"Collaborative organization and promotion of social events taking advantage of new media technologies: the case of music festivals and concerts"

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ABSTRACT

Festival theory is intricately connected with a network of theories from event-tourism to sponsorship strategies and service marketing. This thesis completes a research of connected theories as well as a study of technologies applied in the organization and promotion of festivals abroad, whether they are already being implemented or in trial period seeking to examine whether the findings are also valid in the peculiar Greek environment, where the financial crisis has been ongoing since 2010. A qualitative research is conducted in four stages, providing insightful information regarding the Greek festival market. The question posed in this thesis is how the implementation of new media technologies helps further marketing and promotion of music festivals. Upon completing the literature review and the research of social media and other online platforms already being in use, it was decided to set up social media pages and channels for a fictional event. The research introduces the novelty of creating two festival application prototypes for mobiles and smartwatches. No festival in the Greek market has to this time launched an application to serve the needs of attendees. The process was structured upon knowledge gathered by the conducted research and by needs expressed by two music festival producers, organizing the River Party Music Festival and the Rockwave Festival respectively. In order to develop a prototype as close to reality and as efficient as possible, the process of “sector evaluation” was completed.

Keywords: music festivals, technology, festival marketing, festival promotion, mobile applications prototyping
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1. INTRODUCTION

Festivals, as multi-day events, hosting numerous acts and performances have been on the rise for over fifteen years, with new ones appearing annually intensifying the competition and prompting organizers to put greater effort into reaching larger audiences and attracting higher numbers of visitors. Two of the main differences between festivals and one-day-events, and specifically between music festivals and concerts, are the number of days each event lasts as well as the effect of transience characterizing festivals.

Due to the annual occurrence of music festivals, which is not the case with festivals that take place numerous times during a year, the marketing and promotional strategies differ greatly since the promotional cycle takes place on various levels of intensity, building up anticipation and excitement prior to the event, and maintaining a positive feeling of longing and nostalgia. Therefore, marketers do not seek to attract one-time-visitors, but rather form a bond and a relationship of trust with their possible attendees.

The continuous evolution of the technological sector has introduced new technologies affecting numerous aspects of the daily lives of individuals worldwide. The most eminent example has been the rise of new media technologies since the launch of the first social medium not targeting residents of one country only, MySpace in 2003 and the launch of Facebook in 2004 (“Digital Trends”, 2016). Since 2004 social media platforms have evolved, offering much more than chat services to users. Nowadays, social media promote interaction amongst their users in many ways, through sharing self-generated content such as videos, photos and status updates, or even content from other social media and further online platforms creating an interlinked interactive network of information and content flow.

As the daily use of the internet and social media has become an integral part of communication, the marketing and promoting sector have increasingly turned to the use of online platforms to reach their target audiences, creating a new sector of the industry, namely web-marketing. Through web-marketing close and constant contact is enabled, allowing marketers to create a closer relationship with their customers. This has also been the case with event marketing, which is part of the service marketing sector.

Upon researching the undeniable connection of technology and festivals and its implementation in the annual marketing and promotional cycle of foreign as well as Greek music festivals, it became clear that the Greek festival market lacks significantly in terms of technological progress compared to foreign markets. Therefore it was decided to explore the process of developing a mobile application prototype suggesting the next new media technology applied as a tool of reaching
wider audiences, enriching content and increasing each festival’s revenues. Upon completion, the same application was prototyped for smartwatch users taking research one step further.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Historical review & stakeholders

The theory behind festival organization and promotion is intricately connected with a network of theories regarding tourism, sponsorship, economics, logistics, psychology and marketing. Festivals have been given numerous definitions throughout the years, such as one of the fastest growing forms of leisure- and tourism-related phenomena (Gunn, 1994) and (Dimmock & Tiyce, 2001) and still “…an expanding sector of the cultural industry across the world” (Arcodia and Whitford, 2007) years later. As is largely discussed across the festival theory, festivals have pre-existed for a very long time and as mentioned by Frey (1994) already during the 11th century when the French troubadours participated in festivities of the guilds. Nevertheless the market has encountered a new prime during the last decades. The rise of music festival demand during the years after the 2nd World War is attributed to three factors listed by Frey (1994) the rise of the real disposable income, decrease in working times as a result of real growth and the upgrade of and increased numbers of people receiving education. Additionally, at often times, tickets to – classical- music festivals are sold as a unit within the entire holiday-package, resulting in people being “dragged along”. Finally, comparing the relative costs, the exact same amount of money spent on vacation does not seem to have the same monetary value as back at home, as 100$ at home appear to be a lot more than when spent as part of a 1,000$ vacation. As numerous researches have concluded, there are diverse domains of motivation prompting event tourism such as escape, novelty, family togetherness, socialization, excitement, and so forth (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Formica & Uysal, 1996, 1998; K. Kim, Uysal, & Chen, 2002; Lee, 2000; Lee et al., 2004; Mohr et al., 1993; Uysal et al., 1993) cited in (Liatopoulou, 2016). Regarding the organizers’ point of view, there are also factors influencing positively towards dismissing established cultural institutions such as opera houses and concert halls. Festivals have a much lower marginal cost, there is freedom in the decision-making progress and heavy restrictions (e.g. performing artists) are avoided. As aforementioned the decision making progress also comes closer to brainstorming than following strict rules and regulations. This also affects other festival stakeholders such as sponsorship firms and politicians, both taking advantage of the larger and more diverse audience and the higher media attention. The facts mentioned by Frey (1994) have been researched in regard of classical music and date more than two decades back, but are valid to this time.

2.2 Event-tourism theory

As previously mentioned, one theory strongly connected to music festivals is the theory of event-tourism which links tourism with cultural happensings as are music
festivals. As stated by Chang (2006), festivals are increasingly used to benefit the regional tourism and economy, and as further supported by Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003) “Successful festivals can help recreate the image of a place or contribute towards the exposure of a location.” Furthermore, Getz (1997) also suggests that locations benefit from being associated with successful festivals by enjoying an extended tourism season as well as higher numbers and lengthier stays of visitors as festivals may play a decisive role in a location’s destination development. Events are an important motivator of tourism and a prominent figure in the development and marketing plans of most destinations (Getz, 2008). You go because of the music but you get a lot more out of it. Festivals have been considered the fastest growing type of tourism attractions since before 1995 as stated by Mayfield and Compton (1995) as they enhance the destination’s image, enrich the visitors’ experience and contribute to the lengthening of visitors’ stay (Tomljenovic, Larsson, & Faulkner, 2001). The economic effects of their arrival are perceived in the number of visitors, number of overnight stays, utilization of services, expenditure, and so forth. According to Janezco, Mule and Ritchie (2002) some of the reasons prompting regions to organize or support special events as are festivals or concerts, are community revitalization and traveler and visitor attraction during seasons when said location, would not be considered. Further on, Martin, Bridges & Grunwell (2011) count preservation of local culture and traditions as well as leisure opportunities offered (even if just for limited time periods) to the benefits the community enjoys.

2.3 Festival visitor’s demographic profile

Before setting up location for a festival it is of high importance from a managerial point of view to define the demographic profile of the target audience. What are the motives of festival attendance? Are attendees tourists, whether domestic or foreign, or local visitors? As Crompton & McKay (1997) put it, it is necessary for any festival organizer and promoter to determine their motivations for successfully planning event programs and marketing them to the potential future attendees. Determining the type of festival one sets out to organize and subsequently the attendees and their motives is essential to, as Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson (2000) state, choose appropriate performers and furthermore the ideal setting. “What makes festivals distinct is that they are usually held annually and generally have social rather than economic or political aims: getting people together for fun, entertainment and a shared sense of camaraderie. Most festivals create a time and space of celebration, a site of convergence separate from everyday routines, experiences and meanings – ephemeral communities in place and time”. Research by Bowen & Daniels (2005) and Gelder & Robinson (2009), shows that apart from the music choices made by the organizing committee, the atmosphere and chances for general socializing and networking are of the same interest to festival goers.
2.4 Factors of motivation & satisfaction

Further on, according to various researchers, there are several domains of event tourism motivation: escape, novelty, family togetherness, socialization, excitement, and so forth (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Formica & Uysal, 1996, 1998; K. Kim, Uysal, & Chen, 2002; Lee, 2000; Lee et al., 2004; Mohr et al., 1993; Uysal et al., 1993). Dewar, Meyer, and Wen (2001), maintain that the competence to raise the visitors’ enjoyment as well as appeal to and maintain a greater number of visitors also derives from knowledge of their motives. Finally, Lee (2000) concluded that using visitors’ motivation as the prism through which festival markets are to be divided, is helpful for organizers and managers in their goal of guaranteeing visitors’ satisfaction via identifying the strengths and opportunities.

Oliver (1999) mentions that satisfaction takes place in cases where the product is performing better that expected by the consumer which results in repeat attendance and positive word of mouth (Tomljenovic, Larsson, & Faulkner, 2001). According to studies by Tomljenovic, Larsson, & Faulkner (2001) and De Nora (1999), “Music in itself is a powerful tool in shifting energy levels of visitors. It could be seen as an accomplice in attaining, enhancing and maintaining the feeling of excitement. Social experiences and emotions could be shaped by music’s special qualities”, a statement which is further strengthened by Tomljenovic, Larsson, & Faulkner (2001) as they have concluded that fulfillment of latent needs is an indicator of consumer satisfaction. Expressive indicators of satisfaction like the festival’s program and its’ generic features such as tranquility of nature, the beautiful scenery and the physical proximity to a well-known and liked performer which offers the audience’s members an experience they cannot have by simply listening to a certain artist’s recordings back at home, according to Oakes (2003) play a more important role than instrumental satisfaction indicators which are the tangible aspects as in the quality of the walking paths, cleanliness of a wash room and the overall infrastructure. Again it becomes clear how important managerial awareness of the future audience’s demographic profile is. Finally, a critical factor of the visitors’ profiles is whether they are frequent festival-goers or not. According to Schneider and Backman (1996) and Lee et al. (2004), the ones visiting numerous festivals are inclined to have similar motives even when having different cultural backgrounds.

2.5 Music festivals & identity shaping

What all festivals do share is the notion of public celebration (Getz, 1991), and the mutual feelings of euphoria and conviviality and it is that exact feeling that gives the attendees the freedom to immerse themselves into identities contrasting to the one they go by back at home (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000). Haargreaves, Miell and McDonald (2002) state that music is an opportunity for individuals to show their identity, present themselves to their peers, voice their worldview, ethics and values. So as to compose and further on express that certain identity, young people attend different musical events such as concerts and music festivals (Goulding, Shankar &
Elliott, 2001). In contrast to preceding decades, during recent years, individuals are expected to discover their identity in a highly differing world. Music festivals therefore, especially because of spanning over more than one day, offer attendees the chance to connect with the arts, determine and socially integrate themselves (Packer & Ballantyne, 2011). Festivals can provide a forum for creating, mobilizing and rejuvenating both performers and audience (Peterson, 1997). In order though, to fully and completely experience these liberating feelings, they have to be committed and willing to “immerse themselves into festival culture” (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000).

2.6. The effect of transience & the annual promotional cycle

The most important characteristic of a festival, and the one distinguishing music festivals from any other music event such as concerts, is its transience (Gilbert & Lizotte, 1998). Transience has a great effect on the attendees’ psychological aspect which needs to be handled with care by the organizers and promoters in order to work positively towards attracting new visitors, as well as increase revisiting numbers. (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000), state that while events forming local scenes take place on a more regular basis, festivals compensate for their infrequency by their intensity. The excitement and anticipation felt for an upcoming festival would be hard to be maintained if it were to take place more often throughout the year. What is offered at a festival as Reiss (1993) states, is experience and people indulge in nostalgic narration of what new they have experienced and seen after a trip. It is a marketing truism that people do not purchase products or services but the expectation of satisfying a need. Festivals therefore satisfy the need of living something diverse and satisfied attendees of a festival are certain to talk to their circle of acquaintances about it. For festival marketers that is the cheapest and foremost wide-reaching tool nowadays, namely word-of-mouth. Especially nowadays it gets even more intense as one does not even need to reach the phase of nostalgia to share experiences when with the help of social media one can tell people all about his / her experiences almost simultaneously (Moore, 2013). The show-off factor has been very useful for festival organizers.

