The Customer Journey of Music Festival Attendees

A Swedish Customer Perspective

Master Thesis, 30 credits

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“Great stories aren’t just told, they are retold...”

- Marcus Murphy

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ABSTRACT

Background: Individuals in today’s post-industrial times focus more on ‘why’ they are doing things rather than ‘what’ they are doing. Therefore, consumption activities go beyond purchasing where the experience has become the focal-point when customers evaluate products.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process.

Research questions: What are the steps of the customer journey of music festivals? What are the enablers and barriers that impact the customer journey?

Method: A qualitative study with an inductive approach using a cross-case analysis was adopted. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect primary data from music festival attendees.

Theoretical framework: Literature of the customer journey and decision making influencers are presented followed by theoretical discussion of each step in the customer journey. Finally, a conceptual model, which presents existing theory regarding customer journey related to the event industry and particularly to music festivals to the possible extent, is visualised.

Findings: The customer journey for music festival attendees may be concluded in a model of eleven stages. Each stage aims to satisfy a customer need that will make the individual proceed the customer journey. The stages all conclude enablers and barriers that may affect the customer experience.

Keywords: customer journey, consumer behaviour, customer experience, music festivals.
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the past decades a change within advertising has been identified by many scholars. Consumers are now looking to buy products and services that have an emotional appeal to them (Brembeck & Ekström, 2004; Hultén, Broweus, & Van Dijk, 2011; Krishna, 2012; Randhir, Latasha, Tooraiven, & Monishan, 2016; Ratneshwar & Mick, 2008; Schmitt, 1999). According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), there has been a transition from a service economy to an experience economy. Within an experience economy, experiences are regarded as the most significant value-creating factors, whilst the service economy would focus on the quality of service provided from the firm (ibid.). This may imply that the experience is becoming the focal point of the consumption, rather than the end result (Leenders, 2010). As a firm needs to adapt according to its customer demands (Ford, 2010), the firm now needs to have a greater focus on the full experience of the product. Gerritsen, Soilen, Visser, Hoogreef, Hulst, Jansen, and Consenheim (2014) explain that the customer journey includes all the activities where a customer may interact with a product, brand, or firm. All these activities may be included in the customer experience (Leenders, 2010).

It has been argued that consumers nowadays are intending for new consumption experiences in ways which have been shaped by constant needs for creativity, imagery, emotion and fun (Evans & Cothrel, 2014; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999). Wessblad (2010) claims that in these post-industrial times, people are now looking into ‘why’ they are doing what they do, rather than ‘what’ they do. People are less connected to what they do, and instead identify themselves with lifestyles and interests (ibid.; Hultén et al., 2011). According to Hultén et al. (2011), generation X, Y, and Z are looking at individualism as a lifestyle. It implies that the need for a more personal and emotional approaches towards the customer is demanded (ibid.). Wessblad (2010) claims that in the post-modern society people are living in today, people tend to lose the sense of local connection. He means that therefore, people are in need of more identification hubs than they used to. This is one attribute that explains why the event industry is booming and is more important than ever. According to Wessblad (2010), people go to events to find like-minded people, as an event tends to be a social platform attracting a certain segment. Events are created with a certain purpose, and targets people who may be interested in the message the event organiser wants to communicate (ibid.). Wessblad (2010) explains that to attend an event is to break the daily life, and people can emphasise who they want to be and integrate with like-minded people.
It is claimed that the feeling among attendees from a good music experience may last for weeks or even years, and often engrave deeply in people’s lives (Zubeck, 2014). Music festivals often have great attraction as they comprise numerous activities beyond the music itself to increase the customer experience (Bowen & Daniels, 2005). Previous research suggests that engagement with music in a festival context can bring psychic- and social well-being benefits for the attendees. Examples of these may be the creation of a sense of community, a sense of common purpose and connection (Frith, 1996; Gibson & Connell, 2005), new expressions of self-identity (Karlsen & Brändström, 2008; Matheson, 2005), or a sense of accomplishment (Harrison, 2014).

1.2 Problem Discussion
Randhir et al. (2016) and Hultén et al. (2011) indicate that product-focused marketing and relationship-focused marketing are not as effective as they have been. They mean that there is an increasing need for an experience-focus when designing a product and marketing messages. Von Neumann and Morgenstern (1953) suggest that customers make choices based on expected outcomes of their decisions. However, this has changed over recent years and Leenders (2010) argue that the result of using a product does not matter to the consumers, but the experience of using the product is the value-creator. Also, Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, & Wong (1999) argue that the customers base their decisions on the perceived value that the experience of the product will deliver to them.

Wessblad (2010) and Koranteng (2004) explain that the competition among music festivals has increased significantly over the past years. Although the demand has increased as well, some music festivals are facing difficulties in attracting a sufficient number of visitors (Koranteng, 2004). It is increasingly important to understand the preferences of the customers throughout the full customer journey due to the decreased focus in the end result as a value-creator. However, the customer journey of music festivals has not yet been specified or studied to a great extent in existing research. To bring greater insights to how the attendees perceive their festival experience, this study has been developed to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process.
1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process.

In order to answer the purpose of this study, two research questions have been developed:
- What are the steps of the customer journey of music festivals?
- What are the enablers and barriers that impact the customer journey?

1.4 Delimitation
This study focuses on the customer journey of Swedish music festival attendees. However, the already existing literature used in this study is not specified for the customer journey of music festivals. Therefore, this research was conducted to explore how the customer journey may develop particularly for music festivals. The theoretical framework focuses on the elements of a customer journey. This study was also delimited to the customers’ perspectives, which means that information and data gathered from interviews with music festival attendees aimed to gain better understanding of enablers and barriers of the customer journey. As the empirical data consists of interviews with attendees, the subconscious influential factors in the consumer behaviour will not be studied. The discussion in this study is based upon factors that the respondents are aware of.

1.5 Definitions

Attendees: According to Wessblad (2010), attendees are the people that are attending an event. Throughout this paper, the authors refer to attendees as individuals who have attended a music festival.

Customer Journey: According to Skinner (2010), a customer journey is the sum of the different experiences that a customer goes through when interacting with a brand or company. In this paper, the authors refer to the customer journey as all the steps a music festival attendee goes through when attending the festival. This includes processes, decisions, actions and influential factors from the stage of first hearing about the festival to the evaluation stage after attending the festival.

Touch Points: By touch points the authors refer the definition, according to Gerritsen et al. (2014), as phases where customers interact with a firm.
**Customer Experience:** The term ‘customer experience’ used in this study concerns all feelings and thoughts that the music festival attendees experience throughout the customer journey.

**Product:** The authors refer to ‘product’ according to an explanation by Kotler, which considers anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a need or want. The concept of products comprises not only physical objects, but also anything which has capability to satisfy a need. They can also be intangible goods, such as services, something customers experience but do not hold or retain. (Kotler, 2010).

**Enablers & Barriers:** The enablers and barriers in this study refer to the factors that may improve (enablers) or decrease (barriers) how a customer values the experiences within the customer journey.


### 1.6 Disposition

The paper content is structured by six chapters; *Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Methodology, Empirical Data, Discussion,* and *Contributions.* The introduction elaborates on the background of the topic as well as provides the reader with an understanding of the research problem and the purpose of this study. The introduction chapter also presents the delimitations and provides an overview of terminology that is used throughout the paper. The theoretical framework presents all theories that support the analysis. It is summarised in a conceptual model that was used to develop the interview guide for the empirical data collection. A detailed methodology explains the research process to increase reliability of the study. The research process is also summarised in a visual model, to give the reader an overview of the methodology. Thereafter, the empirical results are narratively presented one respondent at the time. The discussion reviews the empirical data and, with contributions from theory, the authors conceptualise a customer journey for music festival attendees. The authors also discuss potential barriers and enablers in different stages in the customer journey. The last chapter consists of conclusions, implications, and further research. Further, the conclusions is directly related to the purpose and research questions of this study. The authors also present theoretical implications that has its foundation in the findings this study has generated. The practical implications aim to advise event organisers regarding how to improve the customer experience.
throughout the customer journey. Finally, the authors discuss questions that have been raised during the research process that may be subjects of further research.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents relevant literature and theories to support the analysis. An introduction to the customer journey is given, followed by a discussion of influential factors that may have an impact on a customer’s decision making. The latter subchapters identify each step in the customer journey theoretically with respective subprocesses and touch points. Finally, the authors visualise the theoretical customer journey for events according to discussed theories. This conceptual model lays as a foundation for the empirical data collection.

2.1 The Customer Journey

The concept of customer behaviour has received much attention from scholars (Howard & Sheth, 1969; Kardes, Cline, & Cronley, 2011; Pieters, 1993; Kotler, 1994, 2001; Kotler & Keller, 2012). According to Kardes et al. (2011, p.8), customer behaviour “entails all consumer activities associated with the purchase, use, and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer’s emotional, mental, and behavioural responses that proceed, determine, or follow these activities”. This shows that customers process thoughts, feelings, and experiences before, during and after consuming products (ibid.). These activities may all be concluded as the customer journey as Skinner (2010) explains that the customer journey is the sum of the different experiences that a customer goes through when integrating with a brand, product or company. The term customer journey has been widely discussed and adopted in practical service management (Gerritsen et al., 2014; Rawson, Duncan, & Jones, 2013; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Kankainen, Vaajakallio, Kantola, and Mattelmäki (2012, p.221) further describe the customer journey as “the process of experiencing service through different touch points from the customer’s point of view”.

The customer journey concept is closely linked with the use of visualisation, which is referred to as customer journey maps (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2010). Crosier and Handford (2012) and Gerritsen et al. (2014) consider customer journey mapping as a method to examine emotional responses to products, goods, and services. It can be used to improve customer experience as part of a product designing process (Steen, Manschot, & De Koning, 2011). Stickdorn and Zehrer (2012) illustrate customer experience scores for each touch point in their customer journey visualisation. Crosier and Handford (2012) explain customer experience in terms of emotional response scores as an incorporated part of the customer journey map. Gerritsen et al. (2014) consider customer journey processes and the touch points as sources of
the customer experience. They propose an abstract customer journey map as a guiding model for customer experience in in-mall stores (Figure 1).

According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), the customer journey concludes customer needs, subprocesses, and touch points. Each subprocess encapsulates potential touch points. When customers have satisfied a need, they are ready to move to the next stage of the customer journey. The needs a customer goes through according to Gerritsen et al. (2014) are; need for orientation, need for information, need to experience the product, need to purchase, need to pay, and need to consume. The subprocesses are all actions customers take to satisfy the needs that may occur during the customer journey. The subprocesses according to this model are: search for information, experience the product, buying the product, paying for the product, and collecting the product. Gerritsen et al. (2014) further determine that an evaluation takes place, but do not categorise this as a need, subprocess or touch point. Scholars also identify other subprocesses of the customer journey, they are: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, the act of purchasing, and post-purchase use (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995; Kotler & Keller, 2012; Peter & Olson, 2008).

Gerritsen et al. (2014) further explain that companies must match the customer needs and create interaction possibilities with the product, company and brand. These interaction possibilities are referred to as touch points. These touch points are considered as the key building blocks of customer journeys from a firm’s perspective (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2010). The firm may try to impact the customers within the touch points through interacting with the customer. However, as this study focuses on the customer perspective of the customer journey, the touch points will be defined by what interactions the customer needs from the firm to proceed through the customer journey. Gerritsen et al. (2014) explain that the firm should remain in contact with the customer when the journey is completed in order to preserve loyalty. Nathan and Hallam (2009) further argue that poor communication throughout the customer journey may conclude in that customers drop out of the customer journey early.
In the context of events, Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959) discuss five different stages an attendee may go through; *anticipation, travel there, on site, travel back, and recollection of memories*. In the first stage, anticipation, the expectations are created. Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959) mean that this is where the greatest value creation takes place, as it is only the imagination of the individual that decides the limits of the expectations of the event. Stage two and four, are traveling stages. The third stage, on site, is the actual consumption of the event programme. The fifth stage, recollection of memories, is taking place when the attendee has arrived back home. This stage is of great importance according to Bohlin (2000) as the recollection of memories may have impact on the perceived event value. This because stories are being created, and a pride of having participated in the event is being added to the full customer-value.

### 2.2 Decision Making Influencers

Scholars have been studying the reasons why consumers decide to buy a specific product (Kardes et al., 2011; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). By studying previous behaviour, one can estimate how customers might behave in the future (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Faulin, Juan, Grasman, and Fry (2012) and Kotler and Armstrong (2010) discuss factors that can influence a customer’s decision making. The decision the customers make is what determines their
behaviour. They categorise the influential factors into three groups; personal-, psychological-, and social factors (Juan et al., 2012; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

2.2.1 Personal Factors
Personal factors are attributes that identify an individual’s life-situation (Falun et al., 2012). Barone and Miniard (2002) suggest several factors that can impact the customer behaviour and decision making throughout the customer journey. These factors may be; age, sex, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, and personality (ibid.). According to Engel et al. (2005), customers’ purchasing behaviour changes according to different stages in life as their taste and preference also alter with changes in life cycle. Occupation and purchasing power also determine a customer’s purchasing behaviour (Barone & Miniard, 2002). The income level affects what a customer can afford and their view on money (ibid.). Solomon (2004) shows that people who share similar occupation and income level tend to have common taste and usually socialize and share value as well as ideas with each other. Another significant personal factor affecting the decision making process can be lifestyle of the customer (Plummer, 1974). This expresses how one thinks and acts (ibid.). The concept of lifestyle may be explained as a person’s way of thinking and is expressed in activities, interests, and opinions that portrays the individual’s interaction with the environment (Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). It is constructed from inborn characteristic, current situation, and past experiences (Plummer, 1974). Juliusson, Karlsson, and Garling (2005) state that past experiences affect the future behaviour of an individual. The customer is more likely to behave in a similar way if there were positive results from a decision, and tends to avoid repeating past mistakes (ibid.). Also, an individual’s personality can influence the decision making. The personality concerns a dynamic and organised set of characteristics possessed by an individual that uniquely affects the individual’s cognitions, motivations, and behaviour in various situations (Ryckman, 2004).

2.2.2 Psychological Factors
Engel et al. (1995) and Kotler and Armstrong (2000) point out that a customer’s decision making is further influenced by four key psychological factors; motivation, perception, beliefs, and attitudes.

Motivation
Swarbrooke and Horner (2007) claim that motivation is one of the most significant factors that affect an individual’s behaviour. It can be defined as a drive or an inner urge that moves an
individual to take actions to satisfy the wants and the needs (Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). The motivation has its roots in the individual's wants and needs that are developed from the personality and lifestyle of the individual (ibid.). Maslow (1970) divides individual’s motivating factors, also referred to as needs, into five hierarchical steps. According to Maslow (1970), *physiological needs* are the first that has to be met and conclude need for food, water, or things that people cannot survive without. These basic physical needs must be satisfied before an individual can be motivated to pursue any other needs and wants (ibid.). Maslow (1970) argues that once a need in the hierarchy of needs has been fulfilled, it is no longer a motivator and the next level in the hierarchy will become the focal point for the individual. In other words, only unsatisfied needs motivate an individual (Mullins, 2002). After all of the physiological needs have been met, the *safety needs* start controlling thoughts and behaviour (Mullins, 2002). These needs include security, protection from the elements, order, law, and stability (Maslow, 1970). Consistently meeting the need for safety is to have stability of one’s life (Simons & Wallace, 2009). Being ‘safe’ can relate to many different aspects of one’s life, for instance, having financial security, physical security, living in a safe and secured home, or having job security (ibid.).

The next level of the Maslow’s hierarchy concerns the *needs for love, affection, and belongingness*. It is argued that people seek to overcome the feeling of loneliness and alienation (Maslow, 1970). This implies both giving and receiving love, affection and the sense of belonging which can relate to activities such as meeting friends, becoming involved in social groups, become engaged with someone romantically, or getting married (ibid.). Once the first three levels of needs have been fulfilled, the *needs for self-esteem* become a motivating factor. It relates to receiving respect from people around in general (Maslow, 1970). Maslow (1970) further suggests that having admiration amongst an individual’s peers and friends is essential to live a meaningful and worthy life, otherwise a lack of self-esteem needs may lead to the feeling of weakness and insignificance.

The highest level of need according to Maslow’s hierarchy is the *need for self-actualisation*. It is described as an individual’s need to be and do what the individual was ‘born to do’ (Maslow, 1970). It refers to getting to know one’s self as lucidly as they can and accepting that (ibid.). Maslow (1964) further suggests that self-actualisers are the most likely people to have a *peak experience*, which is described as sudden feelings of intense happiness and well-being, with an awareness of ultimate truth and the unity of all things. These experiences stand out from everyday events and tend to occur during artistic, athletic or religious experiences (Privette, 2001). Privette’s study further indicates that individuals, who have a peak experience, shows a
sense of control over the body and emotions, a greater sense of awareness, and a feeling of awe and wonder at the oneness with the world. This can be connected to Maslow’s stage of self-actualisation as these individuals can always have positive feeling and feel blessed. The experience reaffirms the worthiness of life and changes their views forever (Maslow, 1964). In the context of attending music festivals, Zubeck (2014) conducts a study on festival attendees experience and indicates that Maslow’s (1964) analysis of self-actualisation and peak experience corresponds with the attributes of music festival experience. Furthermore, Maslow (1964) stresses that healthy and fully actualised individuals respond better to the unexpected and rise to challenges with more creativity, spontaneity, and equanimity.

