In what way do Instagram influencers impact the promotion of music festivals among millennials?

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

With the transformation from traditional marketing techniques to social media marketing, many new aspects need to be accounted for to determine the most effective way to promote products, services and events. This research investigates which role Instagram influencers play in promoting a music festival i.e. if they have been used in the past to promote a music festival and their potential for the future. To examine the effect of Instagram influencers, a quantitative research method was chosen in the form of a survey. This cross-sectional survey was conducted using 75 participants, based on convenience sampling, who were asked a series of question regarding their relationship with Instagram influencers and music festivals. Only millennials were asked to undergo this survey since they are the main generation who attend music festivals regularly and are more exposed to Instagram influencers. The results provide very little proof of Instagram influencers actually having an effect on participants' motivation to attend a music festival in the past, as well as in the future. However, overall, the participants did state that they can imagine Instagram influencers being useful in promoting a music festival in the near future.

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1. Introduction

1.1.   Background information

Marketing is constantly changing; from traditional marketing tools, such as billboards and radio advertisements, to the development of technology and the creation of social media. With the continual development of social media, more and more marketing techniques become apparent and beneficial to a company who is searching for new ways to communicate with their (potential) customers. The most recent addition to social media marketing is the popularity and reliability of influencers, especially on Instagram. These influencers can nowadays be used by businesses to promote any product or service to a new audience through novel communication methods.

Instagram and its influencers are the result of recent technological advancements, therefore the generation which uses and is influenced the most by it are millennials. Millennials are defined by people who are born between 1980 and 2000 and are often referred to as "technologically sophisticated multitaskers" (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). Reasons for millennials to use Instagram are due to the ease of use, the perceived usefulness, the social identity and the perceived pleasure (Nedra, Hadhri & Mezrani, 2019). Furthermore, Instagram provides a platform for people to post flattering pictures of themselves and to engage large audiences because of the focus on images (Shane-Simpson, Manago, Gaggi & Gillespie-Lynch, 2018). Instagram, being purely picture based, creates feelings of greater intimacy and connectedness, rather than social media sites which are text based (ibid.).

Influencers have recently been used more often to promote a company's products, services and events. A study conducted by Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair & Okumus (2015) has shown that a brand using Online Social Networks (OSNs) increases their brand awareness and generates positive word-of-mouth (WOM). A lot of research has already been conducted into celebrity endorsements in marketing and the effects of Instagram influencers on the

public. Instagram influencers usually post about products connected to 'lifestyle', such as fashion, beauty, electronic goods (Edström, Kenyon, & Svensson, 2016), as well as travel. However, there is still one area in which not a lot of research has been conducted into, which are the promotion of events through using the opinion leadership role of Instagram influencers. These kinds of events include music festivals, such as the well-known festivals Coachella, Tomorrowland and Creamfields (Festicket, 2018). A music festival often contains multiple musical artists which follow a specific music genre. The festivals attract brands because they frequently include activities and other entertainment in addition to the music, such as workshops which correlate with the theme of the festival (Staggenborg, Eder, & Sudderth, 1994). A well-known example of such a music festival is the Amsterdam Dance Event (ADE), which is a five day event and provides conferences and workshops during the day about electronic music and showcases the newest talents by night (ADE, 2019).

1.2.   Research questions and aims

It is clear that there is a lot of potential for music festival promotions through social media, explicitly with Instagram influencers. Unfortunately, there has not been a lot of research looking into the relationship millennials have with Instagram influencers, seen as they are the main generation who use Instagram and other social media, and how Instagram influencers may be used to promote music festivals. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to demonstrate that using Instagram influencers to promote music festivals is the best marketing method to use currently, since it attracts a new audience who rely heavily on the opinions of Instagram influencers whom they follow. This study is especially relevant for music festival organisers who want to increase the number of festival's attendees and gain a better reputation.

In order to collect data and evaluate the study successfully, multiple guiding research questions were formed. These include

- *In what ways can influencers be best used when promoting music festivals?*

- *How relevant are Instagram influencers for event organisers, in this case music festivals?*

- *How effective are these influencers in promoting a music event?*

- *How do festival attendees perceive the use of influencers to promote a music festival?*

Hypothesis:

Instagram influencers, until now, are not being made use of enough to promote music festivals, however they have a great potential to impact many followers/millennials, if done correctly.

The paper is organised as follows. The next section is the literature review in which other studies which are related to this paper's topic are discussed. Then, the methodology used for the research of this paper will be stated (mixed methods approach- content analysis and survey). Afterwards, the results collected will be analysed, whereupon they will be discussed and the study evaluated as a whole. Lastly, a conclusion will be drawn on how relevant this research is.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Instagram definition

To properly understand the purpose and relevance of Instagram and their influencers at music festivals, it is important to clearly define some key terms to avoid confusion. Instagram is an app for smartphones, however also available as a website, and is a fairly new medium in which one is able to post filter manipulated photos and videos on a newsfeed, to share it with so-called 'followers' (people who follow the person who originally posted the

photo/video) (Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2014). It was recorded in 2017 that the social media site has 700 million users worldwide (Instagram, 2017).

Through this attention the app gained, Instagram influencers were created. They are essentially every day, ordinary Internet users who obtain followers through the narration of their lifestyle and personal lives with the help of photos and videos. Successful influencers may also monetise their following by adding "advertorials" into their social media posts and attending events for which they post about (Abidin, 2016). Therefore, events may become more popular, because influencers have a wider reach and a different target audience.

2.2 Social media engagement

Social media plays a vital role in marketing nowadays. Marketing has advanced from being traditional, i.e. advertising on billboards, TV and radio, to being digitalised, such as using social media to raise brand awareness, create interest and ultimately to make individuals paying and recurring customers (Bento, Martinez & Martinez, 2018). It is beneficial to the company and the customers that social media enables easy communication with each other, despite where and when it is used, as well as which device is used (Kim & Ko, 2012).