The characteristic of transience additionally necessitates certain marketing actions and plans from a marketer’s viewpoint. As a festival only occurs once a year, the annual marketing cycle regarding such an event needs to adjust accordingly, resulting in marketing communications between customers and suppliers taking place in varying degrees. Marketing activity, reaches its peak in the last two or three months leading up to the event and of course during it. The rest of the year it is more sporadic and for a few months even non-existent.
2.7 Sporadic marketing

The term sporadic marketing is determined as keeping individuals interested in the event throughout most of the year, updating them on the festival’s news such as upcoming changes in the program and reminding them of the previous years’ installments with videos and pictures. In the last years, many youth music festivals produce a so called ‘aftermovie’ with the best moments of the previous year’s organization like Tommorrowland Festival in Belgium.

![Figure 2.1 Three top results of 'tomorrowland aftermovie', YouTube, 2017](image)

The same practice has been taken up by the marketing team of the River Party Music Festival in Kastoria, Greece. That serves the purpose of not letting the feeling of excitement fade for the past visitors, and awakening the interest of the future ones.

2.8 Web marketing

Apart from sporadic marketing, transient events and especially music festivals require additional marketing techniques in order to increase attendance numbers. Saatchi and Saatchi (2000) state that while arts audiences are very involved with the internet use, very few actually visit arts organizations’ websites. That does not counter the widespread Internet-use since websites are not the only online tool. This forms one of the
main focus points of this paper, as it will be later on discussed and analyzed which additional online platforms serve the promotional purposes of a music festival’s marketing team. Marketers, have only in the past few years started applying the Internet technology innovatively, while adapting their approach in a way to best exploit it. Mainstream marketing as it is used to, differs greatly from web-marketing which is nowadays an indispensable part of service and specifically events and festivals promotion (likewise with arts- and culture-marketing). Services in general are considered a greater risk than goods by purchasers (Murray and Schlacter, 1990) and complex the decision-making process. Since a cultural experience, as attending a music festival, constitutes a service, that characteristic has an impact on the cultural marketing activity (Kotler and Scheff, 1997). There are four mentioned key-attributes to web-marketing: interactivity, pull- and not push-oriented marketing, it is information-based and the size and location of the business are irrelevant. Web-marketing is also used to support already existing marketing strategies such as Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM), which is a shift from transactional marketing, just aiming to increase ticket sales. Successful CRM delivers ‘superior value for the company and also (more efficiently and effectively) for the customer’ as stated by Parvatiyar and Sheth, (2001). The attributes of the multimedia-use online, other than the four key-attributes to web-marketing are responsive use, the retain audience, the cultural integrity, and the profile-building. In the very fluid festival environment, with the appearance of new similar leisure opportunities, the development of the marketing strategies in this direction, acts as a relationship-building tool that according to Colbert (1994) helps meet changing demands and values on the customer side and therefore enabling diversification and competitiveness. To provide the feeling of security, it is necessary of the marketers to create a brand with a solid image or in other words put the organization in a different segment of the market, i.e. create a clearly diversified image from the competitors, and based on that image, form relationships with the customers. Therefore, marketers aim to build brands, to ensure the feeling of trust and at the same time differentiate the services offered from the competition. In order to successfully create that relationship of trust with their consumers (in this case festival and also concert attendees) the promoted service must fulfill certain requirements and most and foremost be qualitative, differentiating itself from other similar ones. According to Tkacznski and Strokes(2005), event quality consists of three factors, namely professionalism, service environment and core product. To keep their visitors longing for the next experience, the managing and subsequently the marketing department have to focus on trust, promptness, support, transaction safety, understanding and accuracy of information; regarding the professionalism aspect. Highly important for the production team overall are the two further aspects of service environment and core product. These are evaluated based on ability, music volume, sound quality, creativity, equipment, on-site cleanliness, crowding, toilets, seating and view.
2.9 Public assistance of music festivals

Public assistance on local festivals, as is the case of the River Party Music Festival in Kastoria, Greece, is used as a tourism strategy, although as stated by Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003) so far many studies have not managed to research how public assistance is transformed into change of local income. If the job placements created by the festival’s occurrence are not covered by locals, then the change of local income is only a “side effect”, owed to the higher visitor numbers on location. In Greece, the municipality of Nestorio in Kastoria has been a part of the River Party Festival since its very beginning. Organizing and funding it exclusively with public expenses until 2010 when private entertainment companies bought the rights for the festival’s co-organization. Up until 2010, all job openings due to and because of the festival, employed local businesses and workers. As the hosting location undergoes a physical expansion requiring land preparation and infrastructure facilities, as well as their preservation, it becomes obvious that the income levels were raised especially during the first years of setting up location. Fortunately for the locals, the entertainment companies that got involved since 2010, kept the deals with the workers and businesses involved up to that time, preventing a potential decrease of local incomes. The tourism industry of Nestorio, also benefits from previously mentioned “side effects” of the festival organization as its’ seven hotel complexes are fully booked almost throughout the year. On the other hand, studying the case of the Rockwave Festival @ Terravibe Park in Malakasa, Greece, the same benefits did not occur as Malakasa is a vast land, outside of the residential area of Athens and the suburbs designed especially to serve the festival’s needs and not cause havoc during the days it takes place. As can be expected, the exposure of locations hosting festivals also bears negative side effects such as pollution, landscape change, ecosystem disruption, traffic congestion, law enforcement costs etc. Though size and type of festival play a major role in the extent to which positive and negative externalities affect each area.

Involvement of the government by public funding and in cultural policy making, in many cases offers practical support and emphasizes on the unity rather the diversity of the community. Furthermore the government provides stability to an otherwise unpredictable festival quality and outcome by supportively enhancing the production team which further results in attracting sponsors who “want a well-defined, high-quality event aimed at specific audience”, The Economist, (1989). Yet corporate sponsorship is of high importance to every organizer as public assistance is not the norm.

2.10 Festival sponsorship, congruence & sponsor recall

Revenue from funding bodies and sponsors relies heavily upon audience growth rate, but with accompanying implications regarding fears of the need to dilute the integrity of the core product, (Oakes, 2003). In Germany, one of the most important art festivals—the Schleswig Holstein Musik Festival— is (title-)sponsored by the region of the same
name. (Walliser, Kacha, & Mogos-Descotes, 2005) Greater congruence has been reported as facilitating outcomes such as sponsor identification (e.g., Cornwell et al., 2006; Grohs, Wagner, & Vstecka, 2004; Johar & Pham, 1999; Rodgers, 2004), positive attitude toward the sponsor (Rifon et al., 2004; Rodgers, 2004), and favorable sponsor image ratings (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2005; d’Astous & Bitz, 1995; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). (Weeks, Cornwell & Drennan, 2008) Statement articulating the sponsor-sponsee relationship may be positive when it comes to recall of sponsorship but the attitude towards said sponsorship may vary. Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan (2008) as well as Rifon et al. (2004), suggest that when consumers perceive that sponsors have commercial motivations they tend to rate those sponsors less favorably, and work by Becker-Olsen and Simmons (2002) shows that if the sponsor’s motive is explained as being well-intentioned, both affective and behavioral responses may be enhanced. Ruth and Simonin (2006) have recently found no difference, however, in audience attitudes toward sponsors who explain their motivations as sales-driven versus those who explain their motivations as goodwill-driven, although these researchers did find that sales-driven sponsor motives were associated with poorer attitudes toward the event. When the sponsor’s Web site was leveraged activationally, participants displayed more favorable attitudes toward the sponsor (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008).

The study has shown that Web sites utilizing sponsorship activation are more effective in promoting favorable attitudes toward the sponsor than are Web sites that are nonactivational, and importantly, that these favorable attitudes can be present well after initial exposure. (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008) Quester and Thompson (2001, p. 34), which was adapted from Meenaghan (1991). These researchers describe sponsorship as “an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity, person or event (sponsee), in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity, person or event by the investor (sponsor).” It has demonstrated that the Internet, despite seemingly being underutilized, can be an effective means for engaging the mass-media sponsorship audience. (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008) Greater sponsor - sponsee congruence is often associated with more favorable marketing outcomes than is lesser sponsor - sponsee congruence (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008). A characteristic example of successful sponsor – sponsee congruence is the case of Amstel beer sponsoring the River Party music festival.
The beer brand has managed after years to be completely immersed into the festival’s feeling and to become intricately connected with it in the minds of attendees, many of whom regardless of not consuming normally said beer in their everyday lives, take preference in it over other alcohol for nostalgic reasons.
Results of a Web site navigation experiment demonstrate that activational sponsor Web sites promote more favorable attitudes than do nonactivational Web sites. (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008) Sponsorship communications can be activational for the event audience while being non-activational for the mass-media audience. (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008) There is a positive relationship between leverage spending and the outcomes. (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008) Information which is memorable may not always be that which is favorable (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008). Sales-driven sponsor motives were associated with poorer attitudes toward the event (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008).

Factors influencing recall can be categorized into five groups: conditions of exposure, product, message, and target characteristics, as well as sponsorship integration. (Walliser, Kacha, & Mogos-Descotes, 2005) In the specific context of a professional tennis event, this study finds that public authorities are more likely to be recognized as sponsors: a) by spectators living in the region (rather than by people living elsewhere b) by younger spectators (rather than older spectators); and c) by spectators most interested in the activity sponsored (Walliser, Kacha, & Mogos-Descotes, 2005) The first major result from this research is that public authorities are accepted by people as sponsors. So, for example, their support is understood to be beneficial for a region in terms of image (e.g. improvement of perceived attractiveness of the region) and awareness. (Walliser, Kacha, & Mogos-Descotes, 2005) The link between a music festival and a given scene can grow tenuous when commercialization is prominent (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000). Regarding corporate sponsorship it is

Figure 2.3 “The Amstel corner”, 38th River Party Music Festival, 2016
important not to alienate the core of the festival (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000). Vans Warped Tour’s sponsors employ marketing strategies to engage participants in highly commercialized activities. Strategies: innovative web design, e-marketing, streaming radio & live concert webcasts.(Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 1000).

2.11 Music festival types according to size, budget and line up

Finally it is essential to mention that music festivals are not only divided according to music genre as is well-known but also according to their size and budget. As is to be expected, large-scale music festivals are leading across the world, but there is a relatively new festival type, here to cover a festival market niche, namely boutique festivals. Boutique festivals surfaced by a need to reinvent the pre-existing large-scale festival model (Culham, 2016). With the skyrocketing prices of DJs and performers, mid-scale festivals struggle to compete with larger ones, able to afford top names and greater locations. In contrary, boutique festivals cater to a unique audience, seeking to feature less known artists but focus on offering an exceptional experience at a beautiful, natural scenery and surrounding when possible, or focusing on community engagement or genre-specific audience creating more intimate experiences (Culham, 2016). According to (Moore, 2013), the secret lies in putting like-minded people together and creating a feeling of inclusion and being part of something special. And while the rise of smaller-scale or as termed boutique festivals began as a British phenomenon it has been nowadays spread worldwide. What all boutique festivals have in common is their effort to accentuate the unique (Chapple, 2017). Port Eliot Festival in the St.Germans, Cornwell focuses greatly on location, offering site specific activities in the castle as well as the surrounding areas,

![Figure 2.4 (Port Elliot Festival, St. Germans, Cornwell, 2014)](image)

while Kendal Calling in Kendal, Great Britain aims to offer the complete experience mixing music with movie screenings and other additional activities such as the
children’s theatre seen in the following image, good cuisine, literature and decent toilets and washing facilities.