Perceptions, Beliefs, and Attitudes

An individual acts according to the perception of the situation (Armstrong, 2001). Each individual can receive many sensory stimuli such as light, colour, sound, smell, taste everyday (ibid.; Hultén et al., 2011). Armstrong (2001) explains that perception is the process through which these sensations are selected, organised and interpreted by an individual. Each sense is feeding information to the brain constantly and one might neglect many sensations in the environment and only focus on those related to the current needs (Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). Every person has different perceptions according to their own experience, beliefs, and attitudes (Armstrong, 2001). Therefore, the message the brand communicates will never be perceived the same way among different customers (ibid.). Kotler and Armstrong (2010) further discuss the issue of selective retention, which entails what a person retain from particular stimuli or situation. This statement is based on that, after receiving information and stimuli, customers remember good attributes about the brand they favour and forget about other brands (ibid.).

An individual’s beliefs and attitudes are acquired through learning and experiencing (Kotler & Armstrong, 2000). A belief is described as a descriptive thought about something and is based on knowledge, opinion or faith (ibid.). A potential belief stays until an individual accepts it as truth and adopts it as a part of the belief system. Attitudes concern learned personal conceptions of the reality according to Kotler and Armstrong (2000). People can have positive or negative feelings, which can be consequences of their personal experiences or their interaction with other people (ibid.). One’s attitude plays a vital role on a customer’s decision making (Kotler & Armstrong, 2000). Pizam and Mansfeld (1999) further indicate that surrounding forces, such as reference groups, may influence the forming of attitudes.
2.2.3 Social Factors

Social psychology concerns how people behave in groups and how trends and reference groups influence an individual (Getz, 2007). Bearden and Etzel (1982) further suggest that reference groups and opinion leaders have a significant impact on an individual’s decision making.

Reference groups

People may be involved with groups while participating in the society and they are directly or indirectly affected by reference groups (Williams, 2002). There are number of different reference groups and scholars tend to conceptualize them differently (Childers & Rao 1992; Solomon, 2011; While & Dahl, 2006). One of them can be brand communities and consumer tribes, which are groups of people who have the same interests and use the same kind of products (Childers & Rao, 1992). Solomon (2011) further explains that individuals in these reference groups build a relationship among them even if they do not live near each other. Some brands gather get-together events for the brand community in order to retain and increase customers’ brand loyalty, these may be seen as a reference group (ibid.). Another type of reference groups is the aspirational reference group, which refers to a group that an individual would like to belong to (While & Dahl, 2006). Aspirational reference groups include idolised figures, such as: successful business people, performers, or athletes (ibid.). It has been stated that many marketers apply the technique of using these reference groups to promote their products or services as people tend to follow their favourite figure or idol’s activities (Solomon, 2011).

Williams (2002) explains that reference groups can affect one’s decision making in three ways; informative, comparative, and normative. For instance, when a customer considers purchasing something or doing something, the customer does not have enough information and may rely on informative influences. These influences include sources that an individual considers as reliable such as friends, family, or other people the customer trusts and respects (Williams, 2002). Comparative influence, on the other hand, is when an individual compare itself with a specific like-minded group and make decisions based on what the customer perceives that the group would do (ibid.). When a reference group sets certain standards of behaving for its members, and those who follows the norms to fit in, it is categorised as normative influences (ibid.). For instance, when attending a specific event, a participant may know how to dress and behave to be accepted (ibid.).
Opinion leaders

In a group, there can be someone who affects others and take responsibility to lead the whole group. This kind of individuals can be defined as opinion leaders (Solomon, 2011). Opinion leaders are defined as an individual who is influential within a social network than others (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948). They are considered to be experts within a specific area of interest and are asked for advice (ibid.). It has been argued that opinion leaders play a vital role in customer’s decision making (Solomon, 2011). Opinion leaders can affect behaviour by raising awareness, persuade others, establish or reinforce norms and leverage resources (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2011).

2.3 Stage One: Orientation

According to Belk, Ger, & Askegaard (2003) and Zeithaml (1996) customer orientation is a process where the customer’s needs and wants are defined. In accordance with Maslow’s (1970) hierarchy of needs, Kotler et al. (1999) argue that humans possess many complex needs, such as physiological needs for food, water, safety; social needs for belongingness and affections; and individual needs for knowledge and self-expression. Further, it is suggested that the individual’s wants and needs reflect the motivational factors (Ramya & Mohamed Ai, 2016).

As the customer’s needs and wants are recognized, the expectations towards a product are formed (Ford, 2010). In the music festival context, Getz (2007) discusses a variety of motivational factors for customers to attend festivals, such as: to escape from everyday life, to look for entertainment, to have a sense of belongingness, and to gain and share experiences. Also, Tarssanen (2009) and Wessblad (2010) argue that people expect an event to be something beyond everyday-life. By having new experiences, different from daily basis, one may see himself from different angles and even have change in lifestyle or growth in personality (Tarssanen, 2009). This corresponds with Packer and Ballantyne (2011), who highlight that attendees of music festivals disconnect with everyday routines and explore new experiences, new relationship and therefore, reflect upon their lives and see the world in different ways.

People attend events to gain social and cultural experiences (Wessblad, 2010). Attending events, may be a way of managing other people’s perceptions and improve the personal image (ibid.). In accordance, Hultén et al. (2011) state that people are looking to identify themselves with a lifestyle. Scholars suggest that individualism as a lifestyle has resulted in today’s global consumer culture and that this type of self-fulfilment is connected to the motivational factors quality of life and welfare (Brown, 1993; Cova, 1999). Wessblad (2010) also suggests that individuals attend events as a result of the need for understanding, aesthetic appreciation,
personal growth, and self-actualisation. This may imply that people attend festivals to feel a sense of belonging, and they may apply an event personality that enhances the common attributes amongst the festival attendees (Wessblad, 2010). Crompton and Mckay (1997) refer to the influence that individuals and groups have over others within their reference groups, for instance, a person may not have personal motivations to attend an event. However, if a friend or someone from a reference group expresses that they are interested in the event, a sense of belongingness may generate and the individual may decide to attend the event just to not miss out on something (ibid.).

2.3.1 Touch Point: Inspire & Make Aware
During the orientation stage, firms must inspire the customers and make them aware of the product (Gerritsen et. al, 2014). It is important for an event organiser to get both attention and attraction to an event (Grönkvist, 2000; Hoyle, 2002). Getz (2007) explains that it is not enough to have a program for an event that is fun, humorous, educational, or welcoming. He also emphasizes that it has to be a certain team that explains the purpose with the festival and unites all the activities during the event. According to Gnoth and Anwar (2000), the theme must be strictly connected to the program content, as it will indicate what the attendees may expect of the event. Therefore, it may be useful for firms to use the event theme to get the attention of potential attendees.

2.4 Stage Two: Information
When a firm has managed to grab attention of a customer, the customer may decide to proceed into the search for information (Gerritsen et al., 2014). In the information stage, the customers want to satisfy their need for information, and therefore a firm may create promotions and offers (ibid.). Customers want to find out why this product is different from another product (Kotler et al., 1999). Kotler et al. (1999) explain that customer needs and wants, cost to the customer, convenience, and communication must be considered when constructing a marketing strategy, which implies that these are factors that influence this touch point of the customer journey. Kotler et al. (1999) refer to that the cost of the tickets is a factor that will influence the purchase power among customers, as well as where and how the message of the product is communicated. What is included in the price and what the product includes, must be well communicated with strategic elimination of possible misunderstandings. Wessblad (2010) explains that it is through the communication strategy and the promotional activities an event manager is able to regulate the expectations of event attendees.
2.4.1 Subprocess: Search

During the information stage, the attendees may also realise certain barriers that make it difficult for them to attend an event (Wessblad, 2010). These may be issues of time, money, or social influences (ibid.). Bohlin (2000) further argues that barriers may be that some events are more suitable for certain target groups, too expensive, or that individuals may not be available during the time of the event.

Information Processing

Customers may have different needs to process information, some may need a lot of information to make a decision and some customers make decisions to buy a product without contemplating options (Kardes et al., 2011). Kardes et al. (2011) conceptualise four types of customer decision making that are driven by the level of involvement in making decisions and the level of processing information. The different types are: brand laziness, brand loyalty, variety seeking, and problem solving. Brand laziness refers to the customer’s natural inertial movement toward a product or service based on familiarity and convenience (ibid.). This may be when people buy groceries or everyday needed products, such as; milk, flour, or salt. People usually buy the products of a brand that they get used to over a long time, and if they do not have any reasons to switch to another brand (Kardes et al., 2011). Kardes et al. (2011) mean that there may be little efforts or no effort of the consumers to make a decision in these cases, particularly, “when both involvement and information processing are low, consumer typically make choices as a matter of habit, requiring little effort” (ibid., p.66) (Figure 2).

The second type of customer decision making, brand loyalty, refers to when the customers remain loyal and satisfied with specific brands for a long time and do not think of any other brands to change for that specific product (ibid.). Cigarette smokers, for instance, may usually stay loyal to one or two brands of cigarettes. Similar to brand laziness customers, brand loyalty customers process little information to make decisions. Although, something that separates these types of decision making types are that brand loyalty customers engage more in the process of making decisions (Figure 2).

The variety seeking decision making prevails when customers process high level of information with low involvement in decision making (Kardes et al., 2011). Kardes et al. (2011) explain that in this type of decision making, the customers have already identified what kind of product they are going to buy but they still need to spend a lot of time on information processing to decide which brand. The reasons for this process may be that the customers look for offerings,
discounts, new benefits from the products, or they have a change in need, aesthetics, food habit, or other (ibid.).

The problem solving decision making refers to high involvement with high level of information processing when the customer is either unfamiliar with the product, the product is purchased seldomly or the product is expensive (Kardes et al., 2011). Examples of this is making decisions to purchase properties, automobiles, or electronics. In this type of decision making, customers need to process extensive information to assess characteristics of different brands such as specifications or price to eventually make a decision or buying (Kardes et al., 2011).

![Diagram of customer decision making types](image)

**Figure 2: Types of customer decision making (Kardes et al., 2011)**

2.4.2 Touch Point: Inform

Kalliomäki (2015) explains that storytelling may be used as a method for dramatising the products or services. Hence, the firm can increase the quality of the product and create a solid connection with the customers (ibid.). Therefore, firms should carefully and strategically design and execute their stories to reflect the desired themes and values (Jensen, 2015). Wessblad (2010) explains that it is through the communication strategy and the promotional activities an event manager is able to regulate the expectations of the event attendees. He discusses further that it is therefore crucial that the firm creates an accurate picture of how it would be to attend the festival, as it would not live up to the customers’ expectations otherwise.

**Communication Channels**

Marketing communication can be delivered in many different channels, such as: TV, newspapers, radio, mail, email, SMS, face-to-face communication, and telemarketing (Danaher
& Rossiter, 2011). Social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, are also useful channels according to Grate (2017). An important part of public relations for an event is *word-of-mouth* (WOM) (Brown et al., 2007). It has been considered to have powerful impact on consumer behaviour, especially those in the information stage (ibid.). WOM is referred to the interpersonal relationship between users regarding personal evaluations and experiences of a brand or a product (Jason et al., 2010). Research shows that WOM is more effective than relationship marketing via other resources (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). The Internet, and the development of new technologies, have changed the function of WOM (ibid.; Yoo et al., 2015). Customers can now search for information about their desired products, not only from acquaintances, but also from strangers who have experience with the product that they choose to share with others (Henning-Thurau & Walsh, 2014). Customers further use the Internet to create their own content and also read content created by others (ibid.). Mangold and Faulds (2009) further indicate that people are more likely to talk to others about products when those products support their desired self-image. Tools such as blogs, social networks, search engines, online communities, reviewed sites and forums, which are referred to as electronic WOM, are actively generated and utilised among customers or users (Yoo et al., 2015). Accordingly, a report conducted by Mintel (2013) further states that social media are key delivery channels for festivals to interact with the customers and provide information, such as schedules and performing artists, and general festival information, much of which is delivered months before the actual date of the event.

### 2.5 Experience the Product

Gerritsen et al. (2014) claim that the customers need the *experience* a product before they buy it. They explain that this stage is when the customers go to the store and try a physical product, or a trial period of a service. However, as this is not evident in the event industry it is excluded from the conceptual model presented below and will therefore not be further discussed.

### 2.6 Stage Three: Purchase

After assessing alternatives, the customer selects a product to buy or decides not to buy any products (Lamb et al., 2011). Gerritsen et al. (2014) mean that customers go through the need to *purchase* and the need to *pay*. The authors have combined these two stages due to that purchase and pay seem to blend together in the online environment where festival attendees buy their tickets. The purchase stage is where the attendee and the event organiser conduct an exchange; the attendee gets the ticket and the event organiser get the money (Lamb et al., 2011).
2.6.1 Subprocess: Buy

Purchase activities regard all actions which are carried out while purchasing products (Kardes et al., 2011). During this stage, price remains the most common consideration when customers decide where and when to buy the ticket (KPMG, 2017). Ashman et al. (2015) further argue that the shopping experience is vital to consider in this stage, which can create perception of value and reassure the customers of their choice.

2.6.2 Touch point: Service & Communicate

How well the purchase experience meet the customer’s expectations will determine whether the customer is satisfied or not (Engel et al., 1968). After the purchase, it is important for the firm to keep the communication with the attendee to continue to build the anticipations and to create an unforgettable experience already before attending the event (Wessblad, 2010).

It has been argued that online transactions are characterised by uncertainty, anonymity, lack of control, and potential opportunism (Petrovic, Ksela, Fallenbock, & Kittl, 2003). This makes trust become a vital factor of electronic commerce (ibid.). Lack of trust is often the reason for the customers to decide not to purchase the products (ibid.). Morgan and Hunt (1994) conclude that trust is when a confidence in reliability and integrity regarding the other party is confirmed. Scholars define trust as a confidence in another’s goodwill (Blau, 1964; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Pruitt, 1981; Rempel & Holmes, 1986), others say trust is present when expectations can be reliably predicted (Ring & Van de Ven, 1992). Therefore, trust is “the willingness of a party to rely on the behaviours of others” (Andaleeb, 1996, p.79). It has been suggested various attributes the seller should consider that affect the customer’s trust in online shopping (Cheung & Lee, 2000; McKnight & Chervany, 2001; Pavlou, 2002). These attributes can be; the reputation and size of the seller, security and privacy control, legally certified issue, design of the website, and service quality (ibid.).

2.7 Stage Four: Collected Needs On Site

The need to consume is when the customer uses/consumes the product, and the firm must navigate the experience and perfect the customer satisfaction (Gerritsen et al., 2014). The authors adopt Bohlin’s (2000) and Clawson’s (1959) studies regarding the customer journey in an event setting and refer to this stage as on site. Use-activities refer to those activities occur during the consumption of goods or services (Kardes et al., 2011). This includes where, when and how consumption takes place (ibid.).
2.7.1 Subprocess: Experience On Site

Packer and Ballantyne (2011) conceptualise four facets of experience; *music experience, festival experience, social experience,* and *separation experience.* Each experience contributes to the unique appeal of attending a music festival (ibid.). The music experience provides the common ground upon which the other experiences were built, enables connections between the attendees (the social experience), and emphasises on the share of joy (the festival experience) (ibid.). Packer and Ballantyne (2011) explain that the social experience consists of the connection between attendees, and between attendees and performers. The separation experience sets the festival apart from daily routines. It facilitates a sense of disconnection which encourages the festival attendees to explore new experiences and relationships, reflects on their lives, and perceives the world in many other ways. Pitts’s (2005) study reported that the music experience in the context of festival encourages the feelings of unity and belonging. Packer and Ballantyne (2011, p.169) further explain that the festival experience “was seen to start weeks, even months before the festival commenced. The anticipation and preparation contributed to gradual build-up of excitement, and when the festival was over the cycle started again, with anticipation of the next festival”. The four facets of the experience together support and have the potential to influence on well-being outcomes (ibid.).

Carù and Cova (2003) differentiate between *ordinary* and *extraordinary experiences.* An ordinary experience refers to everyday routines and the passive acceptance of events, and an extraordinary experience raises individuals’ emotions and transformations (ibid.). As previously mentioned, festival attendees are looking for an experience beyond their everyday life when going to an event - this is what needs to be reassured in the experience stage (Weesblad, 2010; Tarssanen, 2009). The extraordinary experiences may be composed of feelings, new knowledge, and beliefs acquired by the customer through a brand, a product or service (Gelter, 2007; Leppiman, 2010). These are memorable events and must take place outside the daily routine in order to leave a memory trace (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

2.7.2 Touch Point: Service

Wessblad (2010) highlights the importance of accessibility of the event, and the negative effects it may have on the consumer value if the customer finds it difficult to get to the place. An event organiser will not be able to influence the full customer experience as the experience is created by external factors as well (ibid.). As Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959) mention that the transportation stages- when an attendee travel to and back from an event, will also be
included in the full customer journey experience. Therefore, it is important for event organisers to try to eliminate possible traffic jams, as well as provide parking (Wessblad, 2010). According to Wessblad (2010), it is also important that the attendees find it easy to get around the event area and that the attendees will not get lost in order to enjoy the event. Therefore, event organisers should provide the attendees an overview of the event area (ibid.).