It is crucial, when discussing social media, to mention how much of an influence it has and to look at the general way the public and businesses interact with social media. To this day, it is estimated that around 3.48 billion people use social media, which accounts for about 45% of the world's population. 90% of brands are using these sites to increase their brand awareness, mostly through social advertising (53% of businesses do this) (Newberry, 2019).

It is fairly obvious to see whether a business is doing well on social media or not. The reactions (likes, comments and shares) of customers on posts on various social networks have a direct correlation with the brand post popularity. Furthermore, interactive characteristics, such as posed questions

in the description of a post, lead to more likes including positive comments (De Vries et. al, 2012).

An example of a company which used social media very successfully, in terms of customer awareness and profit maximisation, is the car manufacturer Ford. Ford introduced a campaign to launch the newest Fiesta model in April 2009, with the actual car only being available to purchase in December 2009 (Stephen, 2010). However, 18 months before the model was available, Ford started a promotion called the Fiesta Movement. It encompassed giving 100 Americans the new car model for free for six months to use and drive around in. In return the selected participants had to post about the car on social media (mostly Facebook, Twitter and YouTube), therefore establishing user-generated content (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). By the end of the six months, 50,000 people were interested in buying the newest Ford model, with 97% of those people not owning a Ford car already (Stephen, 2010). This demonstrates that social media can have a major outreach, particularly when consumers are satisfied with the product and are willing to spread the word.

Through social media, businesses can advertise to their target group in a more straightforward manner, along with gaining a fast and, to a certain degree, accurate response by the consumers. This type of response is called brand-related user generated content (UGC) and can come in various forms, such as comments/reviews on Facebook or product review videos on YouTube. These are mostly made to converse with other people on social networks but can also profit the company which is being referred to (Smith et al. 2012). Smith et al. (2012) proposed six dimensions looking into UGC and the reason for individuals to post about brands. The first dimension is called the '*promotional self-presentation*', questioning how well the consumer promoted themselves and the brand at the same time in the picture/video. Secondly, there is the so-called '*brand-centrality*', looking into how much focus there is on the brand in the picture, i.e. how obvious it is to see the brand logo. Thirdly, the '*marketer-directed communication*' explores to what degree the picture is aimed toward

the marketer, meaning in which the consumer is hoping to attract the marketer's/brand's attention. The fourth dimension is the '*response to online marketer action*', determining if the content is created upon a marketing promotion. The fifth dimension, '*factually informative about the brand*' defines whether or not any information about the brand has been given. Lastly, the sixth dimension is called the '*brand sentiment*', enquiring whether the content offers positive or negative feelings towards the brand from what is shown in the picture.

Roma and Aloini (2019) conducted a study to test how three social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) varied in terms of the user generated content. They based their research on the abovementioned six dimensions suggested by Smith et al. (2012). The results indicate that promotional self-presentation on YouTube and Facebook do not differ by much, which can be explained by the fact that Facebook is becoming more visual, meaning more uploaded photos and videos rather than just text. Whereas on Twitter there is a little less promotional self-presentation. Concerning brand centrality and factually informative about the brand, all social media sites are on the same level. Brand centrality does not become less important, quite the opposite: especially if it is an internationally known brand, there is more focus on it. Regarding brand sentiment, Rome and Aloini (2019) did not find a large variability, no matter which social media site the content is posted on. They also recommended six additional dimensions which may influence the way marketers look at user generated content. These being: response to advertising campaign, location sharing, connection with personal experience, real-time sharing of purchase experience, real-time sharing of consumption experience, and brand recommendation. Hence, this study provides evidence into the effects of a brand's presentation on social media based on the consumer's point of view and how this reflects back on the brand.

Even though each social media network provides its own separate data to the brand, the networks may also influence each other. Romão et al. (2018) investigated how luxury brands leverage through social media. They aimed to

find out whether there is an influence of user interactions with a brand's social network on another particular network (Instagram), as well as to uncover which factor adds the most to this influence. Using Josefinas as an example, a company selling exclusive women's accessories, Romão et al. (2018) concluded that Facebook and Instagram influences each other in terms of the number of likes. With the luxury brand only tweeting half as much on Twitter (mostly only text) as posting on Facebook and Instagram (text and pictures), it was established that through posting pictures, the post gained more likes.

2.2.1. Customer equity

Any business, whether it provides products or services, needs to focus on customer equity, especially when working with social media. Customer equity is defined as "the total of the discounted lifetime values of all firm's customers" (Lemon et al., 2001). This is an important factor of any marketing strategy due to the fact that the present customers are able to offer valuable data to a business, as well as being the primary source of future revenues and profits for most businesses. The framework of customer equity focuses on customers and their value. There are three key aspects for this framework, which are: customer value, brand equity and customer relationship management. Through these key aspects, a business may define what is important to customers, however also enables to identify the strengths and weaknesses within the firm. Value equity of a brand is an objective opinion of the utility of a brand; basically how much a customer gives up for how much they receive. Brand equity is determined by the image and meaning of a company to customers. Customer relationship equity measures customer loyalty, as well as an objective and subjective point of view of the brand (Lemon et al., 2001).

Regarding the aforementioned framework, Kim and Ko (2012) conducted a study looking into if social media marketing (SMM) activities enhance customer equity and purchase intention, using luxury brands as examples. They concluded that the social media interaction with customers and the quantity of postings by the brand lead to more customers being affected and

enriched customer equity, specifically value equity. Additionally the open communication via various social media platforms from brands to customers, and vice versa, presented an increase in relationship and brand equity.