One of the boutique festivals’ main strategies has been reconfiguring events so as to have them bee more family-friendly as the generation participating in the latest festival boom grows older and people start having families and therefore paying attention to improved quality in features like hygiene, infrastructure and food (Chapple, 2017).

These 9 chapters complete the festival theory review. It becomes ever so clear that festival production and promotion are interconnected with numerous theories from various socioeconomic fields constituting them a multifaceted aspect of the live event sector.
3. MUSIC FESTIVALS AND TECHNOLOGY – PROBLEM DEFINITION AND PROJECT MOTIVATION

As technology is advancing rapidly, no sector is left untouched. With festivals being one of the fastest growing event markets, there are numerous technological advances that have been used or could be used once fully developed in the festival organizational and promotional processes. As Hardwell has stated, “Technology has grown to play one of the most important roles in the festival experience. From lighting to visuals to live streams, it has added an entirely new dimension to live performances.”

3.1 Near Field Communication (NFC)

Starting first with a not so new technology, NFC (Near Field Communication) is a system net technology that has already been used for many years in access cards, prepaid transportation cards (e.g. Japan), credit cards and more ("What is NFC Technology?", 2017). Use of NFC technology on festival grounds would serve a multitude of purposes. Numerous android phones are already equipped with the technology (Strickland, 2017), but even if not, you can easily make use of it by purchasing a NFC tag online at very affordable prices. Use of NFC technology translates into easy money transactions and exchange of information (Pap, 2017). Putting it to use on festival grounds would make money transactions safer as one is able to charge a certain sum of money on his Google Wallet account for example, and leave credit cards and other personal items at the safety of their home. Additionally, posters with NFC tags attached to them could easily provide the needed information to a festival’s visitors by simply bringing their phones in contact with them.

3.2 Wearable tech wristbands

Since 2013 already, San Francisco’s Outside Lands festival attendees (Houser, 2017), as well as TommorowLand and TommorrowWorld festivals and Counter Point music fest visitors were completely cashless (Rubinstein, 2017). Attendees’ tickets came in the form of “wearable tech” wristbands that were used for transactions of all kinds (Wilson, 2017) and the holders were able to sync with the ones around them via UHF radio frequencies when pressing the bracelets’ heart-shaped button at the same time. The festivals’ cloud servers have the wearers’ personal data each visitor stated at the time of registration, stored inside and upon syncing of two bracelets, the servers process that information (Kaur, 2017). This way each person gets sent an e-mail with the other’s Facebook profile link. In 2012, Bonnaroo festival, in collaboration with Intellitix, provided its 74,000 attendees with RFID technology wristbands (Intellitix,
Via RFID access control portals, every holder was validated fast and effortlessly. Additionally, said wristbands, connected with a number of other apps such as Spotify, providing additional services, resulting in an intense social media interaction, with 250,000 live clicks, 20,000 photos posted, 1.9 million likes and 1.4 million comments and an online audience higher than 200 million (Intellitix, 2012). Even so, in 2014 this technology was still on trial with a great number of TommorrowLand’s and TommorrowWorld’s visitors stating glitches. Additionally, the bracelets feature remotely controlled LED technology, adding to the visual aspect of the shows being performed on the festivals’ greater stages (Rubinstein, 2017). Lollapalooza festival also featured wristbands instead of printed tickets, allowing them to share their exact location with friends, receiving push notifications and updates and browse social media activity (Archibald, 2017).

3.3 iBeacon micro-location technology
Moving on to the next tech achievement, there is the iBeacon indoor positioning system (“iBeacon”, 2017). This Bluetooth-enabled micro-location technology (Houser, 2017), was launched and enabled in Apple stores at the end of 2013 (Tasarra-Twigg, 2017), has been developed in order to work with iOS 7 devices as a GPS but in restricted areas such as buildings and parks, to provide information, navigation and other notifications (Houser, 2017). Being put into use in festival surroundings such as the Coachella Music and Arts festival did already in 2014, it gives the attendees the chance to immerse themselves in the culture and their surroundings having one less thing on their minds, such as navigating correctly on location (Houser, 2017). As (Kessler, 2017) states, Coachella festival’s organizers, distributed in 2014 the iBeacons on the site, which used combined with the festival’s app provided the users with notifications regarding the event and the location, while it continued to provide all the more services through the years, combining various apps such as the Square Reader with the iBeacon technology enabling Apple Pay transactions in 2016 (Babu, 2017). Regarding privacy concerns, the iBeacon users need to enable their Bluetooth and location settings in order to take advantage of the services offered (Dormehl, 2017), while they are also able to deny any access via their smartphones’ privacy settings. Coachella’s use of the iBeacon, sets an ideal example of how technological advantage comes one step at a time and how making use of one technology available, suggests an opportunity for expansion and delving deeper into the chances of improvement of the overall festival experience.

3.4 Virtual & augmented reality
Another technological aspect, the blending of which into the festival market seems inevitable, is the VR as in virtual reality as well as augmented reality computer technology. The VR technology creates completely immersive experiences, whereas
augmented reality is used to project holograms into the environment the viewer finds himself in (Hillier, 2017). The greatest example of putting augmented reality technology into use on a festival’s location thus far is TuPac’s hologram projection rapping along to Snoop Dogg on the stage of 2012 Coachella (Hillier, 2017).

Numerous tech companies have already released virtual reality headsets such as Google with the Cardboard headset, HTC Vive, Samsung Gear VR, Oculus Rift and Sony Playstation VR. Sony has also collaborated with the famous duo The Chainsmokers in setting up the first “Lost in Music” VR festival experience in January 2017 (Bein, 2017). Coachella has also incorporated the use of VR, teaming up with Google in 2016 and sending out a Google Cardboard VR with every purchased ticket. By downloading the festival’s app Cardboard VR and Gear VR holders were able to enjoy a virtual tour of the festival’s grounds and location, watch interviews and performances of the featured artists and view 360° photos of the festival’s previous installments (Archibald, 2017), whereas the app’s compatibility with Oculus and HTC Vive was still not complete at that point (Cox, 2017).

Creating innovative and rich content is of utmost importance. Festivals, as annual events, have to keep the interest of past, future and potential attendees throughout the year. By offering the opportunity of experiencing the feeling of proximity, or watching an artist directly addressing one through the VR headsets festival organizers are able to keep the feelings of anticipation and “homesickness” which result in important revenue generators since festivals’ incomes rely on that content during the entire year (Archibald, 2017). It is though important for developers as well as festival organizers to keep in mind that VR technologies are best put to use in order to add to the experience instead of distracting the audiences from the live acts. According to the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF) research in 2014, the overall experience and atmosphere was stated by 58% as the main motivation for purchasing a festival ticket (Hillier, 2017), and such is not going to fade away. The example of the “Lost in Music” VR festival experience where the technology was used as to put the attendees in the mental state to get the most out of the live music experience is a great example of putting VR into use without having to upgrade the livestreaming model and of course without interfering at the time of the actual event taking place (Raymer, 2017). VR could also play a major role in including people not able to attend the festival’s site in person or not wishing to mingle, while still enjoying the spectacle from the comfort of their own home (Hillier, 2017). The Lollapalooza festival plans to add a new feature, “VR Karaoke”, which “will allow people at home share the perspective of a performer on stage” (Raymer, 2017).

3.5 Social media platforms & mobile applications
Second to the end but crucial to this section of this paper are social media. The integration of social media use in daily life has inevitably led to companies making
use of it to access current and potential customers and employees, journalists and bloggers as well as the general public ("Social media marketing", 2017). They constitute a crucial part of companies’ and organizations’ digital marketing strategies. Active user integration is at this point of time at its highest levels so far, showing no sign of decreasing despite individual social media sites do suffer a decline (Chaffey, 2017), which emphasizes the need of companies and organizations to engage a multitude of social media instead of focusing on just one.

The following bar graph by (Statista, 2016), provides a clear image of the number of social media users worldwide from 2010 until 2016, projecting until 2020.

![Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2020 (in billions)](image)

As Kosmetatos (2014), states, according to a Google research, already in 2013, 25% of social media users spent between one and two hours online daily and 23% two to four hours each day. At the same time almost 50% of Greeks already used social media sites to get information about cultural events (Kosmetatos, 2014), more than any other online platform. Studies during 2015 have shown a compelling ascend in usage and participation for almost all renowned social media platforms with YouTube reporting of the greatest one (Kassimi, 2015), while it already was the most widespread social medium in 2014, counting 93% of Greek social media users (Kosmetatos, 2015). Facebook ranked second with 82%. In 2015, 50% of the Greek population were active social media users, while 55.2% had a registered account (Kassimi, 2015). The number of existing social media platforms and the various features offered by each one, have enabled companies in reaching their target groups.
They have the opportunity to carefully groom their image to the public as well as incorporate user-generated content such as online comments, product and service reviews, videos, photos etc. ("Social media marketing", 2017), and thus adding credibility to their online but also offline presence. Most of the social media platforms also offer their own built-in data analytics tools featured in their professional and business versions and allow companies to keep up with the statistics of their respective campaigns. Another major benefit offered by social media, which also is true for applications and official websites that are to be discussed further on, is the lack of hardware costs burdening the festival organizers. In contrast to any gadget mentioned previously in this section, the only things needed for a festival promoter to access the great audience offered by the various social media, is for the user to own a smartphone and to have access to an internet connection which are a fraction of the costs of the technologies mentioned above.

As the following column graph by Statista (2017), showcases, for 78% of worldwide social media users, when it comes to accessing social media, their mobile phone is their device of preference.

![Figure 3.2 Social media access worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2016, by device](image)

This conclusion further leads to the analysis of mobile applications or “apps”.

### 3.6 Responsive mobile applications

Running on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets, this software is designed to provide users with services usually offered on a PC ("What is a Mobile Application? -Definition from Techopedia", 2017). These individual applications are programmed to serve a limited function like a game or browsing the web and are
available for the various existing operating systems like android, iOS etc (Viswanathan, 2016). Being distributed for free or for a certain fee, they are to be acquired on the official stores serving every OS such as Google Play Store for Android users and the Apple store for iOS. For a festival, an application serves as the official festival’s website, as the ultimate destination for necessary information regarding the festival, but on mobile and often offering numerous additional features. Glastonbury festival’s official app offered in 2015 a planner, pinning functionality, an easy to navigate interface, the “My Line Up” feature which allowed users to perfectly plan their ideal custom schedule, Facebook connectivity and more ("Music Festival Apps: The Good, The Bad And The Ugly", 2016). The same festival’s app in 2016 was available for free, offering an interactive map that one was able to co-ordinate with the rest of his group, live BBC streaming, a programming guide, music samples and a rolling feed of the festival’s news (Goodson, 2016). This year the Coachella festival offered two separate apps; one official festival app featuring a set of services similar to the ones aforementioned and the VR app which provided users with the opportunity to experience a virtual reality version of the renowned festival ("Coachella Mobile | Coachella 2017“’, 2017). Numerous musical festivals also offer a free app to their attendees, as the official websites state, the Lollapalooza, Burning Man, Tomorrowland, Sziget being prime examples.

3.7 Problem definition: Music festivals and technology in Greece

Upon completing four interviews with the main organizers of two major Greek music festivals and two individuals involved with music festival, concert and event organization it became evident that the music festival industry in Greece, in contrast to foreign countries has been stagnant for the past years. Organizers and marketing teams are struggling to reinvent the market, to reach groups of individuals that have so far not been interested or involved in the greater music events throughout the country and to offer something innovative or more advanced to the already existing pool of visitors. There are numerous reasons to be listed further on so as to gain insight into the lack of innovation in the Greek festival market.

