student, and I’m sure it is the same as those of you who work full time, the chance to take a break from that revives me. It’s the reason I look forward to the summer holidays so much, festival season takes me to my happy place where I can be carefree and get away from work and people who bring me down.

Moderator: That is interesting. A few of you said earlier that you usually attend festivals with a group of friends, if they did not want to go, would that prevent you from attending?

Hanna: Yes definitely.

Sian: Ye I agree.

Katie: Not so much friends, but I wouldn’t want to go on my own. Just recently I had to sell a festival ticket actually because a work colleague decided not to go and I didn’t think the experience would not be the same without her.

Charlotte: I would probably only go with friends.

Moderator: Could you explain your reasoning for that?

Sian: It isn’t the same going without friends.

Hanna: I agree, festivals are not events you go to by yourself because there when you aren’t watching a performance, what would you do?

Moderator: Do you not think some people go to them on their own to meet new people?

Hanna: We met people when we went but again they were a big group of friends too and we all hung out for the weekend, it was a laugh. I wouldn’t be surprised, maybe that’s for some people but not me.
Molly: I agree with Hanna, I think the whole festival experience is about socialising with friends in a way you wouldn’t be able to at home.

Moderator: Would you agree that the motivations discussed earlier could also influence your decision to not attend an event?

Participants: All said yes

Moderator: Okay thank you, so how do you usually hear about music festivals?

Charlotte: Well I mean, the Reading festival I had just heard about as it’s quite popular and I know a lot of people who had already been to it.

Sian: Through people who have been before

Katie: I follow a lot of events on social media so I am inundated with posts.

Molly: Through social media mainly

Hanna: Friends and social media

Moderator: In fact that brings me on to my next question actually, do you follow events on social media? If you do, which social media sites?

Katie: Yeah that is the easiest way for me to access the information. I use Facebook and Instagram the most. I use those because I can follow the events and artists I am interested in, not just for information about the festivals, but I am intrigued in them personally. And I upload a lot on social media so it allows people to follow me who are interested in what I do and where I go, they are able to share the experiences with me.

Charlotte: I follow the events I have already attended and events I would like to attend. The main social media sites I probably use are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Molly: I don’t follow many events on social media, but when there is a popular end on I will search for tags and the little location on Instagram to see the pictures other Instagram users have uploaded at the event. It amazes me that you are able to do that and they often show the event in a different way.

Others: Yes, mainly on Facebook and Instagram.

Moderator: Do you use it frequently?

Participants: Yes, all the time.

Moderator: What exactly do you follow? Is it the event page itself of the performers?

Charlotte: The line up is the most important part for me, even if it is only one act I want to see and I like to be the first to know about it – it gives me a buzz, especially when it is someone I have not seen before. The year The Red Hot Chilli Peppers performed at Reading, that created such a buzz on social media when it was announced, everyone was excited.
Molly: I follow both, I think the thing that influences me most are other users online. Especially if a celebrity is attending an event, I want to be there too. I will follow their social media streams to feel like I am experiencing the same thing as them. It’s a bit odd when you think about it but I think that is the way apps like Instagram are going.

Moderator: Have you usually made the decision to attend an event before searching for information about it?

Katie: In many situations yes because I know what I am expecting from previous experiences.

Moderator: When would that be different?

Katie: If I am interested in going to a new festival

Charlotte: I agree, I think it is important to look for information first

Sian: I have usually made the decision to attend based on what my friends are doing and if they are going then I am going.

Moderator: At what point do you make the decision to purchase a ticket?

Charlotte: Once I know my friends are definitely going

Katie: As soon as the line up is released, since that is probably one of the main motivator for me

Sian: I will probably do some more research into the event and compare it to any others I am interested in at the time

Moderator: As active social media users, what types of posts would you engage with?

Hanna: Past videos and photos as it gets me excited for the festival

Katie: I don’t really engage with the posts, but I will pay more attention to the line up than other activity

Charlotte: I agree with Katie

Molly: I do enjoy getting involved with events online so I will like and share posts that interest me, they usually involve some sort of imagery.

Moderator: How do you perceive this?

Sian: The use of colours and images draws me to that, it would stand out to me if I was scrolling through my Facebook page.