2.2.2. Social media marketing strategies

With the growth of technology and global interconnectedness, social media has become a major marketing tool within the past decade. It is essential that businesses thoroughly examine their future actions on social media, therefore needing a strategic decision process. Ananda et al. (2016) proposed to understand how companies develop their social media marketing strategic decision process, and how they translate and arrange their social media marketing strategy into strategic actions. They mention that in order to create a social media marketing strategy, one must first decide on which network to use, secondly how the content experience influences consumers attitudes and behaviours, and lastly how outside influence has an impact on consumers attitudes and behaviours, which leads to a decision-making process. In order to undertake the desired actions in the social media network a company choses, four specific factors need to be taken in account, which is summarised as the N-REL (Networking, Representation, Engagement, and Listening-in) framework, developed by Ananda et al. (2016). Representation focuses on conveying information about the company profile and product information via social media. Engagement looks at how the social media interacts with customers and adds value to them, which in turn offers various benefits to the business. Part of engagement includes customer support, loyalty programs and customisation. Listening-in entails market research which is, for example, examining analytics on social media and recognising which aspects are relevant actors and influencers. N-REL is a fairly new framework, only focusing on social media, from which companies can decide which digital marketing actions are most beneficial to them, to be able to compete in the market and increase marketing performance, and to furthermore assess their marketing strategies.

2.2.3. Social media firestorms

Even though social media has many advantageous prospects, such as the real-time feedback from customers and the quick spread of information, these may also backfire. This backfiring is called a "social media firestorm", indicating that if a company says or does anything negative, it spreads rapidly across social media channels so that thousands of people know, talk and spread the information about it. As opposed to pre-digital age when customers were dissatisfied with a company, the only way for them to communicate this was to contact the company and/or spread their opinion to a small, close group of people (Hansen et al. 2018). Whereas the nowadays digital age may cause a colossal threat to a company's brand assets, along with "reputation risk" being a serious threat (Deloitte, 2018).

A company which has undergone a digital brand crisis is the clothing label Abercrombie & Fitch in 2013. Here, the CEO Mike Jeffries made a statement in 2006 that only children who are "cool" and "popular" should be wearing their clothes. This statement resurfaced in 2013, leading to a surge of upsetting comments on social media, and a video on YouTube of someone criticising Mike Jeffries gaining 4.5 million views in only a few days. Upon this outrage, the brand decided to start producing bigger sizes after a petition with 68,000 signatures demanding this change, and the CEO was replaced (Chen, 2016).

Hansen et al. (2018) researched the effects of firestorms on short and long term effects of consumers brand perception and memory. They discovered that the more significant the brand is to the individual, meaning the more personal it is and how often they use the brand, the more they are involved with the firestorm and educate themselves about it, which in turn forms their brand perception. Even when the brand crisis is 'over', these firestorms nevertheless ingrain consumers' perception in the long term, depending on how close the individual is to the brand. Looking at Twitter, where firestorms have the fastest and largest outreach, the company in question receives an immediate increase in negative perceptions just after the firestorm; however,

the issue dissolves in the long run and it may not influence the brand perception as much. All in all, Hansen et al. (2018) concluded that short, small firestorms are only remembered vaguely, whereas with long ones, they are remembered in more detail.

2.3 Influencer marketing

Several brands these days choose to collaborate with online influencers in a number of ways, such as product placements in photos and videos, sharing sponsored content, and attending or hosting events (Mediakix, 2019) and posting about these. Brown and Hayes (2008) defined influencer marketing as using prominent individuals who have influence on a brand's potential customers and to use these in various marketing activities to promote certain products.

A form of an effective marketing activity is called viral marketing, which is dependent on consumers communicating the marketing message to others, therefore increasing positive word-of-mouth and product awareness, for a relatively cheap marketing cost (Mochalova & Nanopoulos, 2014). The purpose of viral marketing is to trigger a chain-reaction of influence, hence sharing the post with friends, which in return makes them share it with their friends, and so on (ibid.). However, what makes an advertisement essentially go viral, is the marketing message, which in many cases also amuses consumers in the way the product is marketed. A great example of a humorous viral marketing campaign was the Blendtec 'Will it blend?' marketing initiative in 2006. Blendtec is a company which sells blenders, which had brand awareness and sales on a low, until their viral video (Minkovsky, 2015). This video, posted on YouTube, comprised of the CEO blending unusual items, such as an iPhone or a block of wood, which demonstrated the high quality of the blender. This lead to the video gaining six million views in only five days, with only 50 dollars invested into this campaign (ibid.). Thus, their brand awareness and sales increased rapidly while entertaining millions of viewers.

The aforementioned example made use of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which is useful for both influencers and brands. It is defined as any "positive or negative statement made about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig et al., 2004). Through eWOM, influencers and brands can engage with their audience, as well as through paid ads and sponsored posts (ibid.). It is useful for influencers and brands online because the more people talk about them, the higher the chance that they obtain more followers.

A point of view which is significant to evaluating the engagement with social media is the one of the influencers themselves and what makes them so effective, as well as how they get their many followers. Yognarasimhan (2011) stated that it is reasonable that an influencer who has many followers will be perceived as more likeable because they are more popular. Yet, he argues that the likeability should derive from the fact that the influencers are a valuable source of information- opinion leaders - and not just due to popularity (ibid.). The more followers someone has, the more and easier they are able to spread ideas and information. A follower - following ratio exists, in which true influencers have a lot more followers than they personally follow (Veirman, Cauberghe, &Hudders, 2017). The higher the ratio, the more the individuals are seen as actual opinion leaders (ibid.).

Through the Social Influencer (SI) index, brands may discover the right influencers for their brand promotion based on a few requirements (Baldus, 2018). To produce such an index, brands need to use features from social media data; the most prominent features which researchers need to analyse are total engagement, total reach, total sentiment and total growth of the influencer (Aggrawal, Arora, Anand & Irshad, 2018). A study conducted by Arora, Kandpal, Aswani, and Dwivedi (2019) measured the social media influencer index using celebrities who are on three social media platforms- Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. They investigated the reactions on celebrities' posts utilising several machine learning regression models,

therefore being able to identify the niche of influencers. These learning regression models have the purpose of aiding brands to find the right influencers based on their criteria (ibid.). Through this index, Arora et al. (2019) concluded that celebrity influencers have the most impact when posting on Instagram, as well as that engagement, outreach, sentiment and growth are central to the decision-making process of brands when choosing an influencer.