2.8 Stage Five: Evaluation

According to Wessblad (2010), evaluation means to put a value on something. This is something that is done continuously throughout the customer journey, as value is created as the experience develops (ibid.). The attendee will have a negative experience if an event organiser did not fulfil the attendees’ expectations (Bernstein, 1984; Hatch & Schultz, 2000; Schultz, Larsen, & Hatch, 2000). The customer may drop out at any stage of the customer journey and then go straight to the evaluation stage, as this is something that a customer does consciously and unconsciously (Kardes et al., 2011). During the evaluation stage, the customer evaluates the full customer journey and the firm may learn about the customer experience (Gerritsen et al., 2014).

Wessblad (2010) highlights the impact the surprise-factor may have on the customer experience for an event. It is the surprise-factor that creates the stories that attendees will continue to tell after the event. Wessblad (2010, p.5) further explains;

“Events create impressions. The impressions become imprints of shared experiences. The imprints grow to be memories. The memories are shared with the others from the event. The memories become stories to tell. It is easy to claim that events create collective memories which we bring into the everyday-life and share with others. Events join us by shared memories.”

An individual’s ability to consciously recollect past events, behaviours, and experiences conclude in the individual’s memories (Schacter, Schrauf, & Greenberg, 1993). It also concerns the individual’s retention of, and ability to, recapture experiences or information (Schacter, 1997). Memories include several primary elements that connect with customer experience, they are; narrative reasoning, emotions, recollection (i.e. remembering experiences), and vividity (i.e. clear memory of past experiences) (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Vividity is specifically significant in cultural industries, including the festival setting, since festival activities aim to create vivid memories for attendees that can be ultimately preserved for the rest of their lives (ibid.). Getz (2007) emphasises that after attending events, it is crucial that festival attendees
should have a change in feeling from special to normal or a certain feel of loss. This can be results from powerful, touching and satisfactory experiences (ibid.).

In the context of music festivals, it is further stressed that the successful delivery of satisfactory experience is vital for the long-term competitiveness of destinations (Mackellar, 2009). Scholars indicate that satisfactory experience directly motivates the customers’ revisit intention and enables positive WOM responses (Ferguson, Paulin, & Bergeron, 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Son and Lee (2011) identify festival quality attributes that have great impact on revisit intention, they are; *diversity of activities, entertainment sound system, promotion and information, festival atmosphere, entertainment stages, accessibility, safety and security, and food and beverage*. These attributes further influence the customers to spread WOM, which was discussed earlier as a powerful way to impact consumer behaviour, and encourage them to recommend others that the festival is worth to experience (ibid.)

Scholars argue that creating a story can be further touching than the event itself (Bohlin, 2000; Clawson, 1959). When the experience ends, an individual’s memory can recall one or more aspects of the overall experience (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). Further, when the memory of the total recreation experience makes a major impression, the recollection will be strong and enduring (ibid.). Kalliomäki (2015) further states that storytelling is used as a method for dramatising the products or services, which turn into memorable experiences. Hence, the firm can increase the quality of the product and create a solid connection with the customers (ibid.). Therefore, firms should carefully and strategically design and execute their stories to reflect the desired themes and values (Jensen, 2015).

### 2.9 The Conceptual Model

In the subchapters above, the authors have identified a conceptual model that presents the existing theory regarding the customer journey related to the event industry and particularly music festivals to the possible extent. The authors start to explain the decision making influencers that may affect the customer’s behaviour throughout the customer journey. These factors include personal-, psychological-, and social factors (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). In accordance with Gerritsen et al. (2014), the authors have organised the customer journey in stages that includes *customer needs, subprocesses, and touch points*. The customer needs in the conceptual model for this study are; *orientation, information, purchase, collected needs on site, and evaluation*.

It is the needs that motivate the customer to move to the next step of the journey (Maslow, 1970; Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). The subprocesses are the actions that the customer takes
in the customer journey, they are; search, buy, and experience on site, and evaluation. The touch points are the interactions between the event organiser and the customer. There are four touch points identified in the existing literature through the purposes for interaction: inspire & make aware, inform, service & communicate, and service. The customer may choose to proceed from one step to another but may also drop out of the customer journey at any point. The conceptual model (Figure 3) lays as a foundation for the collected empirical data, that aims to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process.

Figure 3: A conceptual model of the customer journey for music festival attendees
3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methods

3.1.1 Research Approach
A research problem may be attacked with a deductive-, inductive-, or abductive reasoning (Patel & Davidsson, 2011; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The deductive approach focuses on the theoretical problem where a hypothesis is developed from existing theory and tested through an empirical study (ibid.; Bryman & Bell, 2007; Ezzy, 2002). An inductive reasoning has its origin in the empirical problem, and the results are backed up by theory according to Befring (1995) and Ezzy (2002). Bryman and Bell (2011) elaborate further that inductive reasoning first presents the observations/findings and then explains it with theory. The abductive research approach is a mix of deductive- and inductive reasoning (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). An inductive research approach has been applied in this study. The authors argue that an inductive approach is appropriate as the purpose is based on an empirical problem. In the process of collecting primary data, the authors found new understandings by explaining the empirical phenomena theoretically.

3.1.2 Epistemological Considerations
It is possible to explain the researcher’s role in a study through two philosophical approaches; hermeneutic- and positivistic view (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Patel & Davidsson, 2011). The positivistic view is best applied in quantitative studies, as it focuses on objective facts that are measurable (ibid.; Gummesson, 2000). This view also implies that the results are independent from the sociological factors of the researcher (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). Further, the hermeneutic approach allows the authors to interpret, deliberate, and understand the sociological factors that the study may contain as well. Accordingly, Ezzy (2002; p.24) argues that; “Hermeneutics is the art and science of interpretation”, i.e. hermeneutics is suggested to provide the philosophical grounding for interpretivism. The hermeneutic view was used in this study, as it allowed the authors to interpret and reflect over the social factors in the empirical findings. As a mode of analysis, the hermeneutic view proposes a way of understanding the meaning of textual data which may be unclear in one way or another (ibid.). Ezzy (2002) further explains that the hermeneutic view is suitable for explorative research as it studies subjective facts and phenomenon. A hermeneutic view has been applied throughout this study, which allowed the authors to observe and interpret the respondents’ behavioural patterns that would be excluded by mathematical equations. According to Ahrne and Svensson (2011), it is
important to understand that it is possible to interpret all studies in different ways as the human factors play a big role in the interpretation and is difficult, or even impossible, to standardise.

3.1.3 Ontological Considerations
According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p.4), an ontological issue is “whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors or as something that people are in the process of fashioning”. Bryman and Bell (2011) describe the two ontological considerations as objectivism and constructionism. Objectivism means that the researcher cannot influence the social phenomena, it is viewed as an external fact (ibid.). Bryman and Bell (2011) further explain that the objectivistic consideration implies that the researcher looks upon the social environment as an organisation that is tangible with rules and regulations for how it operates in different procedures and processes. Constructionism on the other hand, implies that the culture and organisation is pre-given, and social actors are viewed as external realities (ibid.). This ontology consideration is seen as a source of the postmodern movement (Galbin, 2014). Lundh (2018) argues that constructional realities may be social intuition, norms, categories, theories, and techniques. Duffy and Jonassen (1992) also claim that knowledge is never concerned to be fixed in constructivist consideration. Bryman and Bell (2011, p.22) further explain that constructivism implies that social phenomenon is “in constant state of revision”. As the context environment of this study is dependable on the views of the respondents, and how they interpret and perceive the customer journey of music festivals, the social phenomena will develop with cultural aspects. Therefore, the authors of this study have adapted to the constructivist consideration.

3.1.4 Research Strategy
Bryman and Bell (2005) explain that a qualitative research is advantageous when an in-depth understanding is needed to understand the empirical problem. Qualitative research has its base in words and understanding of reality, while quantitative research focuses on measuring and comparing numbers (ibid.; Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). Merriam and Tisdell (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2005) explain that a qualitative study allows the researcher to understand the behavioural traits of the study environment to a greater extent than a quantitative study. Ryen (2004) further argues that a qualitative study gives the researcher the possibility to study the respondents in their natural environment. This allows the researcher to also consider non-verbal language in the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). Due to the nature of the research questions, which are exploratory, the qualitative research method was applied in this study. Instead of
measuring the phenomenon of customer experience by numbers, this study used open questions to explore the perceptions of music festival attendees. Additionally, to understand the complex social phenomenon that the practical problem of this study is based upon, it requires an in-depth qualitative approach due to the abstract nature of the study.

### 3.2 Research Design

Salking (2010) explains that a research can be either exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory. Exploratory and descriptive studies are more commonly used in qualitative studies, while explanatory is used for quantitative studies to a greater extent (Richey & Klein, 2014). Exploratory studies are used to give a greater understanding of a topic that has not been researched to a great extent before, which is one reason why this approach has been applied in this study (Salking, 2010; Saunders et al., 2007). Salking (2010) means that exploratory studies are usually conducted to lay a foundation for further research. Due to the exploratory purpose, all parts of this study has adapted this research design. An exploratory secondary data collection was first conducted to suggest a theoretical customer journey for the event industry. After that, semi-structured interviews were carried out to provide a greater understanding for how the customer journey for music festival attendees may proceed. Also, the influential factors that are perceived as enablers and barriers for the attendees’ experiences within the customer journey were studied to explore how the customer journey may be affected in the different stages.

### 3.3 Data Collection

#### 3.3.1 Secondary Data

In this study, both secondary- and primary data were collected. The secondary data refers to the data such as literature, documents, and articles that is collected by other researchers and institutions (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The advantage of secondary data includes its availability that makes it convenient for the researchers to access the data sources (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2007). Further, it saves time and resources for the researchers (ibid.). The authors have critically evaluated and collected secondary data from books, scientific articles, reports, and Internet sources, in order to obtain insights of the steps of the customer journey, and specifically in events and music festivals. The authors have used the databases Web of Science, Emerald, and Scopus while conducting the study.
3.3.2 Primary Data
Bryman and Bell (2011) state that primary data is first-hand data that is gathered by the researchers specifically for the purpose of addressing their research problem. This may be done through, for example, conducting interviews, questionnaires, or other tests. In this study, the primary data was collected from semi-structured interviews with Swedish attendees of music festivals.

Semi-structured Interviews
Merriam and Tisdell (2009) indicate that structured interviews limits the flexibility as the questions are designed as questionnaire and do not allow for further questions that may occur during the interviewing process. Unstructured interviews on the other hand, is useful when the researchers do not have enough information about the topic prior the interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). Bryman and Bell (2005) further explains another interview method, semi-structured interviews, which is the appropriate method to conduct in this study. This technique allowed the researchers to prepare specific questions based on existing theory as well as allowed follow-up questions as the interviews proceeded (ibid.). Bryman and Bell (2005) further explain that the semi-structured interview method permits the researchers to change the order of the questions during the interview in order to get a flow in the conversation. This was useful in this explorative study, as the researchers wanted the respondents to lead the conversation and focus on the parts that they found relevant in the customer journey, parts that may not have been evident in the theoretical framework upon which the authors based their interview questions. Ryen (2004) explains the importance of flexibility when conducting interviews for an exploratory study and therefore advises to use the semi-structured interview method. She argues that it will increase the researcher’s coherence to new phenomena that may occur during the interview, which was important in this study.

Sampling
The sampling method used in this study was convenience sampling. This method means that the researchers have certain restrictions and guidelines for the respondents, and therefore limited choices (Bryman & Bell, 2005). The limitations that the authors based their sampling upon was that they had to have attended a music festival within the last five years.

The authors of this study executed a quota sampling, in order to get respondents for the personal interviews that are representative of relevant segments. Bryman and Bell (2011) explain that quota sampling is a type of convenience sampling where the researchers aim to get
a respondent group of people representing different segments. Barone and Miniard (2002) suggest several factors that can impact the customer behaviour and its decision making throughout the customer journey. These factors may be: age, sex, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, and personality (ibid.). The quota sampling criterias are based on these factors (Table 1). According to Barone and Miniard (2002) and Plummer (1974), lifestyle and personality may also influence the customer behaviour. The personality concerns a dynamic and organised set of characteristics possessed by the individual that uniquely affect the individual’s cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in various situations (Ryckman, 2004). In this study, the personality has not been studied as the authors are limited to only study the conscious attributes. The lifestyle expresses how the customer thinks and acts, and is combined from inborn characteristic, current situation, and past experiences (Plummer, 1974). In this study, as unconscious attributes are excluded, the factors that are considered within the lifestyle of the attendees are therefore limited to music preference and festival frequency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Physiotherapist</td>
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<td>Pop, soul, reggae, &amp; rock</td>
<td>House &amp; pop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Festival Frequency</strong></td>
<td>Frequent (1-5 annually)</td>
<td>Random (last festival 4 years ago)</td>
<td>Frequent (2-4 annually)</td>
<td>Random (attended 1 festival in total)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Quota sampling segments**

Bryman and Bell (2011) further explain that the subgroups should be representative in terms of the sample size. Therefore, the authors included representatives from each segment. Respondent 1 (R1) is male, generation Y, and goes frequently to festivals. Respondent 2 (R2) is female, generation Y, and goes to festivals less frequently. Respondent 3 (R3) is female, generation X, and goes frequently to festivals. Respondent 4 (R4) is male, generation Z, and does not go to
festivals frequently. By comparing R1 and R4 with R2 and R3, the authors could draw possible similarities depending on sex. When comparing the results from R3 and R4 with each other, as well with R1/R2, the authors may see similarities between the generations. Finally, when investigating behavioural similarities depending on the frequency the individual visit festivals, the authors compared R1 and R3 with R2 and R4. Etikan and Bala (2017) further explain that respondent segments that already fulfilled the quota will not be approached, and will not be included in the study. This means that the authors only interviewed a fixed number of respondents from each specific target group that was identified.

**Operationalisation and Formulating Interview Questions**

When conducting an interview and formulating interview questions, there are certain issues that researchers must consider. According to Patel and Davidsson (2011) and Ryen (2004), it is important to use a language that the respondents can understand, therefore academic terms have been avoided during the interview processes in this study. Patel and Davidsson (2011) further argue that the researcher should avoid leading questions and words that are up for interpretation such as ‘sometimes’ or ‘little’. This was carefully considered when conducting the interview guide. It is also important to avoid ambiguous questions, that the respondents can interpret in different ways (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). Trost (2010) also argues that the researcher should not try to fill the silence between the questions and should instead give time for the respondent to further develop the answer without interrupting the silence. The silence may give the respondent time to reflect and think about possible developments to the answer (ibid.). This was also applied to this study.

All interviews in this study were conducted **face-to-face**. This helped the researchers obtained more in-depth, detailed and considerable responses (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Open questions were used throughout the interviews to allow the respondents to answer in their own words and to avoid uncomfortable moments where their levels of knowledge and understanding of the issues could be exploited (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Fisher, Buglear, Lowry, Mutch, & Tansley, 2007). Ryen (2004) also discusses the **naturalistic** interview method, which implies that the interview is conducted as a conversion structured around topics and the questions are guidelines. This method impregnated the interviews in this study, in order to create a comfortable environment for the respondents in the semi-structured interviews. Further, the naturalistic method decreases the possibility of misunderstandings between the researchers and the respondents as a possibility to ask for further explanations is provided (Ryen, 2004).
In order to avoid clutter and confusion of questions when conducting the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Fisher et al., 2007), an interview guide was created as a set of prepared questions (Appendix 2). When it comes to asking questions, it is essential to bear in mind to keep exactly the wording of the questions in order to avoid possible errors (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The interviews with the respondents were also recorded in audio with permission of the respondents or written down as exactly as possible to prevent any confusions (Fisher et al., 2007). It is also important to decide the question order. Early questions should be directly connected to the topic of the study to ensure that respondents understand at early stage what the interview will be about (Darmer, 1995). Also, questions regarding age, social background, income level, with others, were asked in the end of the interview as some personal questions may make respondents uncomfortable (ibid.). Further, the interview questions were also grouped into sections to allow a more concrete overview and better flow during the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2002).

3.4 Knowledge Process

The authors who conducted this study are experienced event organisers as well as have participated in a wide variety of music events and festivals. The authors have come to see different issues throughout the years from both a firm- and customer perspective. One aspect that has caught the authors attention, is that the full experience of festivals does not end with the physical event that takes place. The authors argue that the experience is created already before the event and continue afterwards as well. With this perception as a base of the topic discussion, the authors decided upon a topic that both are genuinely passionate about: the customer experience of music festivals. As the topic discussion continued, the authors encountered the issue of what processes of the full customer journey of music festivals entail and what factors impact the experience throughout the process.

After deciding upon a topic, and identifying the practical and theoretical problem (Chapter 1.2), the authors delimited the study (Chapter 1.4) and developed a purpose and research questions (Chapter 1.3) to make the problem tangible. Thereafter, a detailed methodology was developed to plan an appropriate research process to tackle the research questions that would serve the explorative nature of this research (Chapter 3). As this topic is relatively unexplored, a generalised theoretical framework was developed (Chapter 2) to provide the authors with a deep understanding regarding the topic. The authors mean that they needed to gain more insights about the problem theoretically in order to be able to map the processes that a customer journey may conclude and to understand the customer behaviour within each process.
Therefore, a conceptual model was developed to act as a starting point to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process. From the conceptual model and the existing theory, the authors constructed an interview guide (Appendix 2).

