

Innovation in music festivals

The case of DGTL, EXIT Festival and Glastonbury Festival

Student Name: Maria Pandolfi

Student Number: 617789

Supervisor: Dr Marlen Komorowski

Master Media Studies – Media & Creative Industries
Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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ABSTRACT

The disruption of the music industry caused by digitalization, caused the evolution of music festivals from cultural projects external to the music industry, to main protagonists of the sector, which resulted in a rapid increase in the number of festivals organized. This rise brought higher competition levels in the sector, and the question of how to solve this problem for cultural projects that are now established businesses. Although the growth of their centrality in the current society, there is still a lack of research regarding music festivals. This study will tackle this problem by considering music festivals as part of the experience economy, a relatively new discipline, which recognize innovation as the answer to the current problem faced by music festivals. Nowadays, there is a crucial need to build strategies to innovate in order to stay relevant in the eyes of the customers and competitive in the field. Therefore, this thesis wishes to propose a framework to assess innovation strategies employed by music festivals to innovate, tackling the gap in previous research and with the goal of providing a useful tool to professionals and researchers of this sector. Reckon these propositions, this study will employ a multiple-case study approach, involving three major music festival in Europe: DGTL, EXIT Festival and Glastonbury Festival. The main research question is: *What strategies do music festivals in Europe employ to innovate?* The analysis will be based on 89 projects by the mentioned music festivals that are published online and will draw upon existing literature to develop a framework that differentiate itself from existing ones. The results will show interesting insights and premises for further research. These include the expansion of the area of interest for studies in music festivals, which grows from the basic event organization to the creation of a business, and the inclusion of experience and areas as forms of outcome of innovation strategies.

KEYWORDS: *innovation, innovation strategy, music festival, experience economy, case study*

Preface and acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

Music festivals in Europe have a long history behind them. First born as annual church celebrations in London, it was only later in the XVIII century that broader transformations in society, such as the emergence of modern capitalism and democracy, shaped the worldviews of the bourgeois music festival (Holt, 2020). Since then, they have undergone various changes, some of which can be considered revolutionary. Holt (2020, p.227) identified the major change that festivals faced in the 1990s, as they “went from being viewed as idiosyncratic cultural projects outside the main operations of the music business to becoming central to the concert industry and eventually to the music business as a whole. Festivals became one of the main sources of revenue for artist agencies, managers, and booking agencies”.

This evolution from cultural projects external to the music industry, to main protagonists of the sector, resulted in a rapid rise in the number of music festivals organized every year around the world. Only in the Netherlands, the growth in number of music festivals and festivals attendees was exponential, from 708 festivals in 2012 to 1.117 in 2019, and nearly ten million more attendees (from 19.7 mln in 2012, to 27.2 in 2019). Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic slowed the process, and the forecast for the year which expected 1.175 festivals was not met, but the pause caused by this extraordinary situation is slowly coming to an end (Respons, 2022). These statistics are even more unbelievable if the contemporary number of music festivals in the Netherlands is compared to the number of music festivals in Europe in the 1990s: in fact, an estimated 1000 music festivals were organized in the whole continent around the 1990s, which is less than the number of music festivals organized in the single state of Holland in one year (Frey, 1994).

The growth of festivals can be seen not only from their numbers, but also in their influence on the cultural sector, which is proven by the advancement of the concept of festivalization, that is “the process by which cultural activity, previously presented in a regular, on-going pattern or season, is reconfigured to form a ‘new’ event. Festivalisation also describes the process by which cultural institutions, such as a cinema, theatre, arts centre or gallery orient part of their programme around one or more themes or events, concentrated in space and time. Festivalisation therefore results in part from the ‘explosion’ of festivals, but also from some ‘eventalisation’ of regular, cultural offers” (Négrier, 2014, p.1). The motives behind this transition might be the attractiveness of the festivity, or the potential benefits of economies

of scale in marketing, ticketing and site management, that are emphasized by the capacities of outdoor sites as the festivals' ones (Jordan, 2015) or even the growing demand of experiences in today' society that is packed with virtual and digital opportunities (Pine and Gilmore, 1998).