2.3.1 Becoming an influencer and brand collaboration

Most influencers are self-made, meaning that they started without any fan base and third party assistance to promote their page. This is unlike celebrities, for example actors, who have made a name for themselves in their career and then decided to become an influencer, while they have already attained a major fan base and worked with several other companies in promoting a brand. When an individual looks up how to become an influencer, there are numerous articles explaining five to ten easy steps. These often include finding a niche market which suits the want-to-be influencer and their already existing expertise (Quora, 2017). The next steps are to build a following, understand the audience, post consistently, and interact with the followers (ibid.). Additionally, a successful influencer needs to announce that they are willing to collaborate with brands, therefore posting and promoting about their products (Influencermarketinghub, 2019) on their channels (i.e. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) and receiving compensation from the brand sponsor (Evans et al., 2017).

When influencers manage to be chosen for brand collaborations, they need to use disclosure language in their sponsored posts (i.e. making it clear that it is a sponsored post), which affects ad recognition, brand attitude, purchase and sharing intention (Evans et al., 2017). Stubb and Colliander (2019) argue that there is such a drastic increase of sponsored content through influencers on social media that influencers need to explicitly state when it is an '*original content*' (non-commercial content), which in their study is called an

impartiality disclosure. The aim of their study was to prove that there is a distinction between impartiality and partiality (sponsored) posts on consumer reactions and perceptions. The drawn conclusion was that the effectiveness of the impartiality disclosure depended on whether or not the consumers thought that the post was actually free of any commercial content- implying that there was no underlying advertorial message. Furthermore, consumers essentially viewed a post promoting a product with an impartiality disclosure as more credible, for the post and the influencer. A study conducted by Boerman (2020) supported the findings of the previous study, as well as adding that the disclosure increased ad recognition. Additionally, the disclosure positively affected brand recall through the ad recognition and did not affect the way followers responded to the message, influencer or brand (ibid.). Hence, the disclosure has no vast effect on consumers' brand attitude, purchase intention and ad recognition.

2.3.2 Instagram influencers

Instagram purely relies on visuals; pictures and videos. This is beneficial for multiple industries, for example the fashion industry which needs pictures and videos in order to sell their clothes and accessories. Consumers who are admirers of a brand are willing to post about it on social media, especially Instagram, and may become opinion leaders (also known as 'influencers'), with the right amount of followers. Cassálo, Flavián and Sánchez (2018) examined fashion opinion leaders on Instagram and what factors play into becoming an opinion leader. They discovered that the perceived opinion leaders have to be original and unique, which affects consumer behavioural intentions so that the user interacts more with the account and recommends the account to others, which increases the opinion leader's value (ibid.) and credibility.

2.4 Festival engagement

Due to this paper looking into music festivals, it is vital to mention how festivals are/can promote themselves and how to engage more consumers, with the aim of attracting new festival goers and creating recurring festival goers.

Hoksbergen and Insch (2016) argue that there is a lack of understanding about how to engage users and to make them want to engage with the festival, as well as how separate social media sites are perceived as platforms of co-creation. Music festivals can be thought of and managed as brands, relating to "brand thinking", according to Mossberg and Getz (2006) who conducted a case study of 14 festivals. Either the music festival itself, which is treated as a brand, or another brand which is present at the festival can make use of interacting with attendees through social media and therefore create an emotional attachment to the festival. This attachment has an effect on word-of-mouth (Hudson et al., 2015), which is valuable to promoters.
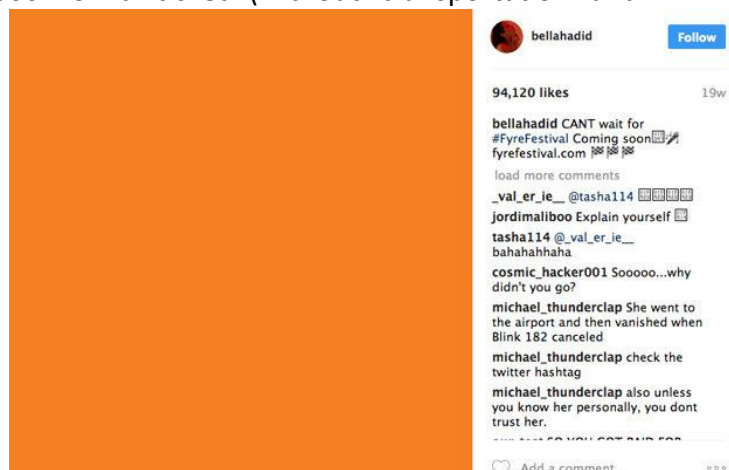
What music festivals offer are more than just the music experience. Packer and Ballantyne (2010) conducted a study which states four components that contribute to the overall experience of attending music festivals. The first is of course the music experience- enjoying ones favourite music (ibid.). The second is the festival experience- being in a different environment (ibid.). Thirdly, the social experience- meeting up with friends and meeting new people (ibid.). Lastly, they state that there is a separation experience, such as experiencing completely new things (ibid.). Therefore, if a music festival can offer all these components, attendees will have an overall good experience. This is crucial for promoting the festival among other people, mostly through word-of-mouth.

Hudson and Hudson (2013) found in his study that more and more consumers are creating their own content (user-generated content) to evaluate festivals. Consumers make use of blogging websites, such as Instagram, as an effective tool to reflect on and share their experience. This was proven in the study when researching the Bonnaroo and Latitude festival, which built relationships with bloggers writing about the festivals and making an interactive blogging account for passive engagement (Hudson & Hudson, 2013). Therefore, users of social media can re-tell their experience, however even if it is a bad experience, which may discourage other people of going to the festival. However, this would also be an opportunity to improve the festival (Hoksbergen, 2016).

Furthermore, Llopis-Amorós, Gill-Saura, Ruiz-Molina and Fuentes-Blasco (2019) conducted a study looking into the difference between Millennials and Centennials at live music festivals and the effects of social media communications on festival brand equity creation. The results indicated that music festival organisers should make more use of social media in their integrated marketing communications and the chance of event content going viral on social media. They also discovered that for both age groups, millennials and centennials, the user generated content by people at festivals have a stronger positive impact on brand equity, than the content produced by festival organisers (ibid.) Therefore this study demonstrates that user generated content is more valued. If this is the case, Instagram influencers may have a major impact on festival attendees and brand equity, which contributes to the festival's reputation, as well as if music festivals would work closely and invest more into Instagram influencers (i.e. posting about the festival), it would result in a higher attendance in the next years, mostly achieved through eWOM.