Katie: I feel like the people who react to that post are people who have been waiting and anticipating the line up. Lets be honest, the bigger music festivals like Reading and Glastonbury don’t struggle to sell tickets. People might only like one act from the whole line up but still pay all that money to go. I’m not sure if that’s something to do with the experience and the festival itself? Or their love for that one act?

Charlotte: The post itself attracts me and draws me in, and I can see a number of acts I would love to see. I think if it was going to have any impact on my decision to attend or not, then
I would probably look at the likes and review the comments made on the post to see others opinions about the line up. If people don’t think it is good then that might change my opinion.

Moderator: If that is everything, then I think we are done, thank you for participating.
Focus group 2

Jack, Will, Tom, Connor, Meg

Moderator: Hi guys, thank you for coming today. As you probably already know, because I am sure I talk about it all of the time - I am currently writing my dissertation and this focus group will be a huge contribution to the research. The discussion will be surrounding the motivations to attend events, particularly music festivals and then there will be some questions regarding social media. It is open for each of you to give your opinions so please do not be afraid to be honest and ask any questions, especially if you do not understand. Finally, just to say that the discussion will be recorded and used only for this research project, is that okay with everyone?

Moderator: So, briefly outline your most recent music festival experience, which festival it was, who did you go with and what was the most influential factor in your decision to attend that specific festival?

Tom: My most recent festival was Glastonbury, I went with 4 of my mates, it was my first festival and I wanted to attend it due to the line up of artists and it was one to tick off the bucket list.

Meg: Glastonbury with my boyfriend and another couple, we have been to a few festivals together and for the same reason as Tom, it was one we had always wanted to do and was a bigger festival compared to the ones we had previously been to.

Jack: Reading with mates, I had been before and it was a class experience

Connor: Same as Jack

Will: I went to Reading with friends, the line up was so good and it was my final summer as a student so I wanted to make the most of it before I had to start working full time.

Moderator: For the rest of you, was your most recent festival experience the first time you had been to that event or have you been before?

Will: I had been to it before

Participants: All agree

Moderator: How many music festivals have you been to altogether?

Tom: Just the 1

Jack: 2

Will: 1

Connor: 2

Meg: 3

Moderator: Would you usually go to the same festival more than once?

Will: Once I know what the festival is I would probably return providing it was a good experience
Tom: I would like to go to different ones, I don’t want to go to the same one each time

Meg: I like to go back to some of the festivals I have been to before, but I probably wouldn’t return the following year, I might wait a few years.

Jack: I have been to the Reading Festival four years in a row now and I am not bored of it.

Connor: I haven’t had the chance to try different festivals because my friends like Jack play it safe and want to go back to the same one but I would like to.

Moderator: What factors encourage you to repeat those festival experiences, and for what reasons might you not go again?

Meg: If I enjoyed the festival I would go again

Jack: It really depends on the line up that year, because I have been a few times now I have seen some acts more than once so for me to go again, the line up would have to be bigger and better

Will: At the moment, due to my circumstances, it would depend mainly on the cost and date of the event. I know most festivals are on around the same time each year but if the ticket price went up then I’m not sure I would want to go again.

Tom: As long as the festival is enjoyable and I know what it is going to be like then I will go back. It’s a mixture of everything really, who is performing, who I would go with and location.

Moderator: In your opinion, what other factors do you think motivate people to attend music festivals?

Tom: The location is probably a big factor for some people, some of the most amazing looking festivals are abroad, especially the ones that are on a beach with guaranteed warm weather, as well as the cost of the ticket. Festivals are often in random places that are not that easy to get to so that might also put people off attending.

Meg: I think music festivals are all about the line up. It’s not often that you get to see some of the biggest names in the industry perform in a small town near you.

Jack: The social aspect of festivals is unlike any other event, people are just free to do what they want and everyone gets along, it’s crazy.

Moderator: A few of you said you usually attend festivals with a group of friends, if they did not want to go, would that prevent you from attending?

Will: I share a different music taste to my friends so probably not, I like to experience the festivals and do my own thing, that doesn’t necessarily mean I will spend time with random people, but I know everyone is there for the same reason.

Jack: More than likely yes

Connor: Yes I definitely would not go on my own

Meg: Ye, unless I know other people who were going to be there
Moderator: Would you agree that the motivations discussed earlier could also influence your decision to not attend an event?