3.7.1 The Greek financial crisis parameter

The first reason is the grave economic situation of Greece during the past years. Greece has suffered significantly from the ongoing financial crisis since 2010 which has had a momentous effect on all aspects of life including the public’s available spending budget. From the festivals and concerts organizers’ side there have also necessarily been made significant cuts from the budgets assigned to organization, promotion, employees’ and performers’ fees. To this day, Greece is the only country member of the Eurozone still subject to a common Eurozone-International Monetary Fund economic regulation and structural reform program (Kalyvas, 2017). The
financial crisis which was fully established in 2010 has put any plants of development in the festival market and broader event marketing on hold, causing all parts involved in organization and promotion to search for ways of accessing their audience and offering a qualitative experience at the lowest possible cost. Festival crowds on the other hand thoroughly research their options in order to reach the decision with the highest value for money factor. This did not pose an issue in previous years as individuals were able to attend multiple events.

3.7.2 The factor of limited performer alternatives in combination with the increasing number of similar events
Nevertheless, the international rise of the festival market has not left Greece unaffected as numerous festivals pop up annually. What does not show any significant signs of changing is the number of people seeking to attend a festival which may amongst other reasons is to be attributed to the lack of variety of line ups and the fact that the usual festival season is during the summer months, creating a plethora of available yet similar events during a short period of time.

As mentioned above, music festivals in Greece, showcase a lack of variety as the majority of them seems to offer the same experience with small altercations. What strongly leads to this lack of variety is the decidedly limited pool of headlining artists to draw from. Renowned artists who pose as headliners are very much the same at a number of festivals each year, therefore not evoking the curiosity of visitors. Combined with the financial crisis factor of limited budgets due to which organizers cannot resolve to booking big headlining acts from foreign countries it is clear that content can only be diversified by choosing from up and coming artists which unfortunately do not have the same draw as already established ones.

3.7.3 The particularity of the Greek population
Once again, keeping under consideration the financial as well as the lack of diversity in line ups it is also important to state that what further holds festival organizers back is the limited size of the population they may draw visitors from. As shown in ("Greece Demographics Profile 2016", 2016), according to the 2016 census conducted the total population of Greece in July 2016 counted 10,773,253 people. From that approximately only 2,485,000 fall in the age gap of 15 – 34 which, according to Mr. Lorris, organizer of Rockwave Festival at Terravibe in Malakasa, Greece, form the target group for festival organizers. That means that only 23.1% of the population falls within the typical target group. 23.1% may come close to one quarter of the population but this still forms less than 2.5 million. Taking away from that number new families, individuals not interested in attending such events, unavailability on event dates, plethora of similarly minded music festivals, lack of appeal and lack of information and or transportation amongst other factors, the pool shrinks significantly.
3.7.4 The particularity of stagnant use of technology

Finally, studying in the first chapter of this paper the wide reaching theories surrounding the festival sector as well as researching technologies whether already being fully implemented at various stages of festival organization or still in the trial period, it became evident that the festival market in Greece lacks significantly in terms of progress specifically in the technological sector which has been intricately and undividedly connected with music festivals throughout their history worldwide. According to the semi-formal interviews conducted during the qualitative research the answers from the experts interviewed, stated the main reason why festival technologies in foreign countries such as Great Britain, the U.S.A., the Netherlands and other leading countries of the festival sector are so far advanced in contrast to the Greek festival and concert market is not solely but mainly financial. Specifically, Mr. Lorris for example, explained that the organizing team has already experimented with the technology of wearable-tech wristbands but the purchase of the additional required technology to secure the system from bugging and crashing when in use posed too high of a cost that cannot be outbalanced by additional revenue. Therefore, and as a combination of the aforementioned contributing factors it was decided to focus on the creation of tools able to fulfill the majority of festival marketers’ needs as well as be able to find use and be actually put in practice under the challenging circumstances the festival market and the general population currently find themselves in. Researching for something with the minimum costs for both sides and with the widest reach possible, it was concluded that an official website, social media accounts on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat and finally an application prove to be the necessary and obvious step forward in the never ending race of using technology for the scope of increasing numbers of new attendees as well as individuals attending the festivals more than one time.

The official website is the number one tool since it constitutes the complete database about everything that regards a certain festival such as location, line up, ticket prices, history, photos, facilities and infrastructure. This responsive webpage is to be linked to every official social media account and most certainly the official festival app. Social media accounts serve for the purpose of advertising, updating followers and members, creating the vital buzz that is crucial to a festival or single event like a concert and of course linking to the official website and resulting in the purchase of a ticket.

Recent research has proven that the vast majority of active social media users access their accounts via their smartphones, making social media an indispensable marketing tool. As clearly stated by Sterling (2016), a dominant 67% of time spent online is on smartphones whether on applications or browsing the web. Adding, online time spent on tablets, the result clearly showcases that users passing their online time on mobile, round up at approximately 80%, (Sterling, 2016). Moreover, the official festival application is not to be used as to attract new followers and future festival attendees
but for two different reasons. Firstly, to keep the interaction and information flow going during the days of the actual event and secondly to provide useful services which will be mentioned in the following sections such as providing fast and easy access to festival info at any point of time.

The ever evolving technological sector brings on the inevitable evolution in every aspect of life. Music festivals have been making use of technological advances for many years, yet in Greece it seems that no significant progress has been made during the last 5 years apart from the integration of social media and further online platforms as promotional tools, as well as refining their use in order to achieve better results. This stands in complete contrast to the foreign festival markets where the rapidly evolving technology is an elementary part. The reasons as listed above are important with the ongoing financial crisis posing the greatest issue at hand.
4. PROJECT ANALYSIS, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Research methodology

In order to gain a better insight on what the most appropriate, accessible and effective strategies and tools for promoting a music festival in Greece are and how these could be optimized and enhanced, a qualitative research was conducted in four different sections. Through the different steps, the music festival target groups as well as their demographics were determined, the marketing and sponsorship strategies with which festival promotional teams go through were analyzed and finally, the marketing tools enabling the completion of these strategies were defined.

As the number of big festivals in Greece is very limited it was decided to focus on the two biggest ones regarding number of attendees and consecutive years of occurring which would be the Rockwave Festival at Terravibe in Malakasa, Greece and the River Party Music Festival in Kastoria, Greece. The research consisted of four different parts. The first step of the research was the case study of the River Party Music Festival in 2016. In order to complete the study, the municipality of Nestorio, Kastoria was contacted via email. The secretary willingly forwarded municipal archives regarding the festival and its history, as well as previous case studies conducted about it. She also answered small, clarifying follow up questions as her presence as secretary of the municipality as well as her being a citizen of Nestorio gave her the knowledge needed. The next step of the research included four semi-structured interviews. Of the four interviews, one was with the organizer of the Rockwave Festival, two with individuals employed at the River Party Music Festival in the past and one with the organizer of the River Party Music Festival to this day. This way the three individuals related to the River Party added to the previously conducted case study of the festival, as well as furthering the completion of the research of the Greek festival market as a whole. Afterwards, the third step of research, involved thorough analysis of official festival websites as well as social media pages and profiles. This procedure did not only involve online platforms of the two studied festivals, River Party ("River Party festival", 2017) and Rockwave ("2017 | Rockwave Festival", 2017) but also newer Greek festivals such as the Eject Music Festival ("EJEKT Festival", 2017) and the Release Athens music festival ("Release Athens - Release Athens festival official site", 2017). The final step of this thesis’ qualitative research is the participatory observation as volunteering at the press office of the 38th River Party in 2016, on location, in order to gain knowledge of how festival visitors behave and what their main needs are in practice apart from theory.

The number of interviews was limited as it was decided to rely on the expertise of major Greek festival key-holders rather than including less experienced individuals for this part of the study. The first interview took place with Mr. Michalis Fidanas, booking artists for the 2012 and 2013 installments of the festival, the second with Mr.
George Isaak, head of People Entertainment Group, organizing the River Party since 2010 and the third with Mr. Dionysis Potsolakis, former co-organizer of River Party from 2010 until 2014. The final interviewee was Mr. Nikos Lorris, head of DiDi music company and organizer of the Rockwave Festival. The interviews were conducted in a semi-formal structure, three managing to take place in person meeting with the interviewees up close as was planned, whereas the interview with Mr. Potsolakis took place over the phone due to unavailability of dates.

The interviews were structured around the following ten research questions:

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Which are the festival’s main target groups?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Which are the festival’s main marketing strategies in order to most effectively access the target groups?</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Have they changed over time? How?</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>How has the focus shifted over the years in the planning of marketing strategies?</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Which are the strongest marketing tools used in order to access the target groups? Why?</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Which marketing tools are timeless and which new ones have surfaced?</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Do implemented marketing tools change accordingly to every region of the country or across countries? How?</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>At what time in the year does the marketing of the event begin?</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>What difficulties, is the promotional team presented with?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>What is the festival’s strategy regarding sponsorship?</td>
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4.2 Research findings

The two festivals that were studied, present major differences, as the qualitative research conducted revealed details and distinctive attributes of each. Especially, the fourth and last step of the research proved to be clarifying as it presented the opportunity of observing the daily reality of a festival and especially the festival attendees’ point of view. Knowledge of the preferred strategies as well as what results in higher response- and reaction-rates from users was attained to a significant point. The contact with visitors and campers on the River Party festival was daily, providing great insight on what is needed on festival grounds and which services would be most appreciated.

4.2.1 The main target groups

River Party is a camping festival, famous for its location at the bank of the Aliakmonas river springs in Nestorio, Kastoria, featuring annually renowned as well as up and coming artists from the Greek rock / art mostly Greek music scene whereas Rockwave is a rock / metal music festival featuring multiple concert dates, during the months between May and August and with the line ups varying hosting both Greek and mainly foreign artists. Another significant difference between the two festivals, are the two different target groups. The River Party is oriented towards young adults...
and teens mostly between eighteen and twenty two years old, looking for the most value for money vacation alternative, whereas the Rockwave has a larger target group reaching from Greek sixteen year old teens to 28 year olds and also seeking to attract audience from the neighboring countries such as the Balkans. Serbia, Skopje, Bulgaria but also Israel, posing an alternative to the festivals hosted there, or even filling a possible market gap.

4.2.2 Timeless and new marketing tools
Nevertheless, although the festivals’ target groups exhibit substantial differences, the marketing strategies of both demonstrate great similarities at crucial points. Both used to rely heavily on advertisement outdoors on the street. Posters, banners and leaflets / brochures were put up at carefully selected points frequented by individuals complying with the description of the target audience. However, the marketing strategies were greatly reshaped since 2012 when putting up posters and banners was claimed illegal. Event promoters have to contact local authorities to secure the permit for advertising an event, which they only get for very special occasions such as the Duran Duran concert. Ever since the change of policy, festival organizers focus on web marketing, to cover the gap, relying heavily on promotion through the various available online platforms, apart from continuing the use of traditional media such as radio and television.

4.2.3 The strongest marketing tools and strategies
The River Party festival has been airing its official aftermovie annually since 2013 which showed the 34th installment of the festival in 2012 on the television while a shorter version is being uploaded on YouTube and the Rockwave festival uploaded its first in 2015. Additional festival content is uploaded on both respective festivals’ channels. The companies behind the two festivals’ organizations both upload all content on the companies’ official Youtube channels while the River Party also features its own channel ‘River PartyTV’ which is less frequented and updated. Nevertheless, through the correct use of keywords, individuals searching for content regarding the River Party festival are directed to the videos uploaded from the official company channel which are more frequent and more updated.