2.4.1 Best-practice example: Fyre Festival

The Fyre Festival is a perfect example of how much impact Instagram influencers truly have. This festival was supposed to take place in 2017 on the Bahamas, but due to lack of funding, budget and time, the festival organisers could not keep their promise of making it one of the best music festivals. Attendees paid up to $2000 for a ticket (without transportation and accommodation costs) and were not informed about the issues of organising the event. Festival goers ended up at an unprepared music festival, with all planned performances cancelled (Babcock, 2019). Beforehand, the viral

Image 1. Orange tile posted on Instagram by Bella Hadid.

marketing techniques and use of Instagram influencers were very effective in promoting not just a festival, but also a lifestyle; partying with famous models and influencers (ibid.). They did this by paying around 400 top Instagram influencers, such as models Kendall Jenner and Bella Hadid, to post a picture of plain orange tile, with the caption "#FyreFestival" (Smith, 2019) (Image 1). This intrigued their followers and made them want to attend the festival, to give them a sense of being exclusive and special (ibid.). This ties in with the phenomenon called 'fear of missing out' (FOMO), which is the panic people perceive when they feel like they are missing an opportunity (Babcock, 2019). This is very common within social media. This shows that certain people are very influenced by Instagram influencers and relying on their judgement and recommendation of what is good, like attending an event.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

In order to successfully conduct research into the topic of this paper, it is important to know why these specific samples and measures were chosen. For this research, a quantitative method approach has been chosen. Quantitative research is typically used for "testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables" (Creswell, 2014, P.4) using standards of validity and reliability. In this approach, the variables can be measured in numbers, which therefore can be easily analysed with statistical procedures. Creswell (2014) suggests that quantitative methods are post-positivist knowledge claims within the philosophical worldviews, which he proposed. These worldviews, or sometimes called paradigms or epistemologies, are philosophical orientations about the world and explains the nature of the research (ibid.). Post-positivism depicts the process of researchers aiming to pursue objectivity even though there may be some effects of biases present, such as the background knowledge or value a researcher holds (ibid.).

Therefore limitations of the research are important to consider, which will be mentioned in detail later on in this paper.

Quantitative research methods usually consist of pre-determined questions which create data, such as performance, attitude, observational or census data, which in turn creates the ability for statistical analysis and interpretations (Creswell, 2014). Instruments commonly used to collect data include surveys and experiments with which numeric data is collected (ibid.).

In case of conducting the research and findings one needs to consider the reliability and validity of the study as a whole. Reliability concentrates on whether the study in question is repeatable and the results are consistent. Validity looks at the "integrity of the conclusions" (Bryman, 2015, P.41) which are drawn from the research. A big part of making a study valid and reliable is to choose the correct sample. These samples may be chosen in two ways: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is defined by a random selection, so that everyone has an equal chance of being chosen (Bryman, 2015). On the other hand, there is non-probability sampling, from which a sample is knowingly chosen and it eliminates any sort of random selection (ibid.). Probability sampling benefits from keeping the sampling error at a minimum, which is the error generated in the research findings because of the differences within the population and of which the sample has been selected from (ibid.). However, true probability sampling is often not achieved.

3.2. Sample and survey design

Due to the nature of this paper and its research topic, a survey will be conducted using only participants who are millennials and have been to a music festival recently, hence looking at a purely consumer behaviour approach.

The participants will be recruited to complete this online survey through convenience and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling is a simple way of establishing a group of respondents who the researcher has easy accessibility

to (Bryman, 2015). Snowball sampling is the method of a researcher making contact with a small group of their sample and asking this group to contact others who may fit into the research (ibid.). Therefore, this paper will use participants who the researcher knows personally and whether they fit into the target group. This will be done by inviting them to partake in the survey through social media networks and individual emails. Then, the researcher will ask the initial group if they know other people who are millennials and have been to a music festival recently, and ask them to take the survey. The aim for the number of participants to partake in the survey is 75-100 people, and it takes around 4 minutes to complete the survey.

A cross-sectional survey was chosen as the best form to execute this research because it is used for the purpose of making descriptive observations of a population and their certain traits and attributes (Babbie, 1990) at one certain time. Babbie (1990) explains that even though surveys typically aim to make a descriptive conclusion, they may also have an added objective of explaining the reasons for why the target group responded in a certain way. This added objective requires an investigation into at least two variables; also called a multivariate analysis (ibid.).

The survey will encompass open and closed-ended questions and statements which relate to Instagram influencers and the participants' experiences at music festivals, and will attempt to find a correlation between these two variables. The 14 questions of the survey are divided into four main categories; demographics, music festivals, Instagram influencers, and general opinion. A question in the 'Music festivals' section asks which festival the participant most recently attended. These ten music festivals were chosen based on research into the biggest and most well-known festivals around the world (TimeOut.com, 2019), however also provides a 'Other' box to insert any other festival participants may have attended. Furthermore, participants are asked to rate, from 1-4, the main reasons why they attend music festivals, based on the study conducted by Packer and Ballantyne (2010). In the 'Instagram influencers' section of the survey, a list of 10 Instagram influencers is given,

with the question being if the participant follows any of them. This list was chosen based on the amount of campaign deals they had and their high engagement rate (Ainfluencer.com). In both aforementioned sections, an open-ended question is asked to describe their ideal music festival/Instagram influencer in 3 words. Lastly, participants need to fill in a likert scale, ranging from 'Completely Disagree' to 'Neutral' to 'Completely Agree', based on statements to do with how much participants rely on the opinions of influencers, and if they would consider attending a music festival if an Instagram influencer they follow were to attend it.