The results from the interviews were presented narratively to give the reader a feeling of the processes the respondents go through when attending festivals from the customer’s perspective, and the enablers and barriers they may face, without interference from the authors (Chapter 4). Due to the narrative nature of the presentation of empirical results, the authors did not categorise the data and therefore gave the reader possibility to interpret the data. The authors thereafter visualised each customer journey of the respondent's (Appendix 1) to facilitate for generalisation of the stages an attendee may go through. In line with this analysis, the discussion (Chapter 5) was developed that explains the processes and the enablers and barriers in each step. The discussion was conducted as a cross-case analysis, so the authors could directly compare the empirical data from the interviews with the respondents. The cross-case analysis also allowed the authors to categorise behaviour and suggest possible behaviour patterns based on the segments developed in the quota sampling. The discussion leads to that the authors conceptualised a new model for the processes the attendees of music festivals may go through in their customer journey (Figure 5). From the discussion, the authors withdrew and summarised the findings in the conclusions (6.1), and suggested implications (Chapter 6.2 & 6.3). Throughout the research process, questions were raised that the authors found interesting but did not include due to the delimitations of the study. These issues are presented as possible further research (Chapter 6.4).
Figure 4: The inductive research process

3.5 Method Critique

3.5.1 Reliability

Bryman and Bell (2011) and Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler (2005) explain that reliability is to what extent the study is repeatable and if its measurements are consistent. Bryman and Bell (2011) mention that in order to increase the reliability, a study must be possible to replicate. They mean that it is important that the researchers specify all elements in the research process. Bryman and Bell (2005) further explain that when a hermeneutic view is used, it is important that the authors explain their knowledge process and previous experience within the topic as this research approach tends to be subjective. Therefore, a detailed methodology has been developed, where the authors include the knowledge process and the practical process of the study in detail. Further, to enhance the reliability of the theoretical framework in this research paper, only peer reviewed articles were used.

3.5.2 Validity

The validity refers to the integrity of the conclusions that are drawn from a study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is typically categorised into internal validity and external validity (ibid.). The internal validity of a study occurs when there is a causal relationship between the variables
being studied, i.e. if there is a match between observations and theoretical thoughts throughout the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is also related to the reliability of the study, in the sense that if a measure of a concept fluctuates and thus is unreliable, it cannot generate a valid measure of that concept. The external validity, on the other hand, refers to the generalisability of the research findings from the sample studies to a wider population (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Besides, it is argued that the use of paid or volunteer respondents can lead to the threat to external validity since they may not be representative to the wider population to which the research findings are generalised (ibid.). The respondents in this study were neither paid nor volunteer respondents, hence ensure the validity.

3.5.3 Ethical Considerations

With regard to the ethical considerations, the authors followed some of the basic principles suggested by Bryman & Bell (2011), Diener and Crandall (1978), and Lichtman (2013). They are given as follows; (i) In any case every respondent feels that any harm might come from the release of their opinions, the interview will be suspended and not be used in the research. (ii) To avoid any problems in terms of privacy and anonymity, it is significant to take special care when findings are being published to make certain that the respondents are not identified or identifiable. (iii) In this study, all respondents were ensured that their profile will not be exposed unless they agree to reveal their profile after being explained all the details of the study. (iv) Another concern regarding ethical consideration is the issue of informed consent, which means that the respondents should be given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision whether or not they are willing to participate in the study. All respondents in this study were informed at the beginning of the interview about the authors’ identity information, the purpose of this study in detail, how the data collected from the respondents will be proceed and that recording equipment were used. (v) Additionally, all respondents’ information was treated in a confidential manner and only the authors of this study have access to that information. The information was secured and will not be used for any non-research purpose.
4 EMPIRICAL RESULTS

In this chapter the empirical results are presented narratively, one respondent at the time. Each subchapter includes a description of the respondent, as well as a deeper description of the subprocesses that the attendees go through before, during, and after a music festival.

4.1 Respondent 1

Respondent 1 (R1) is a Swedish male who was born in 1989. He earns about 180,000 SEK yearly and studies homeopathic medicine. He enjoys rock music and tends to visit festivals that provide this kind of music. R1 visited one festival in 2017 and planned to visit at least four festivals during 2018. He visits between one to five festivals every year.

4.1.1 Pre-Festival

R1 follows a lot of artists and bands on social media, which is usually how he first hears about festivals. Due to R1’s great interest in music, to experience the music performances live is his primary motivation factor. R1 explains that he is willing to invest both time and money to go to festivals. He further elaborates that he would even call in sick to work if he is not able to get time off. R1 highlights that he is greatly influenced by the artists themselves. When the artists he idolise speak well about a festival, it makes him curious to know more about it. Also, when the artists he follows on social media post that they are coming to Sweden, R1 proceed to search for information. However, if an artist R1 is influenced by would say something negative about a festival, R1 would most likely not go to the festival.

R1 searches for information concerning location, accessibility, price, and playscheme. The price of the ticket is not so important to R1, but he usually compares the price with how he values the experience of seeing the artists. He further argues that parking should be included in the price. He has had a negative experience when he arrived at the location and it turned out that he had to pay hundreds of SEK extra for parking. Although R1 tends to look for information on the official festival website, he finds it convenient to get information delivered to him through social media or email. However, he would prefer to get a golden envelope with inspiring information about festivals sent to him by post. R1 explains further that he thinks it is convenient when he can find all information he needs for a festival visit in one place. When R1 searches for information, he uses his phone or computer. He experiences it as easy to find the information he is looking for. However, he has encountered that the schedule for the artist may be released a bit too late by some festival organisers. This has made it difficult to know in
beforehand when the artist he wanted to see was playing. R1 elaborates that when he only wanted to see a specific artist he intended to buy the ticket for just the specific day the artist performed. However, when the organiser released the playscheme, it was already sold out.

When attending festivals, R1 tends to travel in a group of two people, but in some occasions they have been more people. The people he travels with enjoy the same music as him. R1 is generally the one who finds a festival he is interested in attending and then convinces people to join him through creating a hype among his friends about the festival. He also takes on the responsibility of planning the festival visit and is not affected by other people to a great extent when making decisions. R1 explains that it sometimes has been difficult to find someone who is able to join a festival due to that his friends have not had the time or not being able to afford the festival.

When R1 knows who is going to join the festival, he proceeds to book the ticket. He prefers to purchase the ticket on his computer and well in advance. Although, as mentioned before, he may wait until he has all the information needed, but experiences that he then takes a risk to miss out on the festival. He explains that he experienced great disappointment when he missed out on festivals that he wanted to go to. When R1 buys the festival tickets, it is important for him that the website is reliable. He usually buys tickets straight from the organiser or through well-known ticket services. R1 has been affected in the past to not buy festival tickets due to that the event organiser was not perceived as reliable. He further explains that he may continue to the purchase stage faster if discounts are available.

R1 prefers to book comfortable accommodation, such as hotels or hostels, during the festival. However, he has also slept in the car if such alternative was inconvenient. R1 also discusses practical issues, such as forgetting to bring essential attributes that affected his festival experience negatively in the past. R1 usually starts to prepare for the festival weeks in beforehand, he listens to the music and hypes the festival to get himself and his friends excited about the event. He also mentions that he relaxes and takes certain actions to avoid to get sick before a festival. R1 explains that he usually travels by car to the festival, as he thinks it is time-efficient. Before leaving home, R1 makes sure to have directions to the festival, which he expects to find on the official website. He further mentions that he is always annoyed at long queues that are leading up to a festival due to a lot of traffic.

4.1.2 On Site
R1 explains that he has experienced difficulties with finding parking at festivals in the past. He further elaborates, as long as a festival is accessible by shuttle bus or similar, the distance to the
parking area does not matter. To first have to put a lot of effort into finding parking and then have to queue for a long time to enter the festival area, has resulted in that he was already quite exhausted when entering the festival. As all participants have to be searched before entering a festival, the queue to enter usually takes much longer time than he finds appropriate.

R1 prefers to get a map over the festival area upon arrival, as it increases his festival experience when he can easily find his way to stages, food trucks, toilets, and activities. The information folder should also include detailed information about playscheme, security details, and prices for available activities. When being inside the festival area, R1 takes part in activities and performances as well as buys food, beverage and possibly souvenirs. R1 explains that he likes to bring something back home from the festival to remember about the festival.

R1 explains that he has been positively surprised as people participating in the event have been much nicer than he expected. He further means that he can see similarities between himself and other participants in terms of liking the same music and dressing similarly. He describes people attending the festivals he usually goes to as ‘metal heads’ and ‘head-bangers’, who wears black denim pants and leather jackets. He further explains that due to similarities between himself and the other participants, he feels like home at these festivals and as if he belongs to a social-group. R1 further explains that the best atmosphere he has experienced at a festival was at a small festival in Annexet in Stockholm. What made it exceedingly great was that there was already things happening before the event started. People drank beer together and there were big screens that showed different performances. He means that this created a sociable environment as the attendees have something to talk about and get into the ‘festival-mood’ together. He further elaborates that it is the people that create a great atmosphere, and he emphasises that like-minded people tend to create a favourable atmosphere where everyone feels included. The best surrounding for a festival is when it is close to nature according to R1. He also mentions that the area should be clean and that there are possibilities to sit down and relax as well. When exiting the festival, R1 has experienced long queues which has been very tiring after the festival. However, he also means that it is nice to talk to the people in the queue about different performances. R1 further explains that he experiences it beneficially when the festival had staff at the exit that can answer possible questions. The staff may answer questions about how to exit the parking in the best way, directions, lost items, and other. R1 also mentions that there is usually a lot of traffic on the route out from a festival, which he finds annoying.
4.1.3 Post-Festival

When R1 arrives at home from a festival, he is exhausted, but still excited about the new experiences he has taken part of. R1 discusses a lot about the festival afterwards with the people he knows, as well as posting about his experience in social media; Instagram and Facebook. He further means that he and his friends who joined him to the festival relive certain situations through sharing stories and memories. They discuss what was good and bad about the festival, and R4 tends to focus on the artists who were playing and mainly on the positive experiences. If he discusses negative experiences, he does it through jokes and laughs at the situations. When talking to people face-to-face, he also goes deeper into detail of how the practical arrangements around the festival worked.

R1 further explains that he still has many good memories from festivals that he has been to. The memory that comes first to his mind is when it was raining heavily and he and his friends were dancing outside. This was a unique experience and a liberating feeling according to R1.

R1 (personal communication, April 15, 2018) further recounts: “Another strong festival memory is when the legendary guitarist Yngve Malmsten crashed his guitar on stage and broke it through hitting it against the ground and then lit it on fire”. R1 explains that this is something he will never forget.

4.2 Respondent 2

Respondent 2 (R2) is a Swedish female, born in 1989, and listens to pop-, rock- and house music. The last festival she visited was in 2014, and she may go to one festival in 2018. R2 has a degree in economic engineering and currently earns 380,000 SEK yearly working as a real estate manager.

4.2.1 Pre-Festival

R2 goes to festivals as she wants to see a specific artist, however she tends to hear about festivals from friends who has decided to go to the festival. Although the artist is an important factor for R2 when deciding if she is going to go to a festival, she has also bought tickets to single-day-festivals without any insights about the playscheme. In these cases, her motivation to go to the festival was rather to experience something together with her friends than seeing specific artists.

It is also important to her that the festival is in a convenient location, preferably not too far from home. She prefers to stay in hostels or hotels during festivals, and would not attend if these options are not available. R2 has not been to a festival since 2014, but is thinking about attending one in 2018 together with a group of friends. She always goes to festivals in bigger
groups, of 2-10 people, where they enjoy the whole event together. She tends to let someone else take the leading role in decisions before and during the festival. When a festival catches R2’s interest, she visits the official website of the festival. When R2 looks for information, she uses her phone, computer, or tablet, and only visits the official website of the festival. The information she is looking for is how much the tickets cost, what artists are performing, accommodation alternatives, and how to get to the festival location. She also reads about the artists before she books the ticket. She is not interested in information about the event organiser, she only looks for information about the festival. She does not look for reviews online either, but may ask friends who have visited the festival before about their recommendations. R2 explains that she gets to hear about festivals and events mainly from friends, but also through social media, which she sees as convenient as she can choose who she wants to follow. However, as Bråvallafestivalen is located in her home city, she also hears a lot about this through the local news channels, both in TV, radio, and newspapers, as well as through outdoor adverts. There are also many of R2’s friends and colleagues that talk about the festival. R2 has been to Bråvallafestivalen more than once. This is due to convenience, she argues. The festival is close to where she lives and there are also usually a lot of people she knows that attend the festival. When R2 attended Bråvallafestivalen, she did not see any specific similarities among the people; not in regard to how people dress, and not in regard to other personality- or lifestyle traits. However, R2 mentions that her friends who have attended festivals in the past are usually depending on geographic area.

The reason why R2 has gone to festivals with less frequency lately is because she thinks it has become too expensive. She further explains that it is difficult to get days off work, and during her vacation-weeks there may not be any festivals that she is interested in attending. R2 mentions that the ticket price should only include the entrance and activities inside the festival area. She argues that everything else should be excluded in order to keep the price down. She thinks it is better if the attendees can choose their preferences of accommodation and other practicalities.

When purchasing the ticket, she prefers to do so online, and it does not matter to her if it is straight from the official website of the event organiser or another party. She has not encountered any problems when buying festival tickets. She usually buys the ticket at an early stage, as it tends to be cheaper. However, she has also booked tickets at a later stage when the organiser announced new artists that get her attention, or if she finds out that her friends are going. After buying the ticket, R2 gets excited when she gets the email that has assured her place at the festival. She also mentions that this is when she starts to feel anticipation for the
festival, and she starts listening to the artists who will attend the festival so that she knows who she would like to listen to live. After booking the tickets, R2 book accommodation if it is needed. However, this is rare as she prefers to go to festivals that are close to home.

4.2.2 On Site

R2 mentions that past experiences of festivals have had great impact on what she expects from a festival’s atmosphere and practical arrangements. She explains that she now knows that there are huge queues everywhere. As she is prepared for it, she does not get as annoyed as she used to when for example having to queue to get in to the festival area, to go to the toilet, as well as to buy food and beverage. However, she further explains that she was positively surprised at the festival she visited in Mexico, when the staff were walking around the festival selling beer and she did not have to stand in line. R2 (personal communication, April 20, 2018) recounts: “The things that has positively surprised me in the past has usually been the experiences beyond what I expected. For example, when I was at Bråvalla festivalen in 2014, they had a silent disco where everyone hears the music through headphones instead of loudspeakers. This was something that I had not tried before, and really enjoyed”.

The best festival in terms of surroundings that R2 has been to was in Slottsparken, a big park in Gothenburg. She likes that there was a lot of nature around, and it was also very easy to get to the festival as it was inside the city. However, she mentions that the attendees could only drink beer in restricted areas, which she experienced decreased the overall festival experience. The worst surrounding she has experienced was in Mexico, as it took place at a race court, designed for Formula 1 auto racing, where they had to walk 30 minutes to an hour between some of the stages. This made them miss out on some of the performances that they would have liked to see. R2 believes that the most important attribute for the festivals of the surroundings is to design the festival area so that it is convenient for the attendees. According to R2, the festival area should include all the facilities needed, such as; food possibilities, toilets, activities, and somewhere to escape the rain. R2 further mentions that she thinks that decoration is of great importance at a festival. She means that decoration helps creating a feeling that the attendees have entered another world which is beyond their everyday life.

R2 explains that even though the surroundings could have been better for the festival in Mexico, this was the best festival she has been to in terms of atmosphere among the attendees. She elaborates: “People were very open and friendly, everyone talked and danced with each other, and it was easy to get to know new people” (R2, personal communication, April 20, 2018). R2 further explains that, as it was possible to buy beverage from the staff who were
walking around, and she did not have to spend their time standing in a queue. This, she argues, affected the experience positively as it can be very tiring standing in queues. The worst festival in terms of atmosphere that R2 has experienced was at Bråvalla festivalen 2014, as there was a big thunderstorm during the event. R2 explains that the attendees were scared and people even got hurt as the lightning hit the festival.

During the festival, R2 prefers to get information through a mobile phone application that is designed specifically for the event. However, she has experienced some difficulties at big festivals as it may be difficult to access the telephone-network when many phones are active in the same area. Another way to distribute information during festivals that she has found convenient, is to get a badge with an activity-schedule and playscheme. Information folders and other offline information channels may also be useful during festivals according to R2. She also mentions that there are usually huge queues when leaving a festival. It would be beneficial for the event organiser to have staff at the parking. This is one of the reasons why R2 prefers to travel to festivals by public transport instead.

4.2.3 Post-Festival
When R2 recommends festivals to her family, friends, and colleagues, she bases her recommendations on the quality of the practical arrangements of the festival. The practical arrangements she considers is; how easy it was to get around the area, how easy it was to get food and other necessities on site, as well as the quality of the activities that were offered outside the performance areas. She means that as the artists are different each year, she would not base her opinion of the festival upon this to a great extent whether she recommends a festival or not. R2 usually posts some pictures on Instagram when she is at a festival, but does not actively review the festival in other forums. Although R2 mostly considers practical arrangements when recommending a festival, she means that the discussion about her experience when she arrives at home tends to be regarding the artists that performed as well.