As is expected, with Facebook being the most used social medium worldwide and amongst Greek users as well, both festivals being analyzed, make heavy use of it. All content such as announcements, photos, contests and videos is uploaded on the festivals’ respective Facebook pages. This enables interaction amongst followers, and exchange of information, making use of the word of mouth strategy, using a much wider audience including past, future and possible visitors. The first River party Facebook page was set up in 2010 gathering over 50,000 followers and more than doubling the number until 2014. Due to some internal conflicts, a new page had to be created in September, 2015 which today counts some 8,000 followers. The River Party Facebook page posts, comments and informs about everything regarding the festival, but does not mix content with irrelevant to its followers posts. This results in marketing “waves” since, as can be expected, updates are scarce during the winter months, becoming all the more frequent as the spring and summer months, and therefore the festival’s dates approach. In contrast, the official Rockwave Festival page, follows a different marketing strategy. In order to not let the festival go completely unmentioned over a span of time due to its transience, the Facebook page
is used to promote all concerts organized by the same company, capitalizing on the approximately 62,000 followers and at the same time keeping the page relevant and having the festival’s name be heard throughout the year. As all concerts organized by the same company feature artists of the same music genre as the festival, followers do not get estranged by this tactic as they are highly likely to be interested in events promoted.

Additionally to the Facebook pages and YouTube channels, both festivals have profiles set up on additional social media, such as Instagram which has been recording a great rise in user numbers over the course of the past three years. The Rockwave entered the Instagram society in 2015, the same year as the River Party did. Content is similar to the official Facebook pages, as usually the same content is reposted on the various festivals’ social media, being adjusted to every mediums respective characteristics. Instagram is well-known for its numerous filters users may use to edit photos and videos therefore all content is always accompanied by a relevant image.

The River Party also holds a Twitter account as well as other newer music festivals, whereas the Rockwave festival does not. Twitter has a significantly smaller user number than previously mentioned social media, therefore at often times is not being put into use. The lower user numbers also become evident from the interaction that can be monitored on existing festival accounts which cannot be compared to Facebook and Instagram interactions.

Further on, an official website functions as the ultimate pool of information regarding all things festival. It does not serve as a major promotional tool on its own, rather than as a database of all content regarding each festival and which is widely shared through the various official social media accounts. The River Party marketing team keeps the festivals website up to date although not to the extent as the social media accounts, promoting the festival’s brand apart from providing new information. The mystifying location, the fun and partying vibe and the decidedly low ticket prices, form the festival’s brand and can be found here. The Rockwave festival promoters had not refreshed their websites content since 2014, looking to integrate it in an overall rebranding and have rather been focusing on introducing new technologies to the Greek festival and event sector. For the marketing plan of 2017 though the website was completely updated, offering easy navigation and a user friendly interface.
All aforementioned social media and online platforms, serve multiple purposes. Visitors stay informed, potential attendees get a wider picture of the event and have the opportunity to exchange ideas and thoughts with individuals that already have attended said event in the past and promoters have the opportunity to prolong the longing and the feeling of excitement after each of the festival’s installment. Upon volunteering on location it was noted that visitors at the River Party festival had to solely rely on the info point for every information, from payments, to bus schedules, upcoming acts, the festival’s program and so on. Therefore it was decided to focus on creating a mobile application prototype, designed to serve festival visitors on location and of course provide the latest information and content as well as share the feeling on site with individuals not able to participate.

Finally, it has been noted that online platform administrators seem to get all the more acquainted with the online environments they are called to make use of as the content posted becomes more targeted and more effectively timed. Especially, during the 2017 marketing cycle, posts were more homogenously branded and more frequent as well as more frequented from followers, resulting in achieving the word of mouth aimed for.

4.2.4 Change of marketing strategies and shift of focus
As aforementioned, the two promotion teams working on the festivals researched follow two different marketing strategies, one allowing some down time during the winter months, whereas the other opts to keep the flow of information going in the official online platforms throughout the year, promoting similar content organized by the same company. Focus has greatly shifted over the past five years in regard of planning the marketing strategies as the implemented tools have changed significantly with the rise of the internet and the ever increasing use of social media platforms. Nowadays, although the promotional cycle does not have the same intensity throughout the year due to the events’ transience, even the periods of time with less activity do not pass without any update, information, or throwback post on some of the online platforms if not all. The focus of the strategies planned has also shifted.
again due to the rise of the newer tools in concert with the legal ban of past strategies such as hanging banners and posters. The use of online platforms allows the marketing teams to reach individuals which were thus far not reachable, therefore calling for strategies to focus on the new groups added to the pre-existing target groups.

4.2.5 Marketing tools according to target region
Representatives of both the River Party Music Festival and the Rockwave Festival stated that the tools implemented vary according to the regions. Specifically, the River Party promotional team made the same use of online platforms regardless of region yet chose to adjust the use of traditional media such as radio and TV as well as marketing on the street in the form of posters, banners and flyers. While TV advertisements on channels with nationwide reach were the same, the advertisements made on regional TV channels and especially radio channels were adjusted to every specific location, with areas surrounding the location of the River Party getting longer airing times. The same practice takes place with marketing on the street as Kastoria, Greece, the areas close such as Giannena, Florina, Grevena and Preveza and the areas of northern Greece in general enjoy much more intensive advertising than other areas in Greece as they are home to the largest percentage of the festival’s target group. Especially Thessaloniki with the largest student community of the country is a major target area.

The Rockwave Festival respectively adapts to the targeted regions. As it takes place just outside of Athens, radio and TV air time there is longer. Additionally, posters are hung only in the downtown area of Athens and at designated stores, bars and ticket providers outside of the Attica region. As the Rockwave also targets foreign audiences, changes regarding the marketing tools and their use are also to be observed there. Adapting to each country where promotion is to take place, the marketing team chooses online platforms and well known websites of each of these countries in order to achieve maximum effect.

4.2.6 Information flow throughout the year
As has also been mentioned in previous sections, the flow of information throughout one year is not constant and varies depending on the strategy of each festival. During the months prior to the events, both of the research festivals create a strong and constant flow of information. After the respective events’ dates the River Party chooses to let the flow decrease with the passing of time reaching an all-time low during December and January before starting the more frequent updates again. The Rockwave Festival on the contrary keeps the information flow going throughout the year promoting similar events and keeping the festival’s pages active.

4.2.7 Starting dates of festival’s marketing cycle
According to the answers from the interviewees the marketing cycles of both festivals never officially end. Nevertheless, March is the month when promotion of the next installment begins to be more organized, targeting at awakening the interest and slowly informing interested individuals and possible future attendees. Yet the official line up is always the last information to be announced, in order to get the audiences involved and excited about the festival and not about specific artists performing.

4.2.8 Difficulties encountered by promotional teams

The last great difficulty for promotional and marketing teams occurred in 2012 with the banner and poster hanging ban, legally prohibiting street marketing as it took place over the course of previous years. Nowadays, the only issue is the festivals’ characteristic of transience and the effort put into maintaining the interest, and the feeling of excitement and anticipation through the less active months before the start of the annual festival period.

4.2.9 Sponsorship strategy

The interviewees’ answers regarding their sponsorship strategies were greatly aligned with the results stated in the literature research. Organizers seek sponsors in order to have sponsor – sponsee congruence. This way the sponsor becomes part of the promotional campaigns. Most of the times, the sponsorship contracts also involve the events’ promotion through contests and advertisements. Yet if the organizers find the sponsorship to be less profiting for the event for lack of impact, congruence, promotion or other reasons, it is often preferred to not sign a certain sponsor and rather offer the same money to headlining performers expected to attract larger crowds resulting in larger revenue. Lack of congruence also proves to be an issue for the organizers as a sponsor completely irrelevant also estranges the visitors’ crowds. Therefore music festival sponsorship managers approach tobacco companies, beer and alcohol distributors and mobile service providers.

The qualitative research, which was completed in four stages allowed a deep insight into the Greek festival market, the future, the past and the plans of high ranking individuals involved. It is the most crucial step in defining the novelty part of this thesis.
5. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: MEDIA SERVICES & APPLICATION PROTOTYPES

As the aforementioned research clearly displays, there are many technological advances for festival promoters and festival attendees to profit from. The spectrum narrows down significantly considering the financial crisis Greece has been going through since 2010. Festival organizers face severe financial and political barriers (e.g. capital controls) that do not affect other major festival hosting countries. Therefore, and upon thoroughly researching, it was decided that this thesis will be focusing on the combined use of social media platforms, websites and applications in effectively promoting music festivals in Greece.

Due to budget and time limitations it was not possible to organize a real life festival from the very beginning so it was decided to virtually promote a fictional event. The official Instagram and Facebook pages, the official website and two application prototypes of said fictional festival will be created, in order to explore the real time process of creating appealing content and keeping the flow of information as to attract larger numbers of potential visitors. Additionally, a brief research of YouTube and Snapchat platform implementations will be conducted but no profiles set up due to lack of real content. The selection of the tools that will be put into use was made based on the information collected through the interviews conducted as part of this paper and on the volunteer work as press office at the 2016 River Party music festival. We will be further following the example of the social media and online platforms of popular and still growing foreign music and arts festivals such as the Burning Man Festival in Nevada, USA ("Burning Man - Welcome Home", 2017), TomorrowLand, Belgium ("Tomorrowland", 2017), Coachella in Indio, California ("Coachella", 2017), Glastonbury, United Kingdom, (Digital, 2017), Bonnaroo, Manchester, Tennessee, USA, ("Bonnaroo Music + Arts Festival", 2017), Lollapalooza, Chicago, Illinois, USA, ("Lollapalooza", 2017), Sziget, Budapest, Hungary, ("Home", 2017) and Exit, Petrovaradin, Serbia, ("EXIT Festival, Serbia, 5 - 9 July 2017", 2017).

5.1 The Fest – fictional festival data

It was chosen to locate the virtual festival in Chalkidiki in the northern of Greece for reasons of visitors’ attraction and accessibility. It is of utmost importance for a large scale music festival to be easily accessible and therefore all the picturesque Greek islands that would provide beautiful sceneries for such a festival were excluded. Moving on, the target audience was the main issue to focus on. Apart from Greeks, foreigners, people living in the Balkans and other East-Mediterranean countries that either wish to combine Greek holidays with the festival experience, or do not have the opportunity to visit such a festival and enjoy similar events back in their home country will be targeted. Thus, Tristinika, on the second ‘leg’ of Chalkidiki provides
the perfect setting. Located in northern Greece, it is a 2 hour drive from the airport of Thessaloniki and a 5 hour drive from Athens, the capital of Greece and home to half of the country’s population. Only three hours from the Greek-Bulgarian borders and four and a half from the Greek-Turkish borders by car, it is a popular summer destination easily accessible either by plane or by car. The already known destination was chosen on purpose, adding to the self-promoting aspect of the festival. The festival that will be called “the Fest” will be a festival in its’ first five years as we do not set out to explore the struggles and difficulties of creating a new festival, rather than delve into either fully or partially unexplored promotional tools.

As is evident from research so far, that every festival needs a distinctive identity to be distinguished amongst similar events and to eventually create its own brand through the years. Therefore a name both descriptive as well as creative is best in order to give away an important characteristic of the festival while adding identity. Such is the case of the “Burning Man” event taking place in Nevada’s Black Rock Desert in U.S.A. annually. As the name successfully indicates, the whole festival is centered around a man’s statue approximately four stories tall, depending on each year’s creation, that is burned at the end of each installment (“Burning Man – Welcome Home”, 2017). In Greece, both festivals used as examples and studied upon in this paper follow said rule. River Party music festival began as a party of Greek immigrants’ children visiting their home country and hosting a party at the Aliakmonas’ river bank, the very location it takes place to this day. The Rockwave music festival has been the ultimate meeting point for listeners of metal and rock music, giving justice to its name.

As mentioned previously it was decided to first set up the festival webpage, acting as the official tank of information and three social media platforms on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, that will be promoting all content of previous festival installments, updates, notifications, information, as well as providing platforms of interaction between visitors, wishful attendees and interested individuals. What will be introduced to the Greek festival market in trial mode will be an official responsive festival application prototype, designed for mobile phones and tablets, as well as smart-watches.