Thus, the independent variable is the influence of the Instagram influencers, which will have an effect on the dependent variable, which is the music festival attendance rate. Lastly, the participants were informed that their data will be treated in a confidential manner. The full survey can be found in appendix 1.

4. Survey findings and discussion

4.1 Sample descriptions

4.1.1 Demographics

The first part of the survey contained questions regarding the demographics of the participants. In total there were 37 participants who completely filled out the survey and whose responses are valuable for the analysis. There were roughly the same amount of males and females who completed the survey (Table 1), the majority of them being from Europe (Table 2).

Table 1- Amount of male and female participants

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	45,9
Female	19	51,4
Prefer not to say	1	2,7
Total	37	100,0

Table 2- Nationality of participants

	Frequency	Percentage

Asia	3	8,1
Africa	1	2,7
Europe	26	70,3
Australia/New Zealand	1	2,7
North America	3	8,1
Middle East	3	8,1
Total	37	100,0

4.1.2. Music festivals

In table 3, participants were asked which music festival they have most recently attended. The most popular one from this list was the Sziget Music Festival, with 9 of the respondents having attended it.

Table 3- Which music festival participants recently attended

	Frequency	Percentage
Tomorrowland	2	6,3
Sziget Music Festival	9	28,1
Glastonbury Music Festival	1	3,1
Coachella Music Festival	3	9,4
Ultra Music Festival (UMF)	2	6,3
Other	15	46,9
Total	32	100,0
None*	5	
Total	37	

*The 5 people who are indicated with "None" did not fill in which music festival they recently attended.

"Other" responses include: Lollapalooza, Pukkelpop, Open Air Zurich, Frequency FM, Slam FM King's Day Festival, Eurockéennes, Rock-a-field, Electric Love, Electric Forest, Middle Beast, Let Them Eat Cake, and Shutdown.

This leads to the question of how the participants usually find out about a music festival, and if influencers play a role in this. Table 4 reveals the responses (multiple choice question); the majority said that they hear about music festivals mostly through social media, and only 5 people marked 'influencers'. This demonstrates that influencers are not the main channel of promotion of a music festival, yet.

Table 4- How participants usually find out about music festivals

	N
Friends or family	20
Social media	23
Influencers	5
Music artists	10
Traditional marketing tools e.g. posters	8

A question in the survey was based on a study conducted by Packer and Ballantyne (2010), which looks into what kind of experience at a music festival is the most important of the four components (music, festival, social, or separation experience). This was integrated into the survey by having respondents rank the experiences from the most to the least important. This question is beneficial to ask for marketers who want to know which aspect of a music festival is the most important and to focus on this while promoting an event.

Table 5- Ranking of the importance of music festival components

	N	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis
Music experience	32	1,78	1,211	,812
Festival experience	32	2,22	,451	-,880
Social experience	32	2,56	-,433	-,697
Separation experience	32	3,44	-1,630	2,062

According to table 5, people who have been to a music festival rated the music experience as the most important factor (overall 1.78), and the separation experience as the least important factor (3.44), when attending a music festival. The skewness reinforces this, as it tends to be skewed more to the left (positive 1.211), which is positively skewed. The kurtosis depicts that more participants agree on that separation experience is the least important factor (value of 2.062- high agreement), whereas there is a little disagreement of which of the other experiences is the most, second, and third important.

4.2 Correlation analysis between variables:

To relate the abovementioned reasoning for attending a music festival (four experiences) to how participants find out about a festival, a correlation analysis has been established. Due to the nature of this paper, only two ways of hearing about a music festival have been compared to the reason for attending a festival (four experiences)- "social media" and "influencers". Marketers are able to see which aspect they should focus on when deciding what the influencer should post, i.e. if they should concentrate more on the music aspect or the separation aspect.

In both cases (table 6a and 6b), the music experience is ranked as the most important motivation for attending a music festival, for people who said that they find out about a music festival through social media and/or influencers.

Table 6a- The importance of music festival components in regards to finding out through social media

Social media	Mean
Music experience	1,78
Festival experience	2,30
Social experience	2,52
Separation experience	3,39

Table 6b- The importance of music festival components in regards to finding out through influencers

Influencers	Mean
Music experience	1,40
Festival experience	2,40
Social experience	2,60
Separation experience	3,60

Furthermore, participants were asked why they generally follow influencers on Instagram. Answer options included statements such as "I value their opinion", "I like to see their lifestyle", "I can relate to them", and "I like the products they promote". Additionally, respondents were asked how likely it would be for them to attend a music festival in the future due to a recommendation by an influencer (results shown in table 7).

Table 7- Likeliness of participants to attend a music festival due to the recommendation of an Instagram influencer

	Frequency	Percentage
Completely Disagree	9	31,0
Disagree	6	20,7
Neutral	7	24,1
Agree	6	20,7
Not Applicable	1	3,4
Total	29	100,0

The results show that the majority of people would not attend a music festival in future just because an influencer recommended or said that they were going to attend it. In fact, none of the participants indicated that they "completely agree" with this statement. It is possible to compare the abovementioned reasons for following an Instagram influencer to their likeliness of attending a music festival in the future because an influencer recommended it. The value of the R^2 presented in table 8 is 0.480, meaning that the comparison is 48% significant. Thus, only around half the people who completed the survey and checked off the reasons for following an Instagram influencer also said that it would be likely for them to attend a music festival in future upon the recommendation of an influencer.

Table 8- Value of significance (R^2 value)

Predictors	R Square
- I can relate to them - I like the products they promote - I like to see their lifestyle/what they are doing - I value their opinion	,480

However, when looking into further detail, the research (table 9) finds that participants who specifically stated their reasons for following an Instagram influencer were because of the products they promote and how relatable they are, are also more likely to attend a music festival in future because of an Instagram influencer. The reason "I like the products they promote" had a significance value of 0.052, which is very close to the value of 0.05 (when one can accept that it is significant). Therefore the research can accept that this

statement is significant in regards to how likely participants are to attending a festival in future due to an influencer. Another statement which this approves with is "I can relate to them", which has a value of 0.017 (very significant), which is reinforced by the value of the unstandardized beta (1.112). Therefore, using the 48% explained variance offered in table 8, it can be said that people are likely to attend a music festival if Instagram influencers whom they follow (based on the products they promote and how relatable they are) promote it.