Although festivals have such a prominent presence in today' society, they operate as businesses and therefore, they are required to continuously adopt new strategies to improve or maintain their competitiveness in their sector, given also that globalization, technological innovations, and a changing consumer focus, have brought drastic changes in today's event sphere. Moreover, considering the growing number of music festivals around the globe, it is even more important for festival organizers to be able to strategically compete. In order to do so, events and festivals are required to constantly reinvent themselves and innovate, not only because they are businesses, but especially because they offer experiences and are part of the experience economy, the new dynamic sector. To understand why innovation is important in the experience economy and why it constitute a separate sector than services and manufacturing, it is crucial to know its characteristics, and Sundbo (2008) provides a clear explanation about it, starting from the participation of customers that makes the experience production process more supply dominated, and different people interpret the experience in different ways, as it is a mental phenomenon. Moreover, another difference is that in the experience industry, the customers may travel to the provider, while usually in the service sector the provider goes to the customer. Lastly, experiences make great use of technologies, especially because they can be stored on media, transported over long distances, and exported.

The experience sector constitutes a new sector with new dynamics and music festivals, as providers of experiences, are required to build new strategies to innovate and stay relevant. These strategies can take infinite formats and can involve various protagonists, but as every change that happens in a business, success is not guaranteed every time. Long-term planning, insightful studies and having an adequate overview of the sector, can help music festivals innovate in the right way, putting their efforts towards projects that are more likely to bring benefits to them and the communities surrounding them.

Thus, this research will focus on a series of case studies to investigate the strategies put in place by music festivals to innovate, with the goal to create guidelines that can be applied to other cases. It will provide insight into the topic of music festivals and their growth,

because of the universal and special role they maintain in society and culture, and their strategic involvement in tourism and economic development (Getz et al., 2010). Moreover, despite the fact that innovation strategies are crucial for the development of the fast-changing environment of music festivals, there remains a paucity of research on the topic, which indicates the need to pursue this study.

1.1 Scientific relevance

It was only in the 1990s that festivals started to become a widely studied phenomena (Getz, 2010), consequently to their spreading around the globe, and research concentrated on various topics such as the usage of social media during festivals (Van Winkle et al., 2016), festivals as attractions for tourism and in relation to it (Cimbaljević et al., 2021), or festivals' visitors (Kruger, Saayman, 2016; Vinnicombe, Sou, 2017).

This research will contribute to not only the discipline of event and festival studies, but also to the discussion surrounding innovation, which is a dominant feature in multiple sectors, thus it will provide further insights in these important topics, that have not been discussed as widely in research, especially in relation to each other. The primary goal of this study is to propose a new framework to evaluate innovation in music festivals, by looking at the projects put in place as part of different strategies. The proposed framework aims at being a starting point for further research and developments in this field, which is a crucial and awaited resolution as innovation is a fundamental aspect of today' society.

Moreover, the experience economy is an important aspect of this research, which has long been an object of great interest in a wide range of fields. Providing a framework to analyze projects in the experience sector will help to gain a better overview of this new sector, that has been separated from the service sector not long ago and require further research.

1.2 Societal relevance

A 2013 survey found that the largest revenue category for musicians is live performances, and this is due to the disruption in the music industry caused by new digital technologies (DiCola, 2013). The arrival of new technologies, such as digital music stores, streaming services, and webcasting stations certainly brought positive aspects that reduced the cost barriers to the distribution and sale of music, allowing musicians to promote and sell their own music, attenuating the importance of gatekeepers that, in the past, could control the

ability of a musician to create and share music. Although technology brought these important contributions, it has also disrupted the traditional music business revenue streams: “Beyond the problems associated with unauthorized file sharing, we have witnessed the closing of retail stores, a drastic drop in physical album sales (and the subsequent reduction of mechanical royalties for songwriters), lower advances, and less financial support to artists signed to record label deals” (Thomson, 2013, p. 515).

Therefore, not only music festivals have a significant impact on surrounding areas, but they represent one of the most important sources of income for the whole music industry after the disruption caused by technology. Revenue in the Music Events segment is expected to reach US\$9,226m in 2022, and it is set to show an annual growth rate of 11.08%, resulting in a market volume of US\$14,045m by 2026 (Statista, 2022).