4.3 Respondent 3
R3 is a female born in 1968 who enjoys a great variety of music, but listens mostly to pop, soul, reggae, and rock. In 2017, she went to four festivals and is planning to go to two or more festivals in 2018. She works as a physiotherapist and earns about 400,000 SEK yearly.
4.3.1 Pre-Festival

R3 tends to hear about festivals through social media, specifically through Facebook, but also through friends and through TV or radio. Sometimes she experiences that there is too much promotions on social media, then she gets annoyed instead of interested she argues. As soon as R3 hears about a festival that may sound interesting, she asks a group of friends if anyone would like to join the event. R3 tends to go to festivals in groups of five to ten people. She further mentions that festivals are a good place to be curious and try new things. R3 (personal communication, April 22, 2018) elaborates: “I enjoy to go to festivals as it is enriching; to hear new music and meet new people. It is a great way to explore new things and I get many experiences in a short period of time”. R3 is going to festivals for fellowship and does not care that much about which artists are performing.

R3 encourages her friends to join festivals by assuring them that it would be fun if they joined. Although R3 may be the initiator for the idea of going to festivals, she is not the one who takes responsibilities for arranging the festival visit. As soon as R3 and her friends start to discuss if they are going to go to the festival or not, she starts to follow the festival on Facebook. She thinks that this is the best way to stay updated with information about the festival. She also makes sure that she is available for the festival period, and that she can afford the tickets. R3 would not pay a lot of money for a music festival, however, she has instead given up time and worked at the festival to get free entrance. R3 means that she offers time in this sense of working during the festival and would also take days off work. Although, she would not offer time with her family in the sense of going to a festival instead of going on family vacation.

R3 wants to have all information before buying the ticket. When searching for information about the festival, R3 uses her computer and looks for; which artist are going to play, the convenience and accessibility of the location, how to get to the festival, parking, and transportation from the parking. R3 highlights that it should be easy to find the information. She has experienced that the information has not been released on time, and she gives an example of that the playscheme tends to be released later than the rest of the information. This makes it difficult to plan the visit at a festival and which bands she wants to see. R3 also reads reviews from people who have participated in the festival before she buys the tickets.

When R3 has all information needed, she books the tickets, which she does straight from the official website. She makes the purchase a few months before the festival, but sometimes it is difficult for her to plan that far ahead. R3 would not buy tickets through other sites than the official website as she does not trust them to be real. She has heard a lot about fake tickets and rather pays extra to be sure the tickets are real. On the other hand, R3 trusts that other parties,
such as the municipality, would not let the event organisers operate if it was not reliable. Therefore, she does not research about the event organisers before she buys the tickets. R3 has experienced some difficulties when purchasing tickets. For example, it has been a long queue when she called to buy tickets on the phone and when she called customer service for support. Sometimes the website has been overloaded as well, and it was not possible to buy tickets. However, R3 has always been able to buy the tickets, although this has affected her experience negatively.

R3 explains that she tends to go to festivals to do something fun with her friends. They usually go to festivals that they live close to so that they can go just for the day. She further means that to plan the trip together with friends may be even more fun than the actual festival. R3 elaborates that the anticipation before the event is a crucial part for her in the festival experience. When planning the festival visit, R3 looks for a lot of information and plans the trip in detail. She has experienced it difficult to find the information she wants sometimes. She prefers to stay in accommodation with a bed and own toilet, and it could be a hotel but also a small cottage or similar. She also plans the best way to get there. She prefers if the festival is close to home and she can take her bike to the festival or get a lift there. R3 has visited most festivals several times as they are local festivals. R3 tends to prepare for the festival by listening to the artists who are going to be there, so that she does not miss anyone she would like to see. She also prepares what clothes she is going to wear, as well as pack a backpack with all necessary things she may need.

4.3.2 On Site

R3 explains that she tends to receive information at the entrance of festivals, such as a map over the area and a schedule for everything that is happening at the festival. The first thing she and her friends does when they have entered the festival area is to plan together what they want to see, where they want to eat, and where they should meet up if someone gets lost. The fellowship is very important to add value to the festival experience of R3, however if she would like to go and see something that nobody else wants to, she would go anyway.

To enhance the experience at the festival, R3 thinks it is important that the area is clean and that she feels secure at all times. She further explains that the water should be free to decrease the number of drunk- and dehydrated people. R3 believes that to create the best festival-atmosphere, there should be a mix of people who have been to many festivals before and some new people. She means that the experienced people tend to create a stability among the younger people. R3 cannot see any specific similarities among the people at festivals she has been to.
However, everyone is there to explore and try new things, and she notices a difference in behaviour and a happiness and positivity that is rare in other settings. Some festivals consisted of more older people and sometime she has been among the oldest. She further explains that she was surprised that all ages were socializing with each other. However, she mentions that there tend to be too many underage people drinking at festivals.

R3 discusses how important the weather is to the festival. She means that it is what makes the experience great. She elaborates that rain makes it difficult to socialise and to enjoy the activities. R3 further emphasises on the importance of the quality of sound and the possibility to see the artists from the crowd. She also mentions that she does not want the sun in her eyes as she watches the artist playing. She further explains that she has experienced that it was convenient to get information through an application, where notifications show up as something is happening on the festival. R3 explains that although she enjoys the fact that there is so much to explore on a festival, she sometimes thinks that it is too much at the same time. This makes her overwhelmed and tired. Therefore, she also thinks that a festival area needs to include a place where the attendees can sit and relax. R3 explains that she does not mind if there is a queue when she is about to leave the festival, she prefers to meet up with the friends that she has enjoyed the festival with before she exits to say goodbye and discuss their experiences of the festival. She further means that she tends to avoid to drive to festivals due to the possibility of big queues after the festival.

4.3.3 Post-Festival
After the festival, R3 and her friends go home. She prefers to get picked up, as there is usually a big queue to the public transport. When R3 arrives at home she usually shows her family the pictures and videos from the festival and tells them about the experiences. She tends not to mention the artists that performed, except if there was something special about their performance. R3 also usually tells people about all the drunk young people at the festival, and how sad she thinks this is. She also posts pictures of artists from the festival on social media and discusses the experience with the people who she visited the festival with. R3 may also send pictures to people whom she thinks may like certain artists. Further, she also follows artists on Facebook that she enjoyed listening to at the festival.

4.4 Respondent 4
Respondent 4 (R4) is a Swedish male who was born in 1997 and earns approximately 180,000 SEK annually from working on a part-time job as a sales assistant. The respondent studies
technology and has great interest of technical subjects. He prefers to listen to house and pop music. In 2017, R4 attended Bråvallafestivalen. This is the only festival he has been to. He planned to come back to this festival in 2018, however the festival was cancelled this year and he does not plan to attend any other festivals.

4.4.1 Pre-Festival
R4 mentions that his friends motivated him to attend the festival. If his friends had not attended, he would not have gone to the festival alone. R4 attended the festival with four friends. He further mentions that he and his friends do not see each other so often, therefore the festival was an opportunity to reunite. R4 states that he went to the festival as he believes that it is a good place to enjoy music and to take part in many activities with other people. He explains that he arranged his schedule many months in advance to be able to attend the festival. R4 first heard about the festival from his friends who attended this festival before. This is the most reliable source as he further argues, as he trusts their judgement. He does not trust the festival experience to be perceived correctly through advertisement by the event organiser. R4 further explains that he has previously been thinking about attending festivals, but due to negative media about the event he did not go to the festival.

R4 searches for information about festivals mainly on the festival’s Facebook page and the official website by his mobile phone. However, R4 does not spend much time to search for information before attending the festival. He looks for information regarding which artists who will perform at the festival. He also watches video trailers of festivals posted in social media to see how it is to attend the festival. R4 found it difficult to get access the playscheme prior the festival. He further explains that the artists are usually just displayed by names and the times and dates of when they are playing are not released until later. He would prefer to access the schedule earlier so that he and his friends can plan the visit better. R4 also mentions how the festival organiser puts promotions at bus stops and he agrees that it was a good way to grab his attention. R4 did not actively participate in the planning of the festival visit, his friends arranged the accommodation and other practicalities around the festival.

R4 expects that if the festival ticket is expensive, it should include some packages or services such as camping. He thinks the ticket to Bråvallafestivalen was exceedingly expensive and made him unable to make up his mind to buy at first. He stresses that the price is an important determinant that affects his decision to go to music festivals. “While it has to be profitable for the organisers, of course, it should be affordable to attract more people”, R4 (personal communication, May 18, 2018) explains. He relies heavily on other people's opinions
when deciding to buy a festival ticket. R4 sees the event organisers as reliable if they have successfully done the festivals for years. If the festivals are new and there is not any marketing done in well-known channels, it will influence him not to buy the festival ticket. R4 prefers to buy the ticket online by using his computer and buy it a few months before the festival. However, he would prefer to buy the ticket a few days before the festival, but that is not an option as the tickets may be sold out. Therefore, R4 decided to buy the ticket earlier. After that, he received the ticket with the wristband by post to be able to enter the festival area and also the camping area. The wristband had a chip on it so he could charge money by following the instructions on the festival website and scan the wristband when he wants to purchase any products inside the festival. The wristband is also the device which lets him travel between the festival area and the camping area. After attending the festival, R4 could also retrieve any unused money left by using the service on the festival website. This is a good service, R4 elaborates, as in some festivals the money would be non-refundable which makes him annoyed. R4 travelled to the festival with his friends by caravan, which was prepared by his friends. He mentions that the trip to the festival was fun as he enjoyed being with his friends. Further, R4 finds the trip easy as the festival organiser marked the road for different vehicles clearly.

4.4.2 On Site
Arriving at the festival, R4 mentions that he goes with his friends to park the caravan at the campsite and then enter the festival area. He enjoys observing the festival surroundings and discusses with his friends. R4 likes how festivals are usually located in less urban areas and close to nature. He also likes to feel the power of music; how it is performed in the festival context with high quality sound system and thrilling visual effects. R4 perceives that the attendees around him were openly sociable and nice to each other in general. He was positively surprised how clean the festival was as he had expected that the festival would be dirty and there would be trash on the ground. These expectations were based on stories from his friends. He has also experienced it to be easy to get around the festival area and he did not have to wait in any long queues. R4 mentions that he did not experience any negatives in this festival.

R4 states that a common factor between him and other people in festivals has mainly been the kind of music they listen to. R4 mentions the best surrounding he experienced in a festival was that there was a great number of different choices of food sold in small trucks. Everyone could choose what kind of food they liked and everyone could still be seated together to enjoy the food and the atmosphere. At Bråvallafestivalen, the service was fast and there were not any long queues. R4 highlight the importance of the easy accessibility of getting in and out of the
festival. He thinks that the accessibility of different areas inside the festival is important. R4 argues that the festival organisers should equip and provide further solutions to overcome uncertainties such as bad weather to maintain attendees’ satisfaction.

R4 thinks that it was a good atmosphere all the time during Bråvallafestivalen in 2017. He experienced the best atmosphere when it was the final performance of the festival carried out by his favourite artist, Kygo. There was a phenomenal laser- and sound performance and the weather was also favourable. R4 saw that all the people around him were also happy and amazed. He thinks that it is important for everyone to be happy when attending the festival and no one should be excluded. R4 also mentions a good attribute of Bråvallafestivalen when there were areas for disabled people who could access easily and enjoy the festival. When the festival finished, R4 mentions that there were long queues on the way to the exit. However, this does not disturb him and his friends as they enjoy being together and discussing experiences and performances on the way out and on the way travelling back home.

4.4.3 Post-Festival

As R4 got home from the festival, he reflected on his experiences. The experience at Bråvallafestivalen changed his view of the people who attend a festival. Before attending the festival, he thought that people who go to the festivals drink a lot and cannot control themselves, however this was not his experience. R4 has also read in newspapers about various criminal actions that has taken place in the festival previous years. The experience at Bråvallafestivalen changed his view on music festivals in general. He no longer takes the newspapers’ words for festivals as serious as before.

After attending the festival, R4 felt sad and lost but he also felt relaxed and looked forward to get home after days of putting a lot of energy into many activities. R4 would strongly recommend Bråvallafestivalen, because he felt safe all the time and he saw that people were very nice to each other. He would recommend the festival by talking directly to his friends and family. Beside the astounding experience when R4 enjoyed Kygo’s performance at Bråvallafestivalen, R4 also mentions one of his most memorable experiences when he and his friends lived in a bus during the festival. The bus was rebuilt into double-decked and equipped with all facilities needed such as beds, dining tables, liquor bar, and a toilet. It turned out to be a great place for him and his friends to gather during the festival and gave them access to all basic needs without queuing to the camping facilities.
5 DISCUSSION

The exploratory discussion is developed as a cross-case analysis and is structured in accordance to the proposed customer journey for music festival attendees that is visualized in the end of this chapter. The discussion is based upon the theoretical framework and the empirical results.

Kardes et al. (2011) highlight that customers process thoughts, feelings, and experiences before, during and after consuming products. The enablers and barriers in this study refer to the factors that may improve (enablers) or decrease (barriers) how a customer value the experiences within the customer journey. The enablers and barriers are identified in each step of the journey. All these factors affect the customer journey that Skinner (2010) explains as the sum of the different experiences that a customer goes through when integrating with a brand, product or company. Kankainen et al. (2012) describe the customer journey as the experiences a customer takes part of when going through different touch points. Therefore, the authors would like to argue that it is crucial to look at what the customers expect from the event organiser in different steps of the customer journey. As this study focuses on the customer perspective, the touch points are purely identified by what the customers demand from the event organiser in order to proceed the customer journey. The authors further argue that to understand the full experience of the attendees of music festivals, it is crucial to also include processes that is not direct interactions with the product, brand or company. These needs and processes are proven in this study to affect the customer experience, which will be further elaborated below.

5.1 Customer Mindset

Customers perceive things differently and make decisions based on personal-, psychological-, and social factors according to Falun et al. (2012). The authors would like to argue that these determinants are the foundation of how a customer journey may plan out as they conclude in the behaviour of the customer. Therefore, these factors are referred to as the customer mindset.

Barone and Miniard (2002) suggest that age and sex may influence the behaviour of customers. The results of this study shows differences depending on these factors, which will be elaborated upon throughout the discussion. Barone and Miniard (2002) further suggest that occupation and economic situation are behaviour determinants. R1 and R3 operate in social and humanitarian occupations, while R2 and R3 operate in more strategic and technical fields. It is possible to see that the respondents with humanitarian occupations tend to be influencers and
initiators in social groups that they belong to. Barone and Miniard (2002) mean that the income level affects what a customer can afford and the view upon money. However, according to the results of this study the income level does not seem to affect the decision to attend a festival. The customers’ buying behaviour, on the other hand, seems to be dependent on how they value the experience rather than the money they spend on the festival ticket. This argument is based upon that the respondents with the highest level of income, R2 and R3, are less willing to offer their personal resources. The personal resources, in this case, refer to time and money. The authors would like to argue that as R2 and R3 are less willing to give up time than R1 and R4, they do not prioritise the festival experience to the same extent.

Customers’ lifestyle is strongly connected to perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes as explained by Armstrong (2001). This may be because of results of past experiences that the attendees base their lifestyle choices upon. Juliusson et al. (2005) state that past decisions affect the decisions an individual makes in the future. Therefore, the authors would like to highlight that these factors are individual and may also be developed in the subconscious, which are excluded from this discussion. However, it may be possible to extract some past experiences that the respondents mean has affected their decisions when attending festivals.

R1 emphasises an example that he has forgotten to bring essential items in the past and has chosen to learn from his mistakes and now come more prepared. R2 elaborates that she bases her expectations on her previous festival experiences. For example, she learned that there is usually a lot of queues in festivals and this does not affect her experience anymore as she expects this. R3 mentions several times that she hopes to gain as many new experiences as possible, and therefore pursues all experiences with an open mind. R4 does not have much experience from music festivals, but explains that he has experienced that the media perceives the festivals incorrectly and he therefore bases his decisions on reference groups of friends instead. These are all examples of past experiences that have affected the attendees thinking patterns and how they make their decisions throughout their customer journey when attending music festivals. Ramya and Mohamed Ali (2016) explain that motivational factors are based on the lifestyle individuals pursue. As previously mentioned, the attendees may be motivated by a variety of factors. These factors conclude in why attendees want to attend festivals (see 5.2 Orientation).

William (2002) explains that attendees may be affected directly or indirectly by reference groups. This study is limited to the direct influencers. R1 is strongly affected by idolized artists, which may be acknowledged as an aspirational reference group according to While and Dahl (2006) and Solomon (2011). None of the other respondents mention that they are influenced by
an artist’s opinion. That R1 is greatly affected by the opinions of artists, may be connected to his great interest in music. Further, R2, R3, and R4 listen to a variety of music, while R1 is a rock-fanatic, which also may prove that R1 is more involved with the type of music he listens to. Both R3 and R4 tend to read reviews from people who have participated in the festival before. This is referred to as brand communities by While and Dahl (2006), where R3 and R4 put their trust in a group that they can relate to. It may be because neither R3 and R4 express that they are motivated to join a festival due to the music and are instead purely looking to gain new experiences with their friends. In contrast to R1 and R2 who are also motivated to join a festival due to the music performances. Therefore, the authors would like to argue that music performances may not be a determinant to attend a festival for individuals who are part of brand communities.