Table 9- Value of significance (Beta value)

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	Beta	
I like to see their lifestyle/ what they are doing	-,263	-,113	,501
I like the products they promote	1,190	,365	,052
I value their opinion	1,020	,277	,134
I can relate to them	1,112	,422	,017

A comparison has been established to be able to distinguish if participants in the past have gone to a music festival because an influencer who they follow promoted/said that they were going to attend it, and whether they would attend a music festival in the future if an Instagram influencer promotes it. Conducting this comparison was made possible through three statements which asked participants to what extent they agree with them. Table 10 depicts that most respondents did not agree with the statements that influencers have motivated them to attend a music festival in the past. With an explained variance of 36.6% (p=0.008), however, there is a high chance that people who have in the past attended a music festival due to an influencer, will attend a festival in the future because an influencer promotes it (ß=.467,p=.028) (table 11).

Table 10- Value of significance (R² value and p-value)

Predictors	R Square	Sig.
- I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow promoted it - I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow said they were going to attend it	,366	,008

Table 11- Value of significance (Beta value)

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.
"I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow promoted it"	,467	,028
"I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow said they were going to attend"	,223	,271

An additional association can be made between if partakers who rely heavily on the opinion of influencers whom they follow, also would potentially go to a music festival in the future through the recommendation of an influencer. With an explained variance of 40,2% (p=0.000), the statistic does hold true that people would be more likely to attend a music festival if an influencer promotes it on whose opinion they heavily rely on (ß=.748, p=.000) (table 12). To support this argument, the unstandardized beta of table 12 is 0.748, meaning that the higher someone scores on the scale of disagree to agree for heavily relying on the opinions of influencers, the higher that person scores on the scale of disagree to agree to attending a music festival in the future because of an influencer.

Table 12- Value of significance (R² value)

Predictor	R Square	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta
I heavily rely on the opinions of Instagram influencers who I follow.	,402	,000	,748

When asked about the potential of Instagram influencers in promoting a music festival, the majority of participants indicated that they think it would be an effective way (table 13).

Table 13- If participants think that Instagram influencers are a good way of promoting a music festival

		Frequency	Percentage
	Completely Disagree	2	6,9
	Disagree	1	3,4
	Neutral	4	13,8
	Agree	13	44,8
	Completely Agree	9	31,0
	Total	29	100,0
	Missing	8	
Total		37	

With the assumption that the majority of participants would think that using Instagram influencers when promoting a music festival is a good idea, this can be related to the likelihood of these people attending a music festival in future through the recommendation of an influencer. With an explained variance of 45.1% (p=0.000) (table 14), a conclusion can be drawn that people who think influencers are a good way to promote music festivals are more likely to attend a festival which an influencer has advertised (ß=0.701, p=0.000) (table 15).

Table 14- Value of significance (R² value)

Predictor	R Square	Sig.
I think Instagram influencers would be a good way to promote a music festival	,451	,000

Table 15- Value of significance (Beta value)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	
I think Instagram influencers would be a good way to promote a music festival	,701	,000

The following table (table 16) demonstrates the responses of male and female participants and their stance towards the statements concerning:

- Their likeliness of attending a music festival in future due to the recommendation of an influencer;
- How heavily they rely on the opinions of Instagram influencers;
- If they have attended a music festival because an influencer promoted it;
- If they attended a music festival because an influencer they follow said that they were going to attend it;
- If they think that Instagram influencers are a good way of promoting a music festival.

These responses were collected on a likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being completely disagree and 5 being completely agree (with each statement).

Table 16- Male vs. female opinions on statements regarding Instagram influencers and music festivals

Male or female		Likeliness of attending a music festival in future due to recommendation of an influencer.	How heavily they rely on opinions of Instagram influencers.	If they have attended a music festival because an influencer promoted it.	If they attended a music festival due to an influencer saying they were going to attend it.	If they think that Instagram influencers are a good way of promoting a music festival.
Male	Mean	2,36	2,29	1,86	2,07	3,57
	N	14	14	14	14	14
Female	Mean	2,60	2,40	2,53	2,47	4,20
	N	15	15	15	15	15
Total	Mean	2,48	2,34	2,21	2,28	3,90
	N	29	29	29	29	29
	Sig. (P-value)	,242	,056	,734	,262	,131

When noting the differences between the means of male and female with each statement, there is always a slightly higher mean for females than for males. This indicates that female participants agreed slightly more with the above statements. A difference which is especially noticeable is with the last statement, about whether or not they believe that Instagram influencers can be used to promote a music festival. Here, the average for males was 3.57 (on a scale from 1-5), compared to an average of 4.20 for females. A reason for this may be because females use this particular social media more, and/or females tend to follow more Instagram influencers.

4.3 Word clouds

Participants were asked to describe their ideal music festival and, on a separate page, their ideal Instagram influencer in three words. This was done to deduct if there are similarities between them, which music festival organisers could make use of when searching for the right influencers to promote their event.

Word cloud of responses to describe the ideal music festival:

Word cloud of responses to describe the ideal Instagram influencer:

The word clouds show no vast overlaps of words which survey participants used to describe the ideal music festival and Instagram influencer. The only similarity would be the word "fun", used in both cases.

5. Conclusion

This research has aimed to identify if Instagram influencers are being used when promoting a music festival, how followers interact with Instagram influencers, and to determine if Instagram influencers should be made use of more often in promoting a music festival.

The results reveal that, in the past, the majority of participants who completed the survey have not been particularly influenced by Instagram influencers to attend a music festival. Likewise, these participants stated that in future they would also not be inclined to attend a music festival because an influencer promoted it. Yet, this contradicts the fact that the majority of

people think that Instagram influencers would be an effective way of promoting a music festival. However, for the participants that have been motivated by an influencer in the past to attend a music festival, also stated that they would attend a music festival in future when advertised by an Instagram influencer.