Understanding how music festivals can use innovation to further grow, will help create bigger revenues both for the people directly involved in the organization, and the artists. Moreover, music festivals represent an important chance for artists to be discovered by new audiences, therefore bigger and successful music festivals will provide bigger platforms to artists.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter aims to firstly present existing literature on the topics relevant to the current study, precisely on the two main concepts found in the research question, innovation and music festivals, as well as the ideas of innovation strategy and experience economy, that closely relates to both. Introducing the definitions and the existing literature on these topics will help define the context in which this research took place.

Moreover, it is important to review theory in order to present the theoretical analytical framework that guided the methodology of this study.

2.1 Innovation

2.1.1 Defining innovation

Innovation is an ambiguous term and lacks a clear definition. In this section various definitions will be presented as it is important to understand the various forms that innovation can take and the many ways it can be interpreted, this will help set the base of this research that aims at looking especially at innovation. Without a clear understanding of the literature about innovation it would be difficult to firstly acknowledge the definition chosen for the current study, but also grasp how certain strategies and projects are more relevant for music festival, as innovation is not the only aim that strategies put in place in music festivals can have. Therefore, it is important to define it to build projects with the goal of innovating music festivals and, in the case of this study, to identify suitable projects that will help construct the framework.

The Oslo Manual, which provides guidelines for collecting and interpreting innovation data, represents a great resource to frame innovation and identify a definition for it. It is important to note that the manual was published by OECD, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which is a unique forum where the governments of 30 democracies work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalization (OECD, 2005, p. 2). In the manual innovation is defined as “the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations” (OECD, 2005, p. 46). Although the manual refers to it with a broad definition, it must be said that it is still strongly business oriented and further definition will be taken into consideration as innovation is not tighten only to business

organizations. As a matter of facts, “innovation has been studied in many disciplines and has been defined from different perspectives” (Damanpour, Schneider, 2006, p.216), therefore a few examples of definitions will be presented that vary the aspects they emphasize or concentrate on a particular discipline.

The definition provided by Hyland and Soosay (2008, p. 231) is similar to the one provided by OECD, but vaguer on the context of the innovation, as it states that innovation is “the introduction of new and useful products, services, methods, practices or processes that add value to the organization”, which touches upon alike concepts as Thompson (1965, p.2) that earlier defined innovation as “the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes products or services”.

Baragheh et al. (2009, p. 1334) conducted a study on the interpretations of innovation, in order to propose an integrative definition of it, that concludes in the following multidisciplinary answer: “Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby organizations transform ideas into new/improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves successfully in their marketplace”.

If the definitions are to be more sector specific, it is possible to note that while in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sector innovation is seen as the successful implementation of new products, services, and processes (Gordon, McCann, 2005), in the creative industries, innovation is seen as “modern society transform[ing] itself into a society of continuous self-change”. This definition is presented by Hutter and Stark (2015, p.1), which continues as “the scope of innovation widens to all processes that introduce something new. A very broad definition is needed to capture cases as diverse as the shapes of specific synthesizer sounds to new labor market policies, or from a new fashionable style of painting to the invention of a mathematical proof”. Innovation in the creative industries denotes “those creative efforts that strike the market as unusually distinctive, satisfying, and/or productive in opening new ground” (Caves, Plaine, 2000, p. 202).

2.1.2 Defining media innovation

Multiple and distinctive definitions of innovation have been presented through the decades, therefore it is clear that it is a complex and multifaceted concept which doesn't present a unique and generally accepted definition. Given that this research concentrates on innovation in the media industries, more precisely on music festivals, it is necessary now to

concentrate on definitions of media innovation. García-Avilés (2016, p. 29) considers media innovation to be “the capacity to react to changes in products, processes and services through the use of creative skills that allow a problem or need to be identified, and to solve it through a solution that results in the introduction of something new that adds value to customers and to the media organization”. Dogruel (2013, p. 32), through the analysis of research and literature on media innovation in media economics and management, found three different concepts used to approach media innovation: one that sees it as an external, “mainly technical product or process innovation that “demands” change in media organisations”, the second and third focus on new media products, one analysing new technologies and new media standards, and the other new media content, like formats and titles. Yet again, Dogruel enlightens the clutter surrounding the term media innovation, and to add to her conceptualization, it’s relevant to note Charles Ess’ (2014) understanding of media innovation that locates it both as an analytical academic field, as well as a field of practice in media industries, because media innovations are also social, a factor already identified by Dogruel (2013).