R2 and R4 are influenced by their friends’ opinions about festivals. These are friends that are considered experts by the respondents, as they have been to the festival before. These experts may therefore be referred to as opinion leaders (Solomon, 2011; Lazarsfeld et al. 1948). In both cases this concerns informative reference groups, as none of R2 and R4 tend to search for information to a great extent by themselves, but instead trust their friends’ opinions (William, 2002). They trust the WOM from their friends, rather than other sources. In contrast to R2 and R4, who are not frequently going to festivals, R1 and R3 have been to many festivals and may instead act as opinion leaders towards their social groups (Solomon, 2011; Lazarsfeld et al. 1948). R1 and R3 also explain that they tend to take upon the role as initiators to the festival visit and persuade others to join. According to Lamb et al. (2011), these are typical characteristics of opinion leaders.

Although R3 may be considered to be an opinion leader, it is possible to see tendencies that she base her decisions on comparative influences (William, 2002), as she is strongly motivated by belongingness and considers her peers’ opinions to a great extent. R1 is the only respondent that mentions similarities among the attendees of festivals when it comes to clothing. Even though R1 does not go to festivals in order to belong to a social group, but to listen to the performances. He mentions that the social factors affect his experience greatly. He means that when attending events with normative reference groups it creates a sense of belongingness by meeting people with the same interest in music and aesthetic appearance (William, 2002).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Factors</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Student (homeopathic medicine)</td>
<td>Real estate manager (economic engineer)</td>
<td>Physiotherapist</td>
<td>Student (technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Income</td>
<td>180 KSEK</td>
<td>380 KSEK</td>
<td>400 KSEK</td>
<td>180 KSEK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Preference</td>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>Pop, rock, &amp; house</td>
<td>Pop, soul, reggae, &amp; rock</td>
<td>House &amp; pop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival Frequency</td>
<td>Frequent (1-5 annually)</td>
<td>Random (last festival 4 years ago)</td>
<td>Frequent (2-4 annually)</td>
<td>Random (attended 1 festival in total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Factors</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Experience music live</td>
<td>Experience music live &amp; belongingness</td>
<td>Belongingness &amp; self-development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception, Beliefs, &amp; Attitudes</td>
<td>Learn from mistakes</td>
<td>Expectations based on experiences</td>
<td>Gain as many new experiences as possible</td>
<td>Expectations are based on reference groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Factors</td>
<td>Group Constellation</td>
<td>&gt;2</td>
<td>2-10</td>
<td>5-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Influencer, planner, &amp; initiator</td>
<td>Follower</td>
<td>Influencer &amp; initiator</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencer(s)</td>
<td>Acting opinion leader, influenced by reference groups</td>
<td>Influenced by opinion leaders and reference groups</td>
<td>Acting opinion leader, influenced by reference groups</td>
<td>Influenced by opinion leaders and reference groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The customer mindset of the respondents

5.2 Stage One: Need for Orientation

Scholars argue that in the *orientation* stage, the event organiser aims to get both attention and attraction to an event (Hoyle, 2002; Getz, 2007; Grönkvist, 2000). During this stage, firms must inspire customers and make them aware of the product (Gerritsen et al., 2014). The results of this study show that attendees’ awareness towards a festival are formed in this stage. R1, R2, and R3 notice the festivals through social media. R1 especially gets acquainted with a festival through *aspirational reference groups*, consisting of his idolised artists. He may even proceed faster to the next step of the customer journey if he hears positive opinions about a festival from
these influencers. The two female respondents, R2 and R3, further get informed about a festival through local news, including TV, radio, and newspapers. This may be as both R2 and R3 are working, while R1 and R4 are adapted to a student-lifestyle with a more flexible schedule and, one may argue, less daily routines.

The two respondents within the strategic/technical field, R2 and R4, become aware of the festival through their informative reference groups and outdoor advertising campaigns conducted by the organiser. They especially perceive the WOM by their friends as the most reliable. It can be argued that the attendees get inspired and become aware of the festival in the orientation stage. The authors refer to this subprocesses as desire the product, as this is where the interest of attending a specific festival is developed for the first time. Therefore, in accordance with Gerritsen et al. (2014), the authors may argue that the touch point in this stage of the customer journey is to inspire the attendees and make them aware of the festival. Further, the channels used to communicate are WOM, social media, local news, and outdoor commercials (Table 3). These channels can be seen as enablers for the attendees to become aware of the festival, and may increase the customer experience according to the respondents. Mintel (2013) suggests that social media are key delivery channels for the festival organiser to interact with customers and deliver messages. However, the respondents further express their annoyance due to some promotion behaviours by event organisers. R3, for instance, expresses her annoyance when it turns out to be a redundancy of commercials in her social media channels. The two male respondents, R1 and R4, further explain that negative media may obstruct them to proceed to the next stage of the customer journey. As a result, the efficiency of these channels may depend on the content and communication frequency. As Nathan and Hallam (2009) mention, poor communication may influence attendees’ experience negatively and cause them to drop out early from the customer journey.

During the orientation stage, the customers’ needs and wants are recognised, hence expectations towards a product are formed (Bohlin, 2000; Clawson, 1959; Ford, 2010). However, the results of this study show that the anticipation takes part in all stages leading up to the festival. For instance, as an initiator, R1 hypes the festival among his friends to generate anticipation among his peers. R2 and R3 also emphasise the importance of the anticipation before attending the festival. R2 expresses her excitement after buying the ticket. R3 mentions the preparation together with her friends for the festival visits as the highlight of her festival experience. Therefore, the authors may argue that customers’ anticipations are generated in all stages before the arrival at the festival. This is further elaborated upon in each stage of the customer journey.
The orientation stage is where the customer’s needs and wants are developed from the motivational factors (Belk et al., 2003; Zeithaml, 1996; Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). The motivational factors are based on the lifestyle an individual pursues. Scholars also argue a variety of motivational factors that affect an individual’s decision making (Brown, 1993; Cova, 1999; Maslow, 1970; Hultén et al., 2011; Kotler et al., 1999; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007), and particularly individual’s decision to attend events (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Getz, 2007; Tarssanen, 2009; Wessblad, 2010). Research also discusses the peak experience among the attendees when attending events (Maslow, 1964; Privette, 2001; Zubeck, 2014). However, none of the respondents express this level of need. R1 expresses that his primary motivation to attend festivals is to see specific artists and experience music performances live. It can be argued that his need is to look for entertainment (Getz, 2007). R2, R3 and R4, clearly indicate that their foremost motivation to go to festivals is to be with their friends. They want to have a sense of belongingness and to share experiences (Getz, 2007; Maslow, 1970). Further, they are affected by their reference groups to a certain extent, as discussed in the customer mindset. This highlights the influence that individuals and groups have over others within their reference groups (Crompton & McKay, 1997). In addition, R3 is also motivated by her curiosity to try new things and gain as much new experiences as possible. She expects to encounter something beyond her daily-life (Getz, 2007; Tarssanen, 2009; Wessblad, 2010) and value things from different angles (Packer & Ballantyne, 2011; Tarssanen, 2009). R3 is driven by self-development, which Tarssanen (2009) claim that it is developed from experience new things.

In accordance with Swarbrooke and Horner (2007), motivation is one of the main psychological factors and may affect the orientation stage as the attendee’s wants and needs are created and they become aware of the festival. Further, it is possible to see that the attendees are strongly affected by social factors and less by the organiser. This may be due to previous experiences that have developed into a mistrust in promotion (R4). These influencers can create awareness, and inspire and generate anticipation among the attendees towards the festival.
5.3 Stage Two: Information

As Gerritsen et al. (2014) mention, when the customer is interested in an event they proceed to searching for information. It is evident that, although to different degrees (Kardes et al., 2011), the respondents always seem to search for information. Therefore, the subprocess in this stage of the customer journey is to search for information. The empirical data shows that R2 and R4 are considered to be followers, who listen to their friends’ opinions, and have a low level of processing information. While R1 and R3 are opinion leaders and tend to initiate festival visits. It may be possible to conclude that R1 and R3 have a high level of processing information as both of them tend to search for a lot of information before making the decision to attend a festival. The authors suggest that there may be a connection between the level of processing information and the role that the attendee takes upon in the group formation. The empirical results also show that R1 and R2 tend to be less involved with festival brands, while R3 has attended several festivals more than once. R4 has only been to one festival but would have gone to the same festival again this year if it would not have been cancelled. The results of this study suggest that respondents who are initiators and opinion leaders may process a high level of information in accordance with the model by Kardes et al. (2011) regarding types of decision making (R1 & R3). The followers and less frequent festival attendees, may be considered to process a low level of information, as they tend not to search for information to a great extent (R2 & R4). It may be possible to argue that the attendees who are motivated to attend festivals due to music performances are less likely to be loyal to a festival brand (R1 & R2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendees’ motivation (see above) is created as they become aware of the festival</td>
<td>Social media, local news (TV, radio, newspapers), outdoor adverts, WOM</td>
<td>Social media, TV, radio</td>
<td>WOM, face-to-face, outside commercials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees are strongly inspired by social factors (see above) and less by the event organizer</td>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Too much commercials</td>
<td>Negative media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The enablers and barriers of the orientation stage for the attendees
Kotler et al. (1999) explain that customer needs and wants, cost to the customer, convenience, and communication must be considered by the firm when constructing the promotion of a product. This may be connected to what type of information the respondents are looking to find in this step of the customer journey. The ‘customer needs and wants’ are, as explained above, mainly music interest and belongingness in this study. It is possible to see that the respondents look for information about the playscheme, the location and its accessibility, as well as price and more practical information (Table 4).

According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), the firm should aim to satisfy the customer’s need for information in this stage, therefore the touch point within this stage of the customer journey is to inform the attendees. This can be done, corresponding with previous studies (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011; Grate, 2017; Yoo et al., 2015), through various channels such as media (TV, newspapers, radio), mail, email, WOM, and electronic WOM. However, R4 expresses that he may not always trust the information provided by the event organiser or other media, due to that their information has proven incorrectly in the past. Wessblad (2010) explains that it is through the communication strategy and the promotional activities an event organiser is able to regulate the expectations of the attendees. Evidently this has not always been the case, and it affected R4 negatively and decreased the trust he has for the event organiser. Gnoth and Anwar (2000) emphasise that there should be a theme connected to the program content, as it will indicate what the attendees may expect of the event. The authors would like to argue that a theme may help to attract the customers that may enjoy the event as the customers would know what to expect. Also, a theme may help to create a greater sense of unity among the attendees as they will have common perceptions of what the event purpose is. As Nathan and Hallam
(2009) argue that poor communication throughout the customer journey may cause customers to drop out of the customer journey early. This may also be the case for music festivals as R1, R3, and R4 all mention that availability of information has been an issue. In some cases the respondents have even missed out on a festival due to that the event organiser did not provide the information the customers needed on time.

In regard to the accessibility of information, it is also important for the firm to provide information through the channels that the customers demand. All the respondents explain that they look for information at the official website of the festival. However, they also like to get information delivered to them through social media. Accordingly, Mintel (2013) suggests that social media are key delivery channels for the organiser to interact with customers and provide them information regarding festivals. R1 elaborates that he would also find it convenient to get information through email or post where he gets all the information needed collected in one place. It may also be beneficial for an event organiser to put extra efforts into the presentation of the information, as R1 further explains that he would like to get a golden envelope with the information delivered to him by post. He means that this would increase his experience.

Wessblad (2010) further suggests that barriers to attend festivals that may occur when an attendee is searching for information may be time, money, or social influences. R2 mentions that the price is of great importance to her. However, the other respondents explain that they evaluate the price with the value that the experience would give them. Both female respondents, R2 and R3, also mention that they are concerned about the timing of the festival. The male respondents, R1 and R4 are less concerned about this attribute. This may be connected to that R1 and R4 are students and are more flexible with their schedule. This may also be as they value the experience to a greater extent than R2 and R3. This statement is based on that R2 and R3 tend to choose festivals that have a convenient location, that is close to home, and they are less willing to prioritize the festival experience over other activities. The social influencers that Wessblad (2010) mentions, are also visible in the empirical results and may be compared to the reference groups and opinion leaders described in the customer mindset. These reference groups and opinion leaders have the power to influence the perception that the attendees have of the festival, and are sources of information that all the respondents value. This may be accounted for as WOM (Brown et al., 2007; Jason et al., 2010; Yoo et al., 2015). The respondents emphasise that they trust the opinions of their reference group and opinion leaders, so this may create an enabler or barrier depending on if the information they receive is increasing or decreasing the experience within the search for information. These reference groups may
consist of friends, as in R2’s and R4’s case, however, may also be reviews that is possible to read online (R3 & R4). R1 on the other hand, is influenced by idolized artists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinion Leaders, official website, social media, email, post</td>
<td>Reference groups, WOM, official website</td>
<td>Reference groups, WOM, social media, official website</td>
<td>Reference groups, WOM, social media, official website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Reference groups, personal resources</td>
<td>Availability, reference groups, personal resources</td>
<td>Availability, trustworthiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: The enablers and barriers of the attendees during the information stage*

**5.4 Stage Three: Fellowship**

In this study it is evident that none of the respondents would attend a festival by themselves (Table 5). The attendees may put different degrees of value on belongingness, but it may be possible to argue that it is a crucial attribute for a festival visit (Pitts, 2005; Getz, 2007; Maslow, 1970; Kotler et al., 1999). Crompton and Mckay (1997) refer to the influence an individual has over others within their reference groups. It is evident that R2 and R4 tend to follow reference groups or individuals that may already have gone through the orientation and information stage. R4 barely had any information when he decided to join the festival, but trusted his friends that had done the research. However, it is possible to argue that R4 went through the first two steps of the customer journey as well with a low level of processing information. As R4’s friends told him about the festival, he went through the *orientation* stage and became aware of the festival. Thereafter, he also received the *information* he needed from his friends straight away and decided to join the group to proceed and buy the ticket.

Although the attendee may talk to their friends about a festival already in the orientation or information stage of the customer journey (R1 & R3), it is not until the attendees know that someone from their group of friends is joining the festival that they would proceed to buy the ticket. Therefore, the authors would like to argue that the need for *fellowship* is evident in this study, were the subprocess consist of forming a group.
According to Lamb et al. (2001) the customer decides to buy a product or not after fulfilling the need for information and evaluating alternatives. However, this study shows that the customers also go through a step of forming a group. In this case, the product the customer purchases is the festival ticket. Therefore, it can be noted that the subprocess in this stage is to buy the ticket.

Ashman et al. (2015) stress the importance of shopping experience in the purchase stage that may affect the perception of value and reassure the customers of their choice. R3 explains that the technical failures she experiences affect the customer’s purchase experience negatively. However, it may seem not to have affected the customer experience of the festival. The overloaded website and the long queues on the phone were barriers that made R3 experience difficulties when she was unable to buy the tickets or call customer service for support. Engel et al. (1968) argue that how well the product and purchase experience meet the customer’s expectations will determine whether the customer is satisfied or not.

All respondents tend to buy the festival tickets well in advance. According to KPMG (2017) price remains the most important factor when the customer decides ‘when’ and ‘where’ to buy a product. However, for all respondents it is possible to recognise different motivational factors when they make these two different choices. It is possible to see that price is the main determinant for R2’s buying behaviour. R3 on the other hand mentions that it is due to that it may be difficult for her to plan ahead. The authors recognize that both female attendees’ buying behaviour is dependent on personal resources. It may also be possible to recognize that Generation Y’s, R1 and R2, purchasing power increases with discount. On the other hand, the two male respondents who are students and have the same income level, R1 and R4, mention the issue of availability of tickets. They explain that this is their main reason when deciding when to buy the ticket. In accordance, people who share similar occupations and income level may share similar taste, value, and ideas (Barone & Miniard, 2002; Solomon, 2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music interest</td>
<td>Music interest</td>
<td>Geographic convenience</td>
<td>Geographic convenience</td>
<td>Reuniting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers’ resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Table 5: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the fellowship stage*
As mentioned, KPMG (2017) explains that customers also concern ‘where’ to buy their product. All the respondents buy their tickets online by their computer, hence this can be the main platform where the transactions of festival tickets take place. This is also where the touch point is addressed that the festivals sell the tickets to the customers. It can be argued according to Petrovic et al. (2003) that the trustworthiness can also affect the customer’s purchase experience when it comes to online transactions. The respondents concern the reliability and integrity of the ticket marketplace. R1 stresses that it is important to see if the website selling festivals ticket is reliable. He usually buys the tickets straight from reliable organisers or through well-known ticket services. R3 buys the tickets straight from the official website and would not buy tickets through other sites as she does not trust them to be real. She trusts that official websites are approved and qualified to operate and sell real tickets. R4 also needs to check with other people’s opinions to see if the organiser is reliable when deciding to buy the ticket. However, it does not matter to R2 if she buys the ticket from official websites or other parties, for her the price is the determinant for where she buys the tickets as well as KPMG (2017) suggests.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discounts, computer, personal resources</td>
<td>Discounts, computer</td>
<td>Support, computer</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness, availability</td>
<td>Personal resources</td>
<td>Trustworthiness, personal resources, technical failure</td>
<td>Trustworthiness, availability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the purchase stage

5.6 Stage Five: Preparation

After purchasing the tickets, it can be argued that there is a need for preparation in order to have the best experiences when attending or leaving the festival. As influencers of social groups and initiators of festival visits, R1 and R3 have a high level of processing information to plan the festival visit in detail. All of the respondents find information from the official website of the festival. The availability of practical information may help the attendees to plan the directions to the festival and back home, or to decide if they need to book accommodations. Lack of information can be an obstacle for respondents to plan the festival visit. For instance, R1 expects that he can find sufficient information directly from the official festival websites.
R1, R3 and R4 stress difficulties of finding sufficient information such as the playscheme so they can plan the festival visits. The authors argue that practical information can be either enablers or barriers depending on the availability of the information and how it can support the attendees to plan the festival visit. All of the respondents also explains how that they put efforts to plan for the festival visits to a certain extent. Therefore, the subprocess of the preparation stage is to plan for the festival visits. R1 and R3 plan their festival visit in detail to avoid issues that affected their festival experience negatively, by a strategic packing. It can be argued that strategic packing may contribute to improve respondents’ festival experience, especially for those who are opinion leaders. R1 also highlights his preparation for health before a festival. It can be reflected from his frequency of visiting festivals and his role as an opinion leader who plans the visit for himself and other friends.