The background pictures used on all aforementioned platforms, as well as the customized flower logo, name-logo, posters and further content was prepared by a professional graphic designer in order to easier achieve the fitting sizes, formats and color combinations. The three colors (black, white and orange), were chosen in order to achieve the grunge yet summer feeling (orange).

5.2 The official “The Fest” web page

The first step was to begin creating the website that was planned to become the ultimate “the Fest” festival storytelling tool through the years, seasons and promotional time periods. Additionally it is to be interlinked with the festival’s social
media profiles and official apps. To set up the website, the wix.com platform was chosen for diverse reasons. The platform offers free, ready to use templates, divided into theme sections enabling the process of finding the appropriate for each project, but also allows the users to create their own template from the very beginning. Additionally, each template is fully customizable, allowing the designer to personalize, and create an online space catering to every specific need, which also includes the variety of features offered that can be embedded into every website and that are fully functioning. As expected, additional features are offered upon payment, but the ones offered for free prove to be more than adequate. Therefore it was determined that only free of charge features would be used, emphasizing and highlighting the possibilities even during the recession Greece has faced over the past of the last 5 years.

A festival themed layout was chosen to be customized, putting a countdown clock on the home page, right under the “The Fest” logo. Additionally, a “Buy your ticket” button was added on the home page, directly linking to the ticket-purchasing platform. The top header, as well as the social media bar were put on the frozen mode to be visible on the visitor’s screen at all points of scrolling through the webpage and further navigation through its pages.

![Figure 5.1 “The Fest” homepage, wix.com platform, 2017](image)

One of the numerous free applications available on the wix platform is the “Tidio Chat” enabling communication, interaction and exchange of ideas of online visitors. The chat is also always visible on the right bottom side of the screen, yet the users have the option to choose whether to set the chat on online or offline.

Right after the homepage comes the “About” page with a small intro about the festival, trying to communicate the festival’s feeling. This “About” page may contain generic information, detailed descriptions of past events and / or the location. For example, the River Party Music Festival’s official “About” page promotes its most advertized feature, the renown location right at the Aliakmonas’ river banks. In this
case, the “About” page is generic due to lack of actual information. Another service that was left out during the building process of this webpage was the timeline, again due to the event being promoted being virtual. The timeline is to be seen on the official Burning Man festival’s page (“Timeline | Burning Man”, 2017) additionally creating a feeling of history and belonging for the user as it enhances the feeling of a community lasting through the years. Upon scrolling further down, users encounter the festival’s line up, listing the performing headliners of each day, in order of appearance. Upon clicking on the day of interest and the performer, information regarding the program is to be available, as well as potential program changes. Every festival nowadays aims to increase the revenues in any way. Therefore official merchandise is available for visitors at the majority of events or even online. Therefore, on the next page of the website, a link to the online store is featured, exclusively selling festival merchandise, available only online or on location.

The next page, links visitors to the App Store or Google Play Store respectively, depending whether each user’s smartphone or smartwatch run on an iOS or Android operating system. For users browsing the webpage from a PC, the link is not functional, yet the page informs about the applications’ launch, which is the innovation for the Greek festival market reality presented in this thesis.

Right after, as seen in the photo above, the website page dedicated to the camping area follows. Here the users can overview the festival’s location in detail, including the camping area, infrastructure such as showers, restaurants, WCs, stages, relaxing areas etc. Festival ticketholders will also be able to reserve a spot in their favorite area making sure to make the most of their experience.
A Google map is also available on the next page for individuals browsing the page in order to make potential visitors familiar with the wider area of Chalkidiki, Thessaloniki and northern Greece.

By scrolling further down the page, three links are available regarding accommodation, parking and transport. As this paper does not seek to explore the process of setting up webpages and applications of search engines for flights, bus and train routes, hotels and car hires, the links are of already existing platforms Trivago and Chalkidiki buses.

5.3 The official Facebook page

At the same time, the official Facebook page of the Fest was set up. As Facebook is the most used social media platform with 62% of Greek users using their smartphones to scroll their newsfeed it is of high importance to make use of its’ services such as creating events, broadcasting live videos, shares, likes, user generated content and more for further promotion. It was decided to feature the festival’s name and signature flower logo on the profile picture and the festival’s dates and line-up on the cover picture.

![Figure 5.3 “The Fest” Official Facebook Page, 2017](image)

Both pictures are of the same design as it is important to communicate the festival’s key visual, distinguishing it and making it recognizable. Due to time limitations, it is not possible to showcase the real time process of posting content throughout one promotional cycle of one entire year between two festival installments. Nevertheless, all posts uploaded on the Fest’s page will be true in content, simulating the type of content posted in real festivals’ pages. Apart from frequently uploading content, the administrators of official pages also use the platform provided to access their audience and interested individuals for the operational issues of the event. The open call for volunteers, an integral part of a large scale event’s successful run, takes place on social media and especially on Facebook as it is the platform with the widest access.
The post features a link to a platform on the official web page where future volunteers are called to fill in their personal information as well answer some questions such as their previous volunteering experience, attendance at the certain event, where they first heard of the event and their position of interest. Moving on, a Facebook event is set up in order to create further awareness as expressing interest in the event or stating attendance to each follower’s cycle of friends creates positive word of mouth.

Aiming to further the interaction and interest, as well as intensifying the feeling of integration, another platform is set up for followers, requesting them to suggest their own preferences regarding the performers appearing on one of the festival’s stages. The Fest, calls for followers to create the lineup of the smaller, “amateur” stage, performing prior to the headliners.

Facebook also offers extra paid promotional features for businesses. The ability to choose the exact target audience according to demographics, location, interests and behaviour is the first tool. Businesses have the opportunity to target certain groups, find individuals with similar interests and behaviour like their customers or even handpick the individuals they wish to access ("Facebook adverts", 2017). The advert
measurement tools are also critical, enabling measurement of audience outcomes such as reach, frequency, targeting and cross-device performance, brand outcomes as in advert awareness, advert recall, brand awareness and brand perception and finally sales outcomes leads, installs, purchases, conversions, return of investment (ROI) and more ("Facebook adverts", 2017). As mentioned before, the aim of this paper is to explore how social media and applications help promote a music festival event at the minimum costs. Therefore these options were not put in practice.

5.4 The official Instagram profile

Instagram’s greatest feature is the ability to create content in the form of beautiful pictures, able to bring back memories, create the feeling of longing and nostalgia and also promote excitement for the upcoming event.

![Instagram profile of The Fest](image)

*Figure 5.5 “The Fest” on Instagram, smartphone view, 2017*

Therefore after the Facebook page was created, the next step was creating an official the Fest profile on this social medium. Instagram provides the ability to further create positive word of mouth also implemented in the call for volunteers, or suggesting
performers for the lineup of the festival’s smaller, amateur stage in this festival called the “Tri” stage. Hashtags find great and useful use on Instagram, enabling the administrators attract people with similar interests and within the wished target group by using the correct ones. It is also noticed that the more hashtags are used, the greater the number of individuals reached. We used hashtags like Thessaloniki, Chalkidiki, Tristinika, theFest and more. Research suggests that the first hashtags used usually are the generally more popular ones, yet related to the cause like in this case Thessaloniki and Chalkidiki, right after come hashtags directly connected to the event as the festival’s name or certain slang related to the festival (e.g. festers) and finally come widespread hashtags, known to increase awareness of the post and the page. In the Fest’s case the hashtag Thessaloniki was used on one post, attracting one of the city’s cultural associations. This is the reason we moved to setting the page on private mode throughout posting, although this is completely against promotional rules, in order to avoid possible implications. Furthermore, Instagram also offers the same paid promotional tools as mentioned regarding the Facebook platform. Again it was chosen not to research them in practice.

5.5 The official YouTube channel – theoretical research

The next social medium, YouTube, is as mentioned before the most used worldwide and in Greece as well. It is used to easily upload or view content in the form of videos. Therefore it was decided that every festival needed to have an official YouTube channel, in order to upload videos of acts on stage performing live, videos of the festival’s previous installments, soundchecks, parties, extra events, anything taking place at a music festival helping prolong the high and the feeling of excitement festival attendees experience during and after the days of a music festival. Each festival’s aftermovie is one of the strongest tools in festival promotion, being used at the moment during the year between two installments when interaction starts significantly decreasing. The issue in this case is that the festival being set up is fictional and therefore there is no innovative content to be published. Nevertheless, research of features offered was conducted. Youtube, as Instagram and Facebook before, offers paid advertising tools in order to increase interaction and widen the reach of target audience. Users are able to make and run a video ad while targeting only the very users possibly interested in the content offered ("Online Video Advertising Campaigns – YouTube Advertising", 2017). What is different to the previous mentioned tools is the ability to run an advertisement and only pay for it when individuals watch more than thirty seconds or click on it, basically ensuring the promoter pays for interaction. Additional insights of people responding to the running advertisement in real time are also offered and for more than 10$ spent daily the platform assigns an advertising expert to assist with the tools offered, significantly distinguishing YouTube from the aforementioned two social media ("Online Video Advertising Campaigns – YouTube Advertising", 2017).
5.6 The official Snapchat profile – theoretical research

Snapchat was the first social medium to introduce posts of live short-term content. It is an image messaging and multimedia mobile application, focusing on the concept of posted content such as images and messages being available only for a short time, determined by the poster, before automatically being deleted and therefore inaccessible ("Snapchat", 2017). This day it counts more than 166 million daily active users. Snapchat aims at enabling a more natural form of information due to the temporary nature of the content posted. While starting as a private sharing platform, Snapchat has developed, being the first social medium before Instagram and later Facebook to introduce the “My Story” feature, allowing users to create storylines accessible to the wider cycle of friends. At this point, users are able to post content when at on-location events contributing to a curated story available to all users, further raising online awareness and interaction with the event. As all aforementioned social media platforms, Snapchat also has sponsored content features such as “Geostickers”, city-specific stickers that can be added to pictures and messages, customized “World Stickers” allowing users to add augmented reality objects to their snaps. According to studies, Snapchat’s success lies in its fun nature and comedic content (“Snapchat”, 2017), which is completely aligned to the feeling and state of mind of a music festival such as the one being set up, or the two Greek examples researched in this study. Snapchat also provides metrics, for managers to have a clear image of their advertisement results, including first-party data as well as reporting from external partners such as Datalogix and Nielsen Catalina Information provided includes the number of Snapchat users having seen the advertisement as well as their demographics such as age, gender and additional information but also, their emotions and thoughts upon the promoted content. In the likes of YouTube, aided brand awareness is supported from the platform helping attain data regarding advertisement awareness, brand opinion, favorability and action intent of the ad’s consumers ("Measurement • Ads • Snapchat", 2017). Aforementioned partners Datalogix and Nielsen Catalina also help define the impact of Snapchat media in prompting and increasing offline purchases, in the festival’s case tickets and merchandise.

5.7 The official smartphone & smartwatch application prototypes

Upon mentioning ways promoters of Greek music festivals already engage and interact with their audience, the main focus of this thesis is the official application for the Fest. Again, as it is a fictional event, and aiming to keep the costs at a low level, not a functioning application was developed, but instead a prototype on the InVision platform. Development of “The Fest” application, the aesthetic, services, information and features offered, as well the way they are presented were based on the knowledge acquired through studying pre-existing literature, interviews, professional suggestions, personal experience and needs expressed by the organizers of the River Party festival and the Rockwave festival. Regarding the services offered and the additional features to be added to the application, my position as press office administrator of the 38th River Party Music Festival was insightful providing knowledge of existing needs of
festival attendees, perhaps not known even to the individuals employed throughout the various events. A free responsive application, easily accessible via every smartphone connected to the internet, is a constant reminder of the event. It provides numerous services apart from information that will be of assistance for the users before, during and after the event’s days, bridging the time period between every installment. Provided the festival’s location has a strong WiFi connection, able to respond to the traffic during the days of the event or the least, good signal reception for attendees to use their own data, the official application’s first aim is to serve the visitors and help them navigate through the grounds and the event taking place on location as smooth as possible. It is important to state that the application is aimed at individuals already familiar with the event.