From the presented literature, it emerges that media innovation relates strongly to both its surrounding, such as technological developments or other relevant social factors, but also to the internal processes and structure of the media organization of interest, in the case of the topic discussed currently, music festivals, and for this study, the definition proposed by García-Avilés (2016) will be used, as it is specifically targeted towards innovation in media and it considers exhaustively various aspects important to the current study.

2.1.3 Framework for analyzing innovation

As mentioned before, innovation has been widely discussed and various definitions have been developed, along with a large number of frameworks that allow to analyze innovation in various settings. Because of its nature and the dependency on its surroundings, innovation has been studied using different methodologies, and this section will present the frameworks that are relevant to understand how innovation can be studied in order to have an overview of the sector and clarify how the framework proposed in this study was developed.

The aforementioned Oslo Manual (OECD, 2005) provides an innovation measurement framework that has been implemented through the years and draws on large amount of data and experiences, and it emphasizes on the division of innovation into types. A strategy utilized also by Schumpeter (1934) that categorized innovation into his famous five main types: “a

new good,” “a new method of production,” “a new market,” “a new source of supply of raw materials,” and “the carrying out of a new organization of any industry”.

Hall, et al. (1975) used a different approach and highlighted the fact that innovation is a process that each user experiences individually and therefore developed a framework for analyzing innovation adoption that considers the variation in the individual application of an innovation. The Levels of Use of the Innovation consists of eight discrete levels of use of an innovation and range from the lack of knowing that the innovation exists to an active, sophisticated, and highly effective use of it. The Level of Use describes behaviors of innovation users but does not attempt to explain causality.

Van de Ven and Poole (1989) underline as well the significance of understanding the process of innovation and attempted to present methods for studying innovation processes. They recognized the following four requirements, starting from the necessity for a “clear set of concepts for selecting and describing the objects to be studied”, which then will be analyzed using “systematic methods for observing change in the objects over time”. Moreover, it requires “methods for representing raw data to identify process patterns” and lastly, “a motor or theory to make sense of the process pattern and a means of determining whether the theory fits the observed patterns” (Van de Ven, Poole, 1989, p.31).

The presented literature shows that much research has been conducted on the topic of innovation, but because of its cross-disciplinary character, which makes it crucial to study it considering his context, much more research still need to be conducted to fully capture it in various settings.

2.1.4 Defining strategy and innovation strategy

The current research focuses on the strategies that music festivals can put in place to innovate; therefore, this section will present the concept of strategy and innovation strategy, in order to complete the introduction of innovation and allow for a better understanding of the methodology and the findings of this study.

Micheal Porter (1996) defines strategy as deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value, therefore categorizing it as a competitive activity. His view on strategy is one of the most cited and established in the business sector. Although, strategy have been investigated and defined under various aspects. Ovans (2015) indicated three different focuses, that are “doing something new”, “building on what you already do”, and “reacting opportunistically to emerging possibilities”. While Chandler (1962, p. 47) defines

strategy as “the determination of the basic long-term goals of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals”. Finally, Mintzberg (1987) provided five Ps to define strategy: plan, ploy, pattern, position, perspective.

Innovation strategy on the other hand is “a firm’s relative emphasis on different types of innovations and the associated pattern of resource allocation, in alignment with its strategy at the corporate, business unit and functional levels” (Varadarajan, 2018, p. 161).

Lucy Kung (2017) explores a variety of different strategic approaches and proposes three different types of strategy literature, that are Rationalist, Adaptive and Interpretative. The rationalist school views strategy as “essentially a plan, formed through the methodical, sequential analysis of the environment and the evaluation of the extent to which organisational resources can be utilised to take advantage of environmental opportunities or to address environmental threats” (Kung, 2017, p.89). While the rationalist approaches focus on the content of the strategic plan and argue that strategy involves maximizing returns from resources and establishing equilibrium within this context, the Adaptive approach perceive this equilibrium as rare, and that change is endemic to organizational environments. It explored the interrelationship between the structure and dynamics of an industry and the structures, strategies and processes inside organisations, and puts emphasis on the need to adapt and self-renew. Lastly the interpretative school of strategy focuses on exactly “those elements that often prevent strategic plans being implemented, namely the deeper ‘hidden’ aspects of the organisation, such as mindset, belief systems, values, motivation and emotions” (Kung, 2017, p. 114).