Packer and Ballantyne (2011) explain that the festival experience starts already, weeks or months, before the actual event. They mean that the anticipation and preparation contribute to a build-up for the event itself. The results of this study further indicate that involvement with a community may create anticipation and improve the festival experience among respondent. For example, R1 hypes the festival with his friends to create a united anticipation. R3 also highlights that the experience of planning the festival visit with her friends may be even more fun than the actual festival. Scholars argue that creating a story can be further touching than the event itself (Bohlin, 2000; Clawson, 1959). The authors would therefore like to argue that this may be what is happening for R1 and R3 in the preparation stage. They and their friends start to anticipate the festival and together create the story in beforehand.

R1, R2 and R3 further explain that they get prepared for the festival by listening to the artists as they want to avoid missing out on any performances they would like to see live. Also, the music helps them to get in the festival mood. In addition, the video trailers posted by the organiser on social media help R4 to get prepared by seeing how it is to attend the festival. According to Armstrong (2001), an individual acts according to the perception of the situation which is based on past experiences. It may be argued that R4 was attracted to the video trailers of festivals as he did not have any previous experiences to help him imagine how it would be to attend the festival.

It can be argued that all the respondents expect the festival organisers to provide information and support so that they can plan for the festival visit. Therefore, the authors would like to argue that the touch point in the preparation stage is to inform and support. In accordance with Wessblad (2010), the remanence of contact between the organiser and the attendees is to build anticipations and create memorable experience already before the event. An example of
this may be, when R2 expresses her excitement about receiving a confirmation email assuring her place at the festival.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music, relax, information availability, strategic packing, community</strong></td>
<td><strong>Music, information availability</strong></td>
<td><strong>Music, strategic packing, cloths, community</strong></td>
<td><strong>Watch official trailers, information availability</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Information availability</strong></td>
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</table>

*Table 7: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the preparation stage*

### 5.7 Stage Six & Ten: Transportation

The results of this study manifests the need for transportation; *travel to the festival* and *travel home*. Their experience during this stage, as well as the whole customer journey, can be influenced by certain factors explained below.

#### 5.7.1 Subprocess: Travel to the festival

All of the respondents describe their trips to the festival. The two female respondents who work full-time prefer to go to festivals that are close to home (R2 & R3). R3 goes more frequent to one specific festival due to this convenience. R1 stress the importance of time-efficiency, therefore he tends to travel to festivals by car. R2 explains the convenience of public transport that let her avoid traffic. R3 also tends to avoid driving to the festival due to long queues. The two respondents from Generation Y, R1 and R2, complain about the traffic jam and long queues that generate annoyance. In contrast to the other respondents, R4 observes that the support from the organiser makes the traffic circulate and let the attendees easily travel to the festival. R1 further suggests the convenience of shuttle buses for festival attendees. The information of directions to the festival also makes his trip easier. Therefore, it can be argued that the touch point in this subprocess is to *direct* the attendees to travel to the festival. Further, geographic convenience, accessibility of the festival, and traffic support can be seen as enablers for the attendees. It is also possible to note that traffic is the main barrier in the transportation stage.
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<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shuttle busses, directions, accessible by car</td>
<td>Central location, accessibility, public transport, close to home</td>
<td>Close to home</td>
<td>Traffic support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
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</table>

*Table 8: The enablers and barriers for the attendees to travel to the festival*

5.7.2 Subprocess: Travel home

When it comes to traveling back home, the convenience of the location also affects R2 and R3’s experience. The two female respondents indicate their efforts to avoid traffic. The traffic is also the main barrier that affects negatively the two opinion leaders, R1 and R3. However, R4, as a follower, enjoy being with friends during the trip back home and is not affected negatively by the traffic. It can be argued that a sense of belongingness enhances his experience in this stage of the customer journey.

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<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Belongingness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Table 9: The enablers and barriers for the attendees to travel home from the festival*

5.8 Stage Seven: Welcome

In the empirical results of this study it is possible to argue that the attendees of music festivals are in need of a *welcome* at the entrance. The subprocess in this stage is to *arrive* at the festival. When arriving at the festival R1, R2, and R3 argue that it enhances their experience if they receive practical information from the festival organiser upon arrival. R2 also mentions that the absence of queues affects her experience positively. R1 however argues that the presence of queues as well as extra costs and the difficulties to find parking, affect his experience negatively. Kotler et al. (1999) explains that what is included in the price of a product, in this case the festival ticket, must be communicated well to decrease dissatisfaction among customers. Both Wessbland (2010) and Gnoth and Anwar (2000) argues that it is important to
communicate an authentic message that mirror the experience as accurate as possible. The authors would therefore like to argue that it is the element of exceeding or not living up to the expectations of the attendees that decides if a factor will be an enabler or barrier for the customer experience. If the experience is exactly what the attendee expected, the perception of the experience will remain the same for the attendee. This argument is also based on that R2 explains that queues are not an issue as long as she knows what to expect, while R1 further explains that he did not expect it to be queues which decreased his experience. Wessblad (2010) explains that it is through the communication strategy and the promotional activities an event manager is able to regulate the expectations of event attendees. Nathan and Hallam (2009) further argue that poor communication may cause customers to drop out from the customer journey. With this in mind, the touch point in this stage of the customer journey is therefore to inform and direct the attendees.

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<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enablers</strong></td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Absence of queues, information</td>
<td>Information, belongingness</td>
<td>Belongingness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
<td>Queues, extra costs, parking</td>
<td></td>
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*Table 10: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the welcome stage*

**5.9 Stage Eight: On Site**

According to Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959), the on site stage, is the actual consumption of the event program. The subprocess in this stage of the customer journey is *experience*. Although this is not to confuse with the customer experience. Packer and Ballantyne (2011) name four different aspects of a festival experience: *music experience, festival experience, social experience, and separation experience*. The authors argue that these experiences may be incorporated, however is separated in order to study the elements that the festival experience consists of. Therefore, the authors want to stress that these experiences may not only take place during the festival, but also in the other stages, as these conclude in the full customer journey experience. However, this subchapter focuses on the on site experience.

Packer and Ballantyne (2011) argues that the separation experience set the festival apart from daily routines. As mentioned before, one of the reasons R3 enjoys to go to festivals is because she has the possibility to gain many new experiences in a short period of time. Also R4
explains that he wants to meet new people. R1 explains that his main focus is on the music experience, however, he also highlights the social experience to enjoy things with like-minded people. All respondents mention that people are happy and friendly at festivals, they are open to socialise with people from different ages and social groups. R1 mentions that he feels like home at a festival, where people are united by dressing the same and enjoying the same music. He even puts a label on the people that attend the same festivals has him. He expresses that like-minded people among him generate a favourable atmosphere where everyone feels included.

The authors would like to argue that the separation experience not only set people apart from their daily routine, but it also unites them (the social experience).

Carù and Cova (2003) further explain that festivals should be something over the ordinary, it should be extraordinary. Wessblad (2010) and Pine and Gilmore (1999) also argue that it is the experience outside the everyday life. As people are separated from their daily routines, they are also separating from their daily thinking patterns and may act differently than they usually do. This may also be the reason why they feel more comfortable socialising with people than they expected to. Packer and Ballantyne (2011) indicate that the music experience provides the common ground, upon which the other experiences were built. This may be true for R1 due to his great interest in music and his motivation to attend festivals. However, this is not the case for the other respondents, R2, R3, and R4, as they are motivated by a sense of belongingness and most focused on this aspect at the festival. This has enabled them to have a joint celebration (festival experience) and music experience to a certain extent. The authors therefore argue that the attendees may have different experiences as a foundation to contribute to the unique appeal of attending festivals.

As mentioned before, Wessblad (2010) claims that the event organiser should try to communicate an accurate picture of what the attendees should expect when attending the festival. Further, it is important for the organiser to live up to these expectations, and hopefully even exceed them. In the on site stage, the only physical touch point between the attendee and the event organiser takes place. This touch point may therefore be to provide the service. The result of this study indicates that the respondents concern festival quality attributes during this stage. These attributes, according to Son and Lee (2011), can be diversity of activities, entertainment sound system, promotion and information, festival atmosphere, entertainment stages, accessibility, safety and security, and food and beverage. Maslow (1970) explains that there is a hierarchy of needs where the motivation of individuals is developed. After all of the physiological needs have been met, the safety needs start controlling thoughts and actions (Mullins, 2002). Several of the respondents emphasise that safety is important at the festival.
(R2, R3, & R4). Maslow (1970) also mentions the physical needs which concludes water, food, and other physical attributes that one may need to survive. In a festival context, the authors would like to include the surroundings as well. These attributes are not needed for the attendees’ survival, but for the customer journey to proceed and need to be carefully considered as this study proves that it may affect the customer experience. R2 describe a festival where it was too far to walk between the stages, which decreased her experience significantly. Also, R3 and R4 touches upon the topic of the design of the festival area and that it could either be an enabler or barrier for their experience. R4 further concerns the accessibility of festivals for disabled people that they can enjoyed the same as others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature, clean, free parking,</td>
<td>Nature, information-badges, safety, phone-application</td>
<td>Mix of people, variety of activities, many experiences at the same place,</td>
<td>Various choices of food, nature, fast service, laser &amp; sound performance,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relax area, souvenirs,</td>
<td>relaxation, variety of activities, roof, lack of queues, belongingness,</td>
<td>belongingness, phone application, self-development, security, sound,</td>
<td>like-minded &amp; kind people, roof, clean, accessibility, essential physical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sociable environment,</td>
<td>unique experiences, decorations</td>
<td>design of the area, relax area</td>
<td>needs, safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like-minded people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Queues, forgot essential personal attributes, extra costs</td>
<td>Design of the festival area, food options, dirty, safety, network service</td>
<td>Design of the festival area</td>
<td></td>
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Table 11: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the on site stage

5.10 Stage Nine: Exit

The results indicate that there is a need for the attendees to exit after taking part in the festivals. During this subprocess, to exit the festival, the attendees may perceive the experience differently. Long queues can be seen as the main issue that decreases how the attendees value their experiences. However, the experiences they have gained at the festival tends to induce the respondents to neglect their tiredness to a certain extent even at the exit stage. R1 and R4 emphasise that their sense of belongingness also helps to overcome the barrier of queueing at the exit, as they enjoy sharing experiences with other people in the queue. R3 prefers to meet up with her friends before she exits to say goodbye. Hence, it can be argued that the fulfilment of the sense of belongingness can improve attendees’ experience at this stage of the customer
journey. In addition, respondents of generation Y, R1 and R2, find it helpful with staff at the exit and the parking. They express how supportive staff can enhance their experience. The authors therefore argue that the availability and supportiveness of the staff can be enablers for attendees in their customer journey. Further, it can also be inferred that the touch point in this stage is to support and direct the attendees to exit the festival.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belongingness, staff at the exit</td>
<td>Staff at the parking</td>
<td>Belongingness</td>
<td>Belongingness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queues</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 12: The enablers and barriers for the attendees to exit the festival

5.11 Stage Eleven: Digest Experiences

According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), evaluation takes place when the customer has finalized the journey. However, they do not categorize it as either a need, subprocess, or touch points. They rather mean that this is where a firm may learn about the customer experience, although do not highlight the interaction through a touch point (Gerritsen et al., 2014). The authors would like to argue that all respondents express a need to digest their experiences after attending a festival. This statement is based upon that Kotler and Armstrong (2000) explain that the beliefs and attitudes that impregnate the customer behaviour are learned knowledge and perceptions from previous experiences. The authors categorise the subprocess in this stage as evaluate, as it is evident in theory and the empirical data that the customers evaluate the experience through different actions. The authors further argue that these actions are; recollection of memories (Bohlin, 2000; Schacter, 1997; Schacter et al., 1993; Wessblad, 2010; Schacter et al. 1993; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; R1; R2; R3; R4), sharing experiences with friends (Ferguson et al., 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Son & Le, 2011; R1, R2, R3, R4), comparing experience with expectations (Bernstein, 1984; Schultz, Larsen, & Hatch, 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2000; Wessblad, 2010) R1; R2; R3; R4), assessing the quality of service, and emotional response (Getz, 2007; Crosier & Handford, 2012; R1; R3; R4). These are elaborated upon bellow.

As discussed in previous stages, it can be argued that the attendees may decide to terminate their customer journey at any stages due to various reasons (Nathan & Hallam, 2009). Wessblad (2010) explains that attendees evaluate their experiences continuously throughout the customer journey, as value is created as the experience develops. Kardes et al. (2011) further suggest that
the customer may drop out at any stage of the customer journey and go directly to the evaluation stage. Therefore, the authors would like to highlight that although evaluate is considered as a subprocess in this study, it is flexible and stretches over all stages of the customer journey. However, the main focus will lay on this process as the customers terminate or conclude the customer journey.

In this stage, the attendees recollect past events, behaviours, and experiences (Schacter, 1997; Schacter et al., 1993). This stage is of great importance according to Bohlin (2000) as the recollection of memories may have a significant impact on the perceived event value. In accordance with Ferguson et al. (2010) and Tung and Ritchie (2011), the authors would like to argue that it is the recollection of memories that determines if the attendee will generate positive or negative WOM. Scholars further indicate that satisfactory experience directly motivates the customers’ revisit intention and enables positive WOM responses (Ferguson et al., 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The results of this study show that WOM is actively used by the respondents.

R1, R2, and R3 take advantages of social media to share their stories. R1 and R4 especially like to share their festival experiences face-to-face with their peers.

Scholars also suggest the power of storytelling to generate memorable experiences (Bohlin, 2000; Clawson, 1959; Jensen, 2015; Kalliomäki, 2015). This is evident as all the respondents has stories from the festivals to tell and they tend to recreate with their peers to relive the experiences they value from the festival. When the memory of the total recreation experience makes a major impression, the recollection will be strong and enduring (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). As the authors previously argued, it is not enough to fulfil the expectations of the attendees, the expectations need to be exceeded to be considered as extraordinary experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

The memorable experiences expressed in the empirical data are all positive or negative surprise; something beyond what the attendees expected. Positive surprises may conclude unique experiences that the respondents did not expect, and may not be coordinated by the event organiser. For example, when R1 explains that the weather affected his experience and Yngve Malmsten took the performance to the next level and crashed his guitar on the ground. However, negative experiences that attendees did not expect may also stay in their memory. For example, R3 mentions underage drinking and how that decreased her overall experience and it has stayed in her memory. It is something that she discusses with peers as well. In accordance, Wessblad (2010) further highlights the impact of the surprise-factor on an event that encourages the attendees to continue to tell their stories after the event. In addition, Getz (2007) suggests that festival attendees should have a change in feeling from special to normal or a certain feel of
loss after attending events. This can be results from powerful, touching and satisfactory experiences (ibid.). Evidently, R4 emphasises his feeling of sadness and lost when he was back to daily life.

Throughout the results of this study, festival quality attributes are continuously evaluated by the respondents. These attributes may include promotion and information, festival atmosphere, accessibility, festival sound system, safety and security, food and beverage, and others. It is also evident that the respondents show their intention to spread WOM and revisit specific festivals by assessing these attributes. It can be argued according to Son and Lee (2011) that the festival quality attributes have a significant influence on the attendees’ behaviour. Mackellar (2009) further suggests that the successful delivery of satisfactory experience is essential for long-term competitiveness of festivals.

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<th>Respondent 1</th>
<th>Respondent 2</th>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>Respondent 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enablers</strong></td>
<td>Memorable experience, telling stories, social media, face-to-face</td>
<td>Memorable experiences, telling stories, &amp; social media</td>
<td>Memorable experiences, telling stories, &amp; social media</td>
<td>Memorable experiences, telling stories, face-to-face</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
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*Table 13: The enablers and barriers for the attendees during the evaluation stage*

### 5.12 The Customer Journey of Music Festival Attendees

As the customer journey concept is closely linked with the use of visualisation, which is referred to as customer journey maps (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2010), the authors have mapped each individual customer journey for the respondents (Appendix 1), and conceptualized them in a generalized model (Figure 6). As previously mentioned, the stages in a customer journey include customer need, subprocesses, and touch points. The subchapters above are divided by the stages that an attendee may go through when attending a festival.