The main way of finding out if a music festival is happening is due to the word-of-mouth through friends and family, as well as social media; presumably the festival's own social media platforms. The four components that contribute to the overall music festival experience, introduced by Packer and Ballantyne (2010), suggest that festival attendees pay more attention to the "music experience" and "festival experience" components, therefore enjoying the music and being in a different environment are the most important reasons for attending a music festival. This is valuable to music festival organisers and social media managers as these findings provide an answer to what they should focus on when advertising a festival, and to see which Instagram influencer(s) they can best work with to convey the message.

When asked about the likeliness of people attending a music festival due to the recommendation of an influencer, many respondents answered that it would not be very likely for them to be influenced in such way. For the participants that do follow Instagram influencers and would attend a music festival in future upon their promotion, the research suggests that this is because they like the products that the influencer promotes and that they can relate to them.

When observing the differences between genders and what partakers answered, it seems as if females agree more with statements that ask about their relationship with Instagram influencers. A reason for this may be that more females have Instagram and interact more with influencers. Nevertheless, there is no large difference in responses.

In conclusion, the research supports the hypothesis that Instagram influencers are not used very often at the moment to promote music festivals, however they do have a great potential, according to the millennials asked. If implemented correctly, these influencers can have an immense effect on music festival attendance rate; which could be seen based on the example of the Fyre festival.

5.1 Limitations

Even though this research provides some evidence of the kind of interactions users of Instagram have with influencers and the influence they could potentially have when promoting a music festival, there are some limitations to the study itself.

Firstly, it was a relatively small study, with not many participants and not much time to undertake further research and gain more participants. Therefore the findings are not generalisable. Secondly, the wording of the questions in the survey may have been misleading or confusing, depending on the level of English the respondent possesses. Thirdly, no true conclusions could be drawn from this sample due to the nature of its size and because of not all partakers answering every question (mostly open-ended questions, e.g. describing their ideal music festival). Lastly, the sample itself was not diverse enough, so that no comparisons could be done on whether the nationality of the participant effects their interactions with Instagram influencers and music festivals.

5.2 Future research

Future research should further investigate the potential of Instagram influencers for the promotion of music festivals. This may be done in the form of another survey which goes into more detail and uses a bigger sample size, which is more diverse. The diversification could be split up into individual

countries, rather than whole continents, to analyse if there are major differences of people's interaction with Instagram influencers. Focus may also be put on specific festivals or a type of festival (e.g. the type of music played). Additionally, the sample can be expanded into different age groups, especially including the generation Z- people born between 1997 and 2012- to analyse changes between the age groups. Moreover, research can be done looking into the perspective of Instagram influencers themselves; their willingness to promote a music festival, as well to possibly do a test with one or more influencers who would promote a festival, and to see whether the attendance rate of this particular festival increases.

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Survey questions

Instagram influencers effect on music festivals

Demographics

Are you male or female? *

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Prefer not to say

Where are you from? *

☐ Asia

☐ Africa

☐ Europe

☐ Australia/New Zealand

☐ North America

☐ South America

☐ Middle East

Are you between the ages of 20 and 40 years old? *

○ yes

○ no

Have you been to a music festival in the last 5 years? *

A festival with multiple aritsts, not a concert.

○ yes

○ no

Music festivals

Which music festival have you recently attended? *

Only one answer.

- [ ] Tomorrowland
- [ ] Sziget Music Festival
- [ ] Creamfields Music Festival
- [ ] Glastonbury Music Festival
- [ ] Coachella Music Festival
- [ ] Ultra Music Festival (UMF)
- [ ] Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC)
- [ ] Primavera Sound
- [ ] Bonnaroo Music Festival
- [ ] Defqon.1
- [ ] Other (please specify) _____

Instagram influencers

Which of these Instagram influencers do you follow? *

Multiple choice.

- [ ] Indira Scott (@inscotts)
- [ ] Anna (@mrsannnna)
- [ ] Alexis Brejay (@lexibrejay)
- [ ] JonyP (@jonyp.artist)
- [ ] Kennie (@kenniejd)
- [ ] DAYNA G (@dimedayna)
- [ ] Jette (@jette)
- [ ] Katie Sarife (@katiesarife)
- [ ] Elena Ljamcevska (@elenagrncarova)
- [ ] Bea Brina (@bea_brina)
- [ ] None of these Instagram influencer
- [ ] I do not follow any Instagram influencers

How do you usually find out about a music festival? *

Multiple choice.

- [ ] Friends/family
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] Influencers
- [ ] Music artists
- [ ] Traditional marketing tools (e.g. posters)
- [ ] Other (please specify) _____

What are the main reasons for you to attend a music festival? *

Please rank them from 1-4, 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important

- [▼] Music experience- wanting to listen to the music
- [▼] Festival experience- wanting a different environment
- [▼] Social experience- wanting to meet friends and new people
- [▼] Separation experience- wanting to experience something completely new

Describe your ideal music festival in 3 words. *

_____

Why do you follow Instagram influencers? *

Multiple choice.

- [ ] Because friends of mine follow them
- [ ] I like to see their lifestyle/what they are doing
- [ ] I like the products they promote
- [ ] I value their opinion
- [ ] I can relate to them
- [ ] I do not follow any Instagram influencers
- [ ] Other (please specify) [_____]

Are you aware of any Instagram influencers who promote music festivals? If yes, please name them. *

[_____]

Describe your ideal Instagram influencer in 3 words. *

[_____]

General opinion

Please read these statements carefully and indicate to what extent you agree with them. *

	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely Agree	Not applicable
I heavily rely on the opinions of Instagram influencers who I follow.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow promoted it.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have attended a music festival because an Instagram influencer who I follow said that they are going to attend it.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I think Instagram influencers would be a good way to promote a music festival.	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is very likely that I will attend a music festival in the near future because an Instagram influencer who I follow recommended the festival.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Do you have any other comments on this topic?

[_____]