This categorization is important to realize that strategy is also contextual just as innovation is, consequently, it is important to have a clear idea of the conditions in which the strategy is going to be applied to in order to have more probabilities of a successful outcome. For these reasons, the current study looks specifically at the music festivals sector and aims at providing a framework to analyze innovation strategies in this specific environment, so that operators of music festivals can create more successful projects.

2.2 Music Festivals as part of the Experience Economy

2.2.1 Defining music festivals

Falassi (1987, p.1) concluded that “the meaning of festival in the social sciences is simply

taken from common language, where the term covers a constellation of very different events, sacred and profane, private and public, sanctioning tradition and introducing innovation, proposing nostalgic revivals, providing the expressive means for the survival of the most archaic folk customs, and celebrating the highly speculative and experimental avant-gardes of the elite fine arts". Getz, et al. (2010) later confirmed the numerous forms and variations that a festival can undertake, but also clarified that even though festivals can be considered events, it is important to differentiate festival management from event management, highlighting the need of developing separate research studies.

Regarding festival studies, Getz (2010) provides a complete overview of the nature and scope of it and argues that it has an important place in the event-related literature but has not been widely assessed separately. It concludes narrowing down the main topic of festivals literature into three main discourses which are the discourse on the roles, meanings and impacts of festivals in society and culture, the discourse on festival tourism and finally the discourse on festival management (Getz, 2010). Getz (2010) concludes that one of the main research gaps in festivals studies is "the core phenomenon", which he justifies as most of the research is drawn from the classical discourse and the disciplines of cultural anthropology and sociology, but he advises that a unified theory of festival experiences should be created, also to provide festival designers more theory than the one that relies on the arts. Moreover, he considers important to go beyond the event tourism discourse and evaluate festivals in terms other than that.

This study will use the definition of music festivals by Paleo and Wijnberg (2006, p. 53): "a popular music festival can be defined, from an economic point of view, as an organization whose activity results in an event, consisting of two or more live music performances, presented in such a way that it can be identified and valued as a whole by audiences of aural goods".

2.2.2 Defining experience economy

For this study, music festivals will be looked at as part of the experience economy, a concept introduced by Pine and Gilmore (1998, p. 97), that describe experiences as "the next step in what we call the progression of economic value". Experiences are intrinsically linked to consumers in a new way in respect to commodities, goods and services, because of the personal perception and engagement with experience, that is defined as something that "occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to

engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event” (Pine, Gilmore, 1998). Although consumers can participate both actively and passively to experiences, the most important and common factor is the connection created between the customers and the event or performance (Pine, Gilmore, 1998). In their study, Pine and Gilmore (1998) create four categories to sort experiences and describe five key experience-design principles. In order to sort experiences in said four categories, they firstly define two dimensions that can be used to differentiate said experiences: customer participation and connection. Customer participation sees on one side the passive participation, in which customers don’t interfere with the performance, while the opposite side of the spectrum is made up by active participations, in which the audience and customers play a key role in creating the experience. The second dimension is connection, that refers to the relationship between the experience and the customers, where on one side of the spectrum we find absorption, and on the other one immersion. To describe this last dimension, Pine and Gilmore (1998) use the example of going to the theater to watch a movie “with an audience, large screen and stereophonic sound which is more immersing than watching the same film on video at home”.

According to these two dimensions, it is then possible to sort experiences into four categories, which are Entertainment, Educational, Esthetic, and Escapist. Table 1 represent these categories divided based on their location on the two spectrums, that Pine and Gilmore (1998) call “The Four Realms of an Experience”. Overall, experience do not necessarily have to fit in only one of these categories, rather the richest experiences are the one that enclose more than one realm, or even all four of them. It is crucial to keep in mind these four aspects of experiences, as most of the time the common thought is that entertainment is the most important or even the sole characteristic making a difference in the experience economy, when in reality, as Pine and Gilmore (1998) explain, they need to meet the customer needs and to do so, it is crucial to develop a strategy through research, design and development, from which business can obtain an experience suitable to the needs of its sector. This applies also to the case of music festivals, and it is important to note it for the current study and the understanding of how music festivals, as part of the experience economy, can be researched and developed under various aspects.