Participants: yes definitely

Will: at the end of the day, if the festival experience was not great and cost a lot then I would not look to go back.

Moderator: Okay, so how do you usually hear about music festivals?

Meg: Tends to be via social media

Will: or word of mouth

Jack: People are always talking about the festivals online

Tom: I would say social media. I use it everyday so it’s the first thing I see and my friends are usually sharing the events they are interested in.

Moderator: Do you often follow events on social media then? If you do, which social media sites?

Will: I use Twitter the most and find the events I follow are good at updating their social media streams

Jack: Twitter is probably my go to social media site too, I feel like the information is to the point on twitter, probably because you only have a certain amount of characters per tweet. But I find Facebook is all up in the air and there is too much going on. If the information is not clear and easily accessible then it puts me off.

Tom: Facebook is my main social media platform and I don’t have time to look elsewhere so it is probably the easiest way for me to find out about these things.

Moderator: What exactly do you follow? Is it the event page itself or the performers?

Meg: I follow both, if I like an artist or band then I will fan girl them.

Tom: Mainly just the event Facebook page, that is always being kept up to date and it has all the information I need.

Moderator: What about when searching for events on social media, what information is important to you?

Jack: I like to know who is going to be at the event, the artists etc

Tom: Location is important to me

Connor: I am quite picky with the style of music I like so the line up is important

Meg: I often read the reviews, comments made on the posts on event pages. They don’t often put me off attending but I like to see how other people are feeling about the festival line up etc.
Moderator: Have you usually made the decision to attend an event before searching for information about it?

Tom: Since I have not attended many festivals, I will definitely do some research before I make a decision to go. Especially if it is a new festival

Meg: I think for festivals that are starting out, and have not got the reputation that an event such as Glastonbury has then yes it is essential to find out information before hand.

Jack: My mind is usually already made up

Will: That is the same for me

Connor: and me

Moderator: Is that because you have already previously attended the festival? Have you heard about it before?

Moderator: At what point do you make the decision to purchase a ticket?

Tom: Once the first headline act has been announced.

Jack: For the past few years I booked my ticket before the acts were all announced but I will probably wait and see who is performing next time as there is no one I particularly want to see at the moment.

Meg: Normally I have already decided I want to go so once I have double checked the details when they are released online, I will purchase a ticket.

Will: I usually browse the event page and from that end up making a purchase

Connor: My friends are not always reliable so we will usually chat about the event and artists and come to a group decision, then one person will purchase the tickets so that we all know we are going.

Moderator: Does social media influence your decision to attend or not to attend?

Jack: I can see how it would, the comments people make and the photos they share of themselves at events. But for me personally it doesn’t influence my decision much.

Meg: As I previously said, I am intrigued what people put online so in some ways that probably does influence my decision without even realising.

Moderator: As active social media users, what types of posts would you engage with?

Tom: Competitions are always something me and my friends get involved in, why not, nothing to lose and they are a bit of fun.

Will: The announcement of acts and pictures or clips of the year before. It’s the anticipation of waiting to find out who is headlining that is exciting and Reading do that very well through social media, with a countdown and they create quite a build up on the radio where it is first announced.
Meg: Usually the event pages, I will click either interested or going to an event and I am interested to see how many people have clicked going on the event page. If a music festival only had 50 potential attendees, I would be concerned.

Moderator: How do you perceive this?

Meg: I can imagine the build up to this post. It’s the anticipation of waiting to find out who is headlining that is exciting and Reading doing that very well through social media, with a countdown and they create quite a build up on the radio where it is first announced.

Will: What I like about music festivals is that they give what their audience want. I mean there is obviously some sort of build up on social media because they want to hype it up, it creates a buzz and people will ultimately start talking about it over all social media platforms. And it’s clever because they give enough away in their first act announcement for the majority of people will buy tickets straight away, before waiting to hear who else is performing.

Moderator: That is everything, thank you again for taking part.
Appendix 5 - Focus Group Support Material

Screenshot of Reading Festival Facebook (2018) Post:

IT'S HERE! Your FIRST #RandL18 announcement! ❤️❤️❤️❤️
https://goo.gl/NePnGz
Appendix 6 – TurnItIn Receipt
7.0 References


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