Upon downloading the application and opening it, the users land on the loading page. It was decided to follow a minimal design, only featuring the counter, the flower logo linking to the main menu and the “Buy your ticket” button directing to the ticket selling platform as can be seen on the following image.
Upon tapping on the flower logo, users land on the app’s main menu which also, as the loading page, has a minimal and clear design with only the buttons linking to the various services displayed on the screen. The flower logo, serving as the “menu button” on the loading page is to be seen on the top right corner of every page including the menu page in order to forward navigation through the app without requiring the user to go back every time before exploring another service. Right under the flower logo, the “Buy your ticket” button is to be seen, where application users may inspect the prices for one-day or three-day passes and continue with purchasing their tickets. Upon purchasing their ticket, users are automatically logged in with the name with which the ticket was purchased, in order to enjoy a personalized
experience. If multiple tickets are purchased under the same name, or a user wishes to log in without having prior purchased a ticket they may sent a request via the “Contact Us” form. The “Home” page also features an “About” button, where the festival's info is to be found and its mentality and greatest characteristics such as location, lineup, additional activities etc. are highlighted.

![Figure 5.7 “The Fest” main menu page, InVision, 2017](image)

The order of the buttons was set according to the most important needs of the users based on the research conducted. The “Home” button, redirects the users to the aforementioned “Home” page. Continuing, the button leading to the camping page
named “Camping / Map” first leads the user to a sub-menu. There users are presented with two options, tapping the “Camping” button and see a special map of the very grounds, an indispensable feature, allowing the users to pin the locations most needed such as their tent and the closest showers as well as getting informed about the camping area or tapping on “Map” which holds an active navigable map of the wider area the festival is located at. The general map option was featured in order to encourage festival visitors and individuals interested in attending, to explore the greater area of Chalkidiki and Thessaloniki and therefore possibly enhance local tourism in the surrounding areas.

The “Lineup” button as seen in the image of the menu page, leads to a sub menu with the two buttons there leading to information about the two festival stages.
selecting the “Main Stage”, users get to see performers, days and times of appearance as well as select to be informed about their wished events via push notifications. The Tristage button in the submenu leads to a form where users are asked to submit their preferred acts that should appear on the festival’s second, smaller stage, therefore enhancing the feeling of participation and engagement for future attendees, as well as the ability for promoters to better look into their desires and needs, from an artistic point of view.

The next button leads to the most innovative feature of this application. The “Streaming” button allows users to live stream their own content or watch real-time streams of fellow festival attendees or even artists themselves. This aims at increasing the feeling of inclusion and excitement for attendees, as well as creating Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and therefore attracting future visitors. Additionally, live streams enrich content flow, increasing word of mouth and interaction Live Streaming content can be offered as a live radio stream of the festival’s radio as most music festivals do collaborate with radio stations as media sponsors, to secure wider broadcast of the event. One option therefore is the ability to hear the live broadcast taking place at any time. Additionally, through the use of the festival’s official hashtag, such as #thefest, individuals can keep up with user generated content by watching live video streams. Another service, amplifying the “first row” experience, would be offering the individual app users, the opportunity to view live streams of every performer, produced by attendees or festival employees specifically located in the front row. Therefore, even if attendees chose not to merge themselves with the intense crowd to be found on a festival’s front row, they do now have the option to watch the artists from their point of view. Individuals interested in the event but not able to attend a certain installment also majorly benefit from such a service as they get to experience the feeling of excitement and inclusion without leaving the comfort of their home (Wilson, 2017). As this is a prototype, this service has not been set up and is not to be seen.

The next button features “Galleries”, where supervised photos and videos of users uploaded with the official theFest hashtag are to be seen. Supervision only takes place in order to secure non-offensive content. Users can browse the gallery by tapping on each photo or video. As on every application screen, the flower-logo is to be seen on the top right corner on each screen, allowing users to return to the menu at any point.
Another service to increase interaction amongst users is the live chat, allowing users to directly communicate with their peers, upon setting their chat on online. There they can communicate their feelings and their needs with fellow visitor attendees and connect with their friends or new acquaintances.
As aforementioned, the “The Fest” application, website as well as official social media profiles will all be interlinked. Therefore the social media button leads to the page featuring links to all five social media profiles of the festival. Links to YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Google Pin allow quick access to the festival’s profile on each platform where users are able to see new content posted as well as add their own and share content live as well as share their experience by using the check in feature using the festival’s official hashtag thefest. For the Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat platforms, application users need to have their own profiles in order to be able to explore the ones of the festival.
Looking to make life on location easier, the app will allow individuals to pre-load their phone with the amount of money they wish, allowing them to make use of it as a credit card and leaving anything additional somewhere safe and freeing their mind from extra worries completely indulging in the festive feeling. Further on as aforementioned, the application will feature booking services for daily passes or three day tickets for the entire duration of the festival but also booking transportation to and from the location, having the itineraries available. The program of each day including the lineup of the artists as well as additional happenings taking place will be available, allowing users to note the acts they are interested in and be informed about via push notifications. Additionally, connecting with friends and company will be facilitated by using location services and sharing the exact location with connected individuals. The app is designed to provide not only festival-related services in order to be useful
throughout the year, and thus maintaining its’ number of users. Therefore, the booking services for transportation will not only include the transportation to and from the location as already mentioned but will follow the steps of the official website of Lidl Germany. Although the website belongs to the retail chain, it has a section where users may book tickets worldwide ("Lidl-Reisen - ...einfachurlaubiger!", 2017) and therefore manages to increase traffic and engagement.

It is important to note that it was opted to develop a navigable menu with buttons instead of one long interface where the user would just scroll down through the screens. In case of errors and glitches which may often occur on smartphones in times of heavy usage, the users may return to the service of the application they were using at the moment in three easy steps via the menu. Whereas a glitch during scrolling far down on the app, sending the user back to the top screen would be much more tiring and frustrating to return to the feature they were at prior to the glitch.

Further on, was decided, to also create a smaller scale smartwatch prototype in order to further the research of this thesis. This is completely innovative as no festival researched, has so far launched such software. Specifically in Greece, the use of smartwatches in general is still very limited. Nevertheless, a prototype with similar design to the mobile application was designed. It offers less features and has a very minimal design as it needs to be easy navigable on small screens. Therefore, and in contrast to the mobile application, the smartwatch prototype is browsed just by scrolling down through the services.
The first feature is the ticket purchase platform users may visit simply by tapping on the “Buy your ticket” platform. From there, as on the mobile app, users can see the ticket prices and purchase the one of interest to them. After the ticket-purchasing service, users are able to scroll through the lineup, camping information and an interactive location map, the innovative streaming services, the social media icons, the cash feature, chat ability and finally the contact platform through which users may communicate with the festival production team.

Differences to the mobile application prototype are minimal and occur due to restrictions posed by the smartwatch hardware, such as the streaming button only allowing watching real-time streams and not uploading as smartwatches do not feature cameras.

In the same logic, of keeping the apps' appearance and services as homogenous as possible, the screens are very similar, featuring the same flower-logo, official festival logo, colors, buttons and designs.

Upon completion of the “The Fest” festival’s mobile and smartwatch applications’, as well as the official website’s basic set ups, a formative evaluation that led to specific updates and improvements in usability was conducted. Additionally, troubleshooting and correction of structural and functional errors was done in order to ensure the
experts evaluating the apps and website could focus only on the navigation and the user experience without dealing with issues of development and structuring.

All online platforms already being implemented by Greek festival promoters were set up, including an official Facebook page and Instagram profile and an official website. The YouTube channel and Snapchat verified profile were not set up due to lack of original content. In addition, two separate prototype applications, one designed for smartphones and one for smartwatches were designed as a suggestion for the next technological step forward, aiming to serve the promotional needs of the production as well as the needs of festival attendees.
6. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS: DISCUSSION & EVALUATION

6.1 Discussion

As with all services, the quality and the success of the service provided, such as music festivals studied in this paper, is rated by customer satisfaction. As was stated in the first chapter and analyzed further on, the theory surrounding events and music festivals in particular, refers to a wide spectrum including theories of economics & finance, event management, web management, sponsorship, branding and customer satisfaction. Yet all these theories related to music festivals, in practice, serve the aim of achieving customer satisfaction, compelling satisfied attendees, to share their pleasant and fulfilling experience with their peers and therefore attract new festival visitors apart from raising the numbers of re-attendance. To achieve satisfaction and therefore increased revenue, festivals focus on rich content and streaming services, whether live or not (Wilson, 2017).

Upon completing a series of interviews with individuals holding key spots in festival organizations in Greece throughout the past years and in concert with the previously conducted literature research, it became evident that the festival market in Greece is significantly lacking in terms of technological progress, as well as tools implemented in the process of organization and promotion, in order to reach so far uninterested or oblivious crowds. Therefore it was decided to research the use of Near Field Communication (NFC) tags, wearable tech wristbands, iBeacon micro-location technology, virtual and augmented reality, social media platforms and mobile as well as smartwatch applications.

While a festival application seems to be the next affordable step to be achieved in festival promotion, it still presents an additional cost to be covered. Therefore, in order for music festival organizers to partially cover the cost of the application, a discrete charging method could be implemented. Providing ticket purchasers with a free app download code, while charging each download one euro or fifty cents for non-ticket-holders.

Upon discussing the issue of lack of technological advance in the Greek festival market, all groups responded with the intention of creating and making use of researched technologies in the future. One interesting response, coming from the festival employees’ group, was the objective of including large corporate sponsors in their technological projects to secure adequate funding. The same group of experts stated that some of aforementioned technologies are already being researched as to how their implementation in the Greek market would prove feasible. The wearable-tech wristbands, has already been in trial mode but the technology in Greece still suffers from bugs, a very simplified version of the application presented in this paper has been under consideration and as our study proves, social media platforms and official websites have proven to be the latest yet strongest tool for marketers and promoters active in this field.
The group of festival attendees stated clearly making use of available online platforms to get informed about up and coming festivals, as well as every year’s installment of their festival of choice. They showcased a prevalent preference of social media as the majority already spends approximately 2 hours online scrolling through their newsfeed daily (Asano, 2017), therefore finding festivals’ social media pages to be easier accessible, with Facebook as proven by theory garnering the greatest number of visitors. To the proposal of introducing a specifically designed application, the entire group showcased positive emotions of interest, curiosity and anticipation. The group was shown prime examples of applications of renown famous festivals already aforementioned in the research section of this paper.

6.2 Evaluation

The evaluation of this application takes place throughout the creative process, seeking to redefine and refine the development and design. Specifically, experts as well as simple yet carefully selected smartphone and application users attending music festivals, are asked to navigate through the application and provide feedback in the form of notes, comments and analysis. They are also asked to comment on difficulties encountered. Upon completion of the basic design, and after beginning the process of development, the same group of experts and other individuals contributing to the evaluation process, were asked to carry out “section evaluation” as in collaborating with the prototyping team in the process of debugging by locating and therefore helping restore possible errors (Dimoulas, Veglis, Kalliris & Tsarchopoulos, 2016).

This group of experts of the field such as individuals having attended music festivals over the course of the last three years, marketing experts, festival employees and event organizers consisted of 34 individuals in total.

For the purpose of evaluating the mobile application prototype set up on the InVision platform we had the involved experts complete small tasks. They were asked to browse the application and land on pre-requested services of the app. Upon completing these tasks, experts were asked to state difficulties met in navigating through the applications, possible discrepancies, as well as suggest optimizations where they were thought to be useful. In order to simulate an active application environment, individuals were sent a link on their smartphones via the InVision platform, and explored the application prototype as they would browse an active application.