Sundbo and Sørensen (2013, p. 4) attempt to define experience, in the context of the experience economy, as “the mental impact felt and remembered by an individual caused

by the personal perception of external stimuli. The impact might be entertaining or learning, but does not need to be so; the stimuli may be authentic, but does not have to be; and the combination of stimuli and personal perception may invoke flow but the definition includes more than optimal flow experiences". Later, they also try to define experience economy as "formal economic activities that have the aim to deliver elements that can provoke experiences in people who pay directly or indirectly for them. Those people can be defined as customers or citizens, depending on whether the delivery is market or public based" (Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013, p. 5).

Considering these definitions, it is possible to say that both innovation and the experience economy are amorphous concepts and, just like innovation, the experience economy can be researched from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Sundbo and Sørensen (2013) list perspectives such as economic, business and managerial, psychological, sociological, anthropological, and technological.

This cross-disciplinary aspect of the experience economy opens the door to numerous research possibilities. Furthermore, experiences as previously defined can be traced back to the indigenous times, but it was only in the 2000s that the experience economy started being considered as an independent societal phenomenon, therefore leaving many research paths yet undiscovered (Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013).

2.3 Innovation and Music festivals: towards a new framework

The study by Sundbo (2009) about innovation in the experience economy gives an interesting overview of issues that determine why experience becomes an important economic and sociological factor, namely society's demand for experiences, the company's effort to produce innovations and technology and in addition it provides pertinent conclusions on the character of innovation in experiences. When looking at the first issues, experience economy is described as flighty and therefore innovation is needed to continuously present new experiences and maintain the growth rate (Sundbo, 2009). A theory that is shared also by Pine and Gilmore (1998). Moreover, Sundbo argues that although creativity is a particular feature of experience production and could be the basis for one type of innovation, it could not be a basis for a universal innovation model, as entrepreneurship and business creation are also core agents of change, especially if they are taken over by large organizations, which bring innovation to have massive effects. Lastly, Sundbo discusses the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and

concludes that technology matters in the experience economy.

The experience economy and its correlation with the creative industries represent an important sector for the growth of today's economy, and music festivals have a relevant impact on it. Previous research has looked at this specific matter and confirmed the development of music festivals and their impact on various areas such as economy and charity, politics and power, temporality and transformation, creativity, place-making and tourism, health and well-being and environment (McKay, Webster, 2016; Connell, Gibson, 2016; Bracalente et al., 2011).

Although the concepts of innovation, experience economy and music festivals have been researched under various perspectives, and result deeply interviewed, there is still a need to develop a suitable framework to evaluate innovation in music festival.

3. Method

3.1 Multiple-case study approach

The research aims to uncover the strategies put in place by music festivals to innovate. To answer the research question: *What strategies do music festivals in Europe employ to innovate?* And the sub-questions: *What types of innovation projects music festivals undertake? How do these innovation projects help music festivals stay relevant in the music industry?* The research will employ a multiple-case study approach. A number of instrumental case studies will be selected to develop a better understanding of the innovation projects put in place in music festivals and to theorize about a broader context (Mills et al., 2010). Case study research is defined as research that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, p. 97), making it a suitable research method for this study as its goal is to investigate music festivals in-depth, as part of the experience economy, a phenomena widely influenced by its contemporary context, and in relation to innovation.

Gummesson (1988, p.86) highlights the holistic aspect of case studies, stating that “the detailed observations entailed in the case study method enable us to study many different aspects, examine them in relation to each other, view the process within its total environment and also use the researchers’ capacity for ‘*verstehen*’”. Consequently, case study research provides us with a greater opportunity than other available methods to obtain a holistic view of a specific research project”, including also that having a holistic view means that “the whole is not identical with the sum of its parts” and it “can be understood only by treating it as the central object of study”, which is highly relevant in the current study as it does not aim to research a small and well-defined object, as done in the past with music festivals (Bowen, Daniels, 2005; Packer, Ballantyne, 2011; Gilstrap et al., 2021), but it addresses the concepts of innovation as a whole, including all of its various aspects.