Maslow (1970) argues that once a need in the lower level of the hierarchy of needs has been fulfilled it is no longer a strong motivator and the next higher level in the hierarchy demands satisfaction. In other words, only unsatisfied needs motivate an individual (Mullins, 2002). The authors would like to argue that this is also how the customer journey proceed and the reason why the customer journey is structured by the needs of the customer. Once the first need is satisfied, the customer will move on to the next need. Therefore, the authors conclude that the
foundation of the customer journey are the needs of the customer. The customer needs are further elaborated upon below (Figure 6), as well as the subprocesses and touch points the customer journey steps are included.
Figure 6: The customer journey of music festival attendees
6 CONTRIBUTIONS

This chapter entails the conclusions that were discussed in previous chapter. It further elaborates upon theoretical- and practical implications and finally recommendations for further research are discussed.

6.1 Conclusions

Scholars have previously discussed the customer journey, and the customer experience. However, the music festival environment has rarely been a focus, and the full customer journey has never been generalised before. To the knowledge of the authors, this is the first study that aims to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur in the process. Through this study the customer journey of music festival attendees was visualised, where the customer’s needs are what bring the customer to proceed through the stages (Figure 6). Therefore, only unsatisfied needs motivate an individual. Once the first need is fulfilled, the customer will move on to the next need. The customer needs are: orientation, information, fellowship, purchase, preparation, transportation, on site, and digest experiences. These all entail subprocesses but may not include touch points. The factors that influence the behaviour of an attendee throughout the customer journey is created through past experiences (psychological factors), current situation (personal factors), and social influences (social factors). These factors are referred to as the customer mindset.

In the first stage of the customer journey, the orientation stage, the organiser inspires the attendees and makes them aware of the festival. Communication channels can be seen either enablers or barriers for the attendees’ experience, depending on the content and communication frequency. During this stage, however, the attendees are strongly influenced by social factors and less by the organiser. This may be due to past experiences that has generated a mistrust in promotion. Further, anticipation among the attendees is formed and continues to take part in all stages before the arrival at the festival. Also, motivation can be one of the main psychological factors that effect the orientation stage as the attendee’s needs and wants are identified in this stage. The attendees’ motivation can be; to look for entertainment, to have a sense of belongingness, or self-development by gaining new experiences.

As the attendees become aware of the festivals, they come to search for information. There is a close connection between the level of processing information and the attendees’ roles in groups. Attendees who are more active in the search for information, tend to be more influential within their social groups, or people who are influential within their social group have a higher
level of processing information. Barriers that are evident in this stage are lack of personal resources, negative social influences that may hinder the attendees to proceed to the next stage of the customer journey. The main barrier in the information stage is that event organiser does not provide the playscheme on time, which may result in that the individual miss out on buying the ticket.

The attendees may have different degrees of need for belongingness, however it is an essential factor for a festival visit. Attendees may go to festivals purely because their which of doing something together with their friends. Therefore, the fellowship stage is crucial to conclude in a group formation for Swedish attendees. Further, people who go to festivals with less frequency tend to have a lower level of processing information and instead trust their friends’ opinions and advice.

Not until the group for the festival visit is formed, the attendees will decide to buy the festival tickets. The shopping experience during the purchase stage may not have an impact on the perceived customer experience of the festival. During this stage, the attendees also consider the timing to buy the ticket an important attribute, as it may generate discounts when buying the ticket at an early stage. How the attendee perceives the price of the ticket is not directly related to income level. The attendees’ buying behaviour is instead affected by how they value the experiences that they gain through the festival visit. Further, trustworthiness of a site or event organiser also affects the customer purchase when it comes to online transactions to a great extent. The attendee may not purchase the ticket exclusively with the suspicion of unreliable organiser or transaction platform.

When it comes to the preparation stage, the attendees plan for the festival visit in order to have the best experiences when attending or leaving the festival. Attendees who are influencers tend to concern this step as important and are actively involved in this stage. Further, the involvement in the preparation stage may generate anticipation and affect attendees’ festival experiences.

The customers also express a need for transportation to travel to the festival and to travel home. During these subprocesses, the attendees consider issues such as; time-efficiency of the trip, status of the traffic, and directions from the organiser.

When the attendees arrive at the festival, they need a welcome at the entrance. How they experience and are supported from the organiser at this stage affect directly to their perception of the experience. It is important to inform and direct the attendees through certain communication strategies and promotional activities in order to regulate the expectations of the attendees. The attendees expect a smooth entry.
During the on site stage in the customer journey, it is crucial for the organiser to provide sufficient service in order to live up the attendees’ expectations, and hopefully even exceed them. Further, the attendees concern various quality attributes that determine success of the festival. The customer experience is also expressed when the attendee exits the festival area. Traffic, accessibility, and supportiveness to ease the process are certain issues during this stage that is important for the organiser to consider when the attendees exit the festival.

Finally, this study shows that the attendee may drop out at any stage of the customer journey and go directly to the evaluation stage. There is a need for the attendees to digest experiences after attending the festival, as well as during all processes of the journey. The attendees reveal their evaluation through recollection of memories, sharing experiences with friends, comparing experience with expectations, assessing the quality of service, and emotional responses. This study also indicates the power of storytelling among the attendees to generate memorable experiences. Festival quality attributes are also continuously evaluated by the attendees and affect their intention to spread WOM and revisit specific festivals by assessing these attributes.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to theory regarding customer experience and customer behaviour. Especially, regarding the customer journey of music festival attendees; the processes and the barriers and enablers it may conclude. This has not been elaborated to this extent in previous research. Previous research regarding the customer journey has not considered the set of personal-, psychological-, and social factors that may impact the customer behaviour within the customer journey. The authors refer to this as the customer mindset, which conclude all attributes that affect the decisions, feelings, behaviours of the attendee.

Existing literature indicates that the income level affects what a customer can afford and the view upon money (Barone & Miniard, 2002). However, this study shows that the income level does not seem to affect the decision to attend a festival. The customers’ buying behaviour tends to be dependent on how they value the experience rather than the money they spend on the festival ticket. Also, Mintel (2013) suggests that social media are key delivery channels for the organiser to interact with the customers and deliver messages. This study further demonstrates the attendees’ annoyance towards certain promotion behaviours by the organisers. Therefore, it can be suggested that the efficiency of communication channels is according to the content and the communication frequency. When it comes to music festival experiences, scholars argue that the music experience establishes a common ground upon which the other types of experiences are built. However, the results of this study indicate that other experiences,
such as separation experience, can be the foundation for the attendees that contribute to the unique appeal of attending festivals by creating a sense of belongingness.

### 6.3 Practical Implications

Throughout the customer journey, the festival organiser interacts with the customer through different touch points. The organiser is not present in all stages of the journey, but when being present they should aim to ease the processes and provide what the customers demand to fulfil their needs.

| Touch point 1: Inspire & make aware | - Inspire the customer through creating an attractive festival image;  
|                                   | - Take advantage of reference groups and opinion leaders. |
| Touch point 2: Inform              | - Make the information available and easy to access;  
|                                   | - Balance the frequency of the communication;  
|                                   | - Social media is the most preferred channel;  
|                                   | - The attendees look for the attendees look for the location, accessibility, price and further practical information. |
| Touch point 3: Service & communicate | - Provide good well-structured and trustworthy platform for the ticket purchase;  
|                                   | - Support the customer with issues and communicate with the customer to encourage purchase and ease the process. |
| Touch point 4: Inform & support    | - Provide information needed to go to the festival and make the most of it (practical information and inspiration);  
|                                   | - Support the customers with practical issues. |
| Touch point 5: Direct              | - Make signs on the roads so it is easy for the attendees to know where to go. |
**Touch point 6: Inform & direct**  
- Provide information through printed material they may be useful for the attendees during the festival.

**Touch point 7: Service**  
- Provide good service throughout all activities during the festival.

**Touch point 8: Support and direct**  
- Make it easy for the attendees to exit the festival area by having staff at the exit and the parking.

### 6.4 Limitation & Recommendations for Further Research

As this is an explorative study this chapter aims to provide support for further research within the topic. Whilst qualitative data was the most appropriate form of data to collect, it did present some constraints to the authors. Even though having a small amount of participants was appropriate for this study, one could see this as a limitation as experiences and feelings towards the questions may not be an accurate reflection of the whole population. The authors would like to encourage quantitative studies on a larger sample. Besides, the study was conducted in the context of music festivals, which implies that contributions and conclusions may not be applicable to other industries. Future research therefore should seek to overcome this limitation.

As this study is exclusively conducted from a Swedish customer perspective, it may also be interesting to conduct studies how the customer journey and the customer experience may differ between cultures.

This study focuses on the customer’s perspective towards the customer journey. It can be suggested for further research to assess the firm’s perspective in order to gain a more comprehensive view of the area and identify more characteristics and conclusions. Also, this study focuses mainly on the positive effects of music festival rather than negative sides, such as antisocial behaviours, drug and alcohol abuse, overcrowding, or public health issues. Future research is needed to explore the negative effect of festival and to gain an understanding of the customer’s mindset and experiences regarding this. A study of this sort may support mechanisms that help the attendees make healthy choices that lead to meaningful and productive lives.

Existing literature further stresses on the presence of peak experience as an essential aspect of attending events that is strongly connected to self-actualisation, however, it was not manifested by the result of this study. The authors therefore would like to recommend for further research to consider this aspect of the attendees when studying customer experience at events. The authors suggest that as this study is limited to the attendees conscious environment,
this (among other attributes) may be evident in a study that allows the researchers to gain insights about the unconscious attributes as well.

This study indicates that individuals acting within humanitarian occupations tend to have great influence and be initiators within the group constellations when attending festivals. Although, these individuals are also frequent festival visitors, which may affect the group constellation as well. Other patterns that may be discovered regarding group constellations in the empirical results are the roles and the levels of processing information versus involvement. Although, this would have to be investigated with a larger sample group to be possible to generalise.
7 REFERENCES


Cova, B. (1999). From marketing to societing: When the link is more important than the thing. *Rethinking marketing: Towards critical marketing accountings*, 64-83.


APPENDIX 1: The Individual Customer Journeys of the Respondents

These customer journey models were mapped together with the respondents during the interviews to outline the steps of the customer journey for music festival attendees. These visualisations were used by the authors in the analysis to easily see the patterns of the journey. However, some processes were excluded in these models as the respondents did not directly point them out, but was understood through analysing the results.

Respondent 1
Respondent 4

1. Hear about festival from friends who is going to attend
2. Receive information from friends
3. Searching for information
4. Booking the ticket
5. Attending the festival
6. Travel to the festival
7. Charging money on device that will be used during the festival
8. Receiving the ticket and wristband to enter the festival
9. Evaluating experiences
10. Retrieving the money that is left on the device
APPENDIX 2: Interview Guide

Introduction

The interviewer first explained that the researchers are studying music festival attendees’ behaviour and preferences when attending an event, as well as the processes before and after the event. A music festival, in this study, is defined as an event that is more than a music performance. The festival takes time for one or more days and provide other services and activities than music although music is the main attraction. The interviewer explained to the respondents that the anonymity of the respondents will protected in the research process, so that they can feel comfortable to talk about more private experiences.

The questions presented below have been the initial questions in each semi-structured interview and have supported the authors as guidance, and questions may not be in precise order when conducting the interview. The questions were developed from the theoretical frame of references and all questions may be asked with a specific purpose explained below to understand different aspects of the conceptualised customer journey for music festival attendees. The interviews took about one hour each and were recorded with permission of the respondents.

1 Festival Habits

To break the ice, and to gain more insights regarding what type of questions the respondent will be able to answer, the interviewer asked about the festival habits of the respondent. These questions further intend to encourage the respondent to be more open about themselves and help the respondents get more familiar with what the researchers aim to study.

- What kind of music do you prefer to listen to?
- When was the last time you went to a festival?
- How many music festivals did you go to during 2017?
- How many music festivals are you planning to attend during 2018?
- What kind of accommodation do you prefer when going on music festivals that lasts more than one day?

2 Customer Journey

In order to outline an overview of how the attendees perceive their customer journey when attending a festival, the respondents was asked about what processes their customer journey of
the last festival they attended. Before asking the respondents to describe their journey, the respondents was given brief information regarding what kind of processes a customer journey may include, the information given was: *All the interactions, actions, activities and processes that is related to the festival is included in what can be defined as a customer journey. It also involves all processes where you may think about the festival, the organiser or the experience itself. It involves thinking, feeling, planning, etc. - all experiences that you may have and all actions you may take.*

- Please describe your customer journey the last time you attended a festival.

The interviewer let the respondents draw their customer journey with pen on paper so that they could easily visualise their customer journey. This also decreases possible misunderstandings. To make it easier for the respondent to recall minor processes, the interviewer divided the journey into three parts as consumers process thoughts, feeling, experiences before, during and after consuming products (Kardes et al., 2011).

- Please describe different steps that you go through before you go to a festival.
- Please describe different steps that you go through during a festival.
- Please describe different steps that you go through after a festival.

### 3 Customer Mindset

The questions may concern sensitive topics (personal factors), that may influence how comfortable the respondent is throughout the interview will be asked under 10. Personal Background.

To understand how the respondents prioritize and value the festival experience they were also asked:

- To what extent have you gone to be able to go to a certain festival in terms of giving up personal resources, such as time and money?

To gain a brief understanding of how previous experiences has affected the respondents’ customer journey, they were asked:

- How have previous experiences of festivals affected your perceptions of festivals?
- Can you tell us about one or several occasion(s) where an experience of a festival surprised you in a positive way?
- Can you tell us about one or several occasion(s) where an experience of a festival surprised you in a negative way?
Social Factors
To gain a greater understanding about the social factors that influence attendees before a festival, the respondents were asked:
- How many friends/acquaintances usually join you to music festivals?
- What was your role in this group of friends when attending this festival?
- What factors do you believe was the common factor between you and other people at the last festival you went to?
- How has other people affected your decision to attend a music festival?
- Who is your biggest influencer?
- Please explain how he or she influence you to attend music festivals.
- Who have you influenced to go to a festival?
- How have you influenced other people to go to a festival?
- Who have you influenced during a festival?
- How have you influenced other people after a festival?
- Who have you influenced after a festival?

4 Orientation
To understand the motivational factors behind why the respondents go to festivals, following questions was asked:
- Why do you want to attend music festivals?
- Why did you go to the last festival you went to?
- Please give some examples of what has motivated you to go to certain festivals. (Not regarding the attributes of the festival itself)
- What attributes of music festivals do you like?
- Have you been to the same festival more than once? Why/Why not?

Awareness
To gain more insights about how attendees become aware of a festival, the respondents were asked the following questions:
- How do you first hear about festivals you want to attend?
- Through what channels do you prefer to hear about festivals?
5 Information
- To understand how attendees are looking for information, and what kind of information, the respondents will be asked the following:
  - How much information do you search for before attending a festival?
  - Where do you search for information?
  - What type of information are you looking to find?
  - What technological device(s) do you use when looking for information about festivals?
  - What problems have occurred when you have searched for information?
  - How would you prefer to have this information delivered to you?
  - What do you want to have included in the price of the festival ticket?
  - To what degree is the price for a festival important?

7 Purchase
To gain more insight about how the attendees prefer to make the transactions, the respondents were asked the following:
  - How do you decide if you want to buy a festival ticket or not?
  - What are the attributes that would make you purchase a festival ticket?
  - To what extent do you rely on other people’s opinions when deciding to buy a festival ticket?
  - How do you decide if the event organiser is reliable?
  - What may influence you to not buy a festival ticket?
  - How did you experience the transactions to purchase festival tickets?
  - How do you prefer to buy your festival ticket?
  - Where do you prefer to buy your festival ticket?
  - When do you usually buy your festival tickets?
  - What are the main problems that have occurred when you buy a ticket?
  - What happened after you bought the ticket?

8 On Site
To understand the preferences regarding the surroundings at the music festival, the respondent was asked the following:
  - Please tell us about the best surroundings you have experienced for a festival.
  - Please tell us about the worst surroundings you have experienced for a festival.
  - What are the most important attributes for the surroundings of a festival?
- What is important with the design of the festival area?
- What do you think the festival area should include?

To understand the preferences regarding the atmosphere at the music festival, the respondent was asked the following:
- Please tell us about the best atmosphere you have experienced during a festival.
- Please tell us about the worst atmosphere you have experienced during a festival.
- What are the most important factors for the atmosphere of a festival?
- How does the accessibility of a festival affect your experience?
- How would you describe the people/attendees around you?

To understand the preferences regarding the communication at the music festival, the respondent was asked the following:
- How do you think information should be provided during the festival?

9 Evaluation

To understand the how the attendees perceive to be affected by the festival experience, the respondent was asked the following:
- How did the experience affect or change your behaviours or thoughts, feelings, emotions?
- In what ways has the music festival you attended brought additional value to you personally?

To understand how the attendees spread the word about their festival experience, the respondent was asked the following:
- Would you recommend the music festival you attended to other people? Why?
- How would you recommend a music festival? Through what channels etc.
- Who do you usually discuss a festival experience with?
- What technological devices do you use to talk about your festival experiences?
- Please tell us about 2 of your most memorable festival experiences.

10 Personal Background

The respondents were asked to provide background information so that the researchers would be able to recognize patterns such as similar behaviours according to segments. This was done in the end of the interviews so that the interviewer would avoid biases based on the segments
of the respondent when asking questions. The interviewer explains that the last part of the interview will be regarding the background of the respondent, and that this is done to be able to analyse similar behaviours within the same target group.

- How old are you?
- What is your gender?
- What is your occupation?
- What is your yearly income level?