As the use of smartwatches is still not very popular and widespread in Greece it was not possible to find individuals available for the evaluation process of the smartwatch application prototype. Therefore, the development was based on personal knowledge and information gathered online and no official evaluation has been completed.

6.1.1 Rules of usability and evaluation criteria

The evaluation of applications, as of any software used in combination of man and computer is based on some rules of behavior. In the case of application software as
presented in this thesis, the characteristics of functionality and usability of the provided services are highly important (Dimoulas et al., 2016). As also stated by Dimoulas et al (2016), “According to the international ISO-9241 standard, usability is efficiency, effectiveness and satisfaction provided by a (computational) environment to its predetermined users in the effort to achieve specific goals in-frame of the mode of use for which this environment was created”. The same usability criteria are to be applied throughout the “section evaluation” as described before.

This subject was studied mainly by Nielsen in collaboration with other scientists resulting in the definition of heuristic evaluation and the respective usability criteria, by Nielsen and Molichas listed below (Nielsen, 1993, 2005;Dimoulas et al., 2016):

Table 5-1. Usability criteria suggested by Nielsen and Molich

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Avoiding unnecessary elements distracting the users from their goals (e.g. too long texts, complicated graphics etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Simple use of language, terms and expressions understandable by the users, avoiding software and technical terminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Minimizing the users’ memory load by using predetermined values and examples of use (the user should recognize, not memorize)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Maintaining consistency throughout all the contacts and conventions of the application (the terms and actions need to be homogenous throughout the entire environment of interaction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Providing feedback and information about the systems processes (e.g. if the loading time takes longer than 10 seconds, there should be a progress indication or a change of the cursor’s icon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Providing easy and clear escape routes, quick exit of error pages and the ability to undo, redo or cancel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Providing obvious shortcuts for quick task completion for experienced or first-time users (e.g. command buttons, typing predictions, recent documents, repetition of recent commands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Providing clear error messages (exact expressions, clear instructions, help and avoiding coded messages, rude and offensive language etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Design to avoid user errors (selecting a document’s name from a list instead of typing, request for confirmation prior to dangerous actions, avoiding the use of the same command for different actions etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Providing adequate support and help and providing user manuals (simple search, structuring according to the users actions, extensive use of examples)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, Nielsen defined the five metrics of usability (Nielsen, 1993, 2005; Dimoulas et al., 2016):

Table 5-1. Usability metrics suggested by Nielsen

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ease and speed of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>High performance of functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Low frequency of functional and navigational errors and ease of continuing after a occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Maintenance of ability of use from occasional users after a period of time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Subjective user satisfaction

To easier analyze the results, the group was divided into two smaller groups, the one consisting of individuals attending numerous festivals in the past and the other of employees in one of the branches of event organization, management and festival set-up. As is to expect, the answers and observations of the two groups differed on the subject of focus.

6.1.2 Qualitative evaluation: results and updates
Following the aforementioned rules and criteria the responses of the two subgroups evaluating the prototype were analyzed and categorized. The proposed application and the services offered were commented positively yet with constructive feedback leading to the improvement of the prototype.

Comments from the group of experts employed in branches related to the subject, such as marketing specialists and festival employees suggested to keep the main menu page as simple and small as possible with limited buttons and create small-scale sub menus where more options are available as the first of Nielsen’s aforementioned usability criteria.
Such examples are the camping section and the navigable map with the pin-option as well as the headliners lineup and the smaller “TriStage” lineup which were all different categories on the main menu and then were put together under the “Camping” and “LineUp” buttons respectively, making the main menu page less cramped with information and therefore easier to navigate. The “Home” section also now features the “About” section of the festival which used to consist of one additional button in the menu. Additionally a hovering menu was suggested, to simplify navigation without always having to visit the menu page while browsing. Because the services featured are numerous though it would be impractical as not all would be able to be displayed in a hovering menu. The marketing specialists also suggested instead of a menu browsed by tapping on the buttons, to have an environment where the user would navigate through the app by scrolling down. Upon explaining the reasons of the choice made, as they are mentioned in the section of implementation, they agreed. Festival attendees, put their focus on easy and clear navigation as well but without keeping design in mind and only focusing on effectiveness, again focusing on the first of Nielsen’s usability criteria. Therefore the
initial cramped menu did not pose an issue as long as they were able to easily find their service of interest.

Another comment made from individuals both attending festivals as well as employed in relative branches was the camping area map.

![The Fest Mobile Application](image)

*Figure 6.2 Mobile application evaluation comments*

All mentioned their dissatisfaction with the displayed map and showed their preference towards maps as the one displayed in the image 6.3 (The Soul Fest, 2016).
Moreover, one festival attendee as well as an enterprise manager commented that the incitement for users to suggest their favorite acts for the festival’s smaller “Tri” stage was not very visible and therefore confusing the users until noticing it.
What was also requested, from festival attendees, was a hovering social media bar put on “frozen” mode to be always available on screen for even quicker access to the users’ social media profiles.
Again the reason for not opting for a social media bar always available on screen, was to ensure minimal and easy to navigate screens. With the current design, users are online within three taps on the screen.

Following the stated criteria and rules by Nelsen throughout the designing and prototyping process and conducting “sectional evaluation” as well as requesting one final evaluation of the completed prototype, the result proved to respond to every functional necessity of the users.

Additionally, the same 34 individuals acting as evaluators throughout the process were asked to provide commentary on the actual services provided by the application apart from the functional issues. The feedback was positive as the number of services provided aimed at not leaving unanswered requests as they were presented during the participatory observation stage of the research.

The experts group comprised of individuals employed in relative branches expressed their satisfaction with the opportunity provided to future attendees to easily live-stream their self-generated content as well as being able to watch live streams from
the festival generated by other app users. Richer content increases word of mouth and serves to attract further visitors.

Figure 6.6 Mobile application evaluation comments

The group of attendees also showcased strong likeness regarding the live streaming possibilities. As the Snapchat, the Instagram Stories feature, as well as the Facebook Stories and Live features have proven, individuals demographically belonging to the festival target group do make extensive use. Therefore the ability to share the experience and the feeling of excitement, look into other attendees’ point of view, and of course have the ability to always re-visit, re-watch and re-experience the festival during times of nostalgia was a very welcomed feature.

The qualitative evaluation process of the mobile application purposely includes a small number of experts as it is a tool that has not been launched into the Greek market. Therefore large crowds are not expected to be familiar with the environment yet. The feedback has been insightful, providing useful suggestions in order to improve the designed prototype. The majority of individuals partaking in the
evaluation process were satisfied with the designed prototype, making refining comments. The smartwatch evaluation has not been conducted as it was not possible to find a smartwatch user, acquainted with festival environments due to the limited number of smartwatch users in Greece.
7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary & Conclusions

As the situation in Greece, financially, does not seem to be improving in the next future years, and especially with the newly voted fourth memorandum to be put into action in 2018 (Ziras, 2017), it is even more important for festival organizing, marketing and promotional teams to combine and draw the greatest possible profit from tools put into practice thus far as well as the ones to be implemented in the future.

In order to keep the market profitable and to secure the quality of the provided services, festival organizing teams seek to make the most correct possible use of the tools at hand while struggling to overcome problems posed. The ongoing financial crisis seems to be further introducing additional problems as is the stagnant use of technology and the limited alternatives when it comes to headlining performers. Budget cuts limit organizers when booking foreign performers as international festival performer fees have been increasing and therefore constituting one of the highest sources of income for artists. The particularity of the Greek population also poses an additional issue. Festivals have not yet become part of the Greek culture. Individuals are not used to visiting music and arts festivals across the country after a certain age leaving a limited target group.

This thesis aimed to research the situation in the Greek festival market, analyze the issues at hand and propose means of achieving the goal of successful festival promotion and marketing within the circumstances. Therefore a thorough research of Greek festival social media pages was completed, trying to recognize possible difficulties, miss-handling of time schedules, wrongly placed advertisements, possible use of wrong social media platforms and other particularities not allowing administrators of those social media profiles achieve full impact regarding the target groups. Consequently effort was put into setting up profiles on social media suggesting how posted content and interaction could yield more profit for a possible festival organizing team.

With the evolution of music festivals and the internet, crowds become more demanding. Needs and satisfaction criteria evolve, therefore making research into the evolution of festival theory as well as theories intricately connected with festivals critical in order for organizers to be able to better achieve customer as in visitor satisfaction and therefore increased revenues.

7.2 Thesis novelty and contribution

Social media platforms have been actively used for promotional reasons since 2011, with the extent of their use ever expanding. Therefore the novelty presented in this paper is the mobile application prototype, designed to be navigated with ease by
festival visitors and aiming at serving their most important needs on location. Individuals interested in the event serviced by the application can make the most use of it during the days of the festival, to live the feelings and the experiences of actual visitors by watching live streamed or simply uploaded User Generated Content (UGC) which has thus far not been possible. However, users of the application may also make use of it prior to the event by booking their tickets and receiving push notifications about important information. Additionally, users will be able to use the installed online booking platform in order to book their travels around the world at any time and therefore retaining users during the course of the entire year between two festival installments and acting as a reminder of the event.

One significant service this application prototype is designed to provide is live streaming from users. Festival organizers rely on rich content and constant flow of information and content to increase revenues. User Generated Content (UGC) therefore enriches the content as well as manages to transfer the vibe and the feeling of the attendees to the viewers, creating interest and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and as a result attracting future visitors. Thus far festivals have supported live streaming but only from the festivals’ promoters not from visitors on location through an official channel.

Furthermore, taking the research and development one additional step further, it was decided to set up an application prototype for smartwatch users. Although the use of smartwatches is not so widespread in Greece yet, technology progresses rapidly, prompting the prototyping of the additional application for a smartwatch interface yet without including the entire offered services designed for the mobile application.

Creating and putting applications as the ones suggested into use, especially the mobile application, would be of great profit for organizers as they rely on rich content supplemented by live streams, to create the necessary word of mouth and therefore increase interaction and interest resulting in higher numbers of re-attendance in addition to new first-time visitors.

No festival organized in Greece has had a supporting app thus far, making the creation of such the next expected step regarding technologies implemented in music festival promotion.

7.3 Further Work

The first step of furthering the research completed by this thesis would be evaluating the smartwatch application prototype and through the process of “section evaluation” develop an innovative prototype as a similar application has yet to be launched.

Another step could be thorough research into the possible implementation of other technologies mentioned in this thesis as well additional ones being presented in the ever evolving scene of technology. Near Field Technology (NFC) tags and wearable-
tech wristbands could be the next technologies to be put into use on location at Greek festivals. As aforementioned, festival organizers in Greece are already experimenting and researching to find viable solutions in taking their events to the next level by improving the level of services provided and the overall visitor experience on location as well as before and after the event.

Virtual and augmented reality technologies are expected to be the next revolutionary step forwards, bringing on significant changes in the festival markets around the world and changing the experience of individuals both on location as well as the comfort of their home. Thus far these technologies have only been displayed at foreign events or at science fairs or further technology-related events in Greece. Research of ways to implement such technologies as part of performances taking place on stage or as was the case at the ‘Lost in Music’ VR festival set up by Sony in collaboration with the Chainsmokers in January, 2017, prior to the event to set the visitors in the ‘right’ mood (Bein, 2017) would benefit both event organizers and attendees as well, magnifying and changing the experience of a music and arts festival.

Moreover, one great problem organizers in Greece face is the ongoing financial crisis. Therefore it is crucial to explore solutions such as funding methods as well as sponsorship theories that would present a way to secure the necessary budgets to finance aforementioned technologies and further research.

Finally, this thesis has focused on organization and promotion of music events and specifically music festivals and how promoters and marketers may benefit from the implementation of new media. Further research should explore whether the findings of this thesis are also valid in regard to other social events.
8. REFERENCES


Table 1.p: 12


**ONLINE RESOURCES**


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