Moreover, case study research has been frequently chosen as a method to investigate music festivals (Nordvall, Heldt, 2017; Brennan et al., 2019; Gelder, Robinson, 2009; Chen, Lei, 2021) and drawing on data from multiple cases will offer the opportunity for more extensive descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon (Yin, 2014), while also providing comprehension of complex social phenomena and real-life events such as organizational and managerial processes, which relates strongly to the topic of strategies and projects put in

place for the innovation of music festival.

3.2 The case studies

Multiple cases were chosen as it provides support in the case of replication, and they are generally preferred within case studies (Rowley, 2002).

The proposed case studies for this research are EXIT festival, DGTL Amsterdam and Glastonbury Festival.

Primary inclusion criteria for the case studies were their country of origin, as it was limited to European countries for the scale of this research. In order to analyze music festivals that are relevant in the industry, the first criteria used was the awards won, therefore all of the selected festivals won at least one major award. This represented a criterion as this study is analyzing music festivals that through the employment of innovation strategies managed to stay relevant and therefore, the winning of an acknowledgement such as a major award means that the selected music festivals not only managed to stay relevant but they were successful in doing so, making them suitable for this research. Moreover, to narrow down the list of award-winning festivals to the current number of three, some research was done to investigate the active will of these festivals in portraying their involvement in innovation. Lastly, the aim was also to choose music festival coming from different backgrounds and with diversified characteristics, in order to reach the most reliable outcome possible for the research.

EXIT festival is a summer music festival which takes place in Novi Sad, Serbia, precisely at the Petrovaradin Fortress. It was founded in 2000 and has since then won twice the Best Major Festival award at the European Festivals Awards. The organization of the festival shows great commitment to the “EXIT Values”, explained on their official website, as “the mission to spark positive social changes”. The festival was firstly founded as a student movement to fight for democracy and freedom in Serbia and the Balkans, but it has never lost the already mentioned mission, and the social responsibility that festivals hold, while keeping a focus on the development of creative industries. Nowadays EXIT has established a foundation and activism projects, and EXIT team organizes six events in five different locations besides the main music festival held every year in Novi Sad (EXIT Team, 2022).

DGTL started out in Amsterdam but has now editions in Bengaluru, Santiago, Sao Paulo, Barcelona, Tel Aviv, and Madrid. The case of DGTL Amsterdam is particularly interesting for the current research because its organization is trying to make DGTL the first circular,

climate-neutral music festival in the world. In order to achieve this goal, the festival conducts research all year round and it is now on a journey to redefine the innovation strategies needed for that, and for said reasons a foundation was created, called “DGTL Revolution”. (DGTL, 2022).

Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts was founded in 1970 and it has been held intermittently from the first year until 1981. After that year, the organization decided to take “fallow years” mostly every five years, to allow the land, local population, and organizers to unwind. With its long history and many changes in both internal organization and external context, it is interesting for the current research to investigate how the festival innovated. Moreover, the festival has been awarded by DJ Magazine as “World’s Best Festival” in 2019 and by NME Awards as “Best Festival” from 2010 until 2020, proving the relevance of this festival in the industry (Glastonbury Festival, 2022).

Table 1 provides further details about the chosen festivals and compares some key characteristics.

Table 1

	EXIT Festival	DGTL Amsterdam	Glastonbury Festival
<i>Length</i>	Four days, starting on the second Thursday of July	Two days	Five days
<i>Years active</i>	2000 – present	2013 – present	1970 – present (with fallow years)
<i>Attendance</i>	180,000	20,000	203,000
<i>Location</i>	Petrovaradin, Novi Sad, Serbia	NDSM Docklands, Amsterdam, Netherlands	Pilton, Somerset, England
<i>Nr. of projects analyzed</i>	32	38	19
<i>Website</i>	https://www.exitfest.org/en https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/	https://dgtl.nl/ https://revolutionfoundation.nl/	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/ https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/the-glastonbury-festival-archive

3.3 Data description and sample

To provide an answer to the research question, the collected data consists of multiple sources of evidence, such as documents, archival record, and articles, in order to create a database for each case study and maintain a chain of evidence (Kohlbacher, 2006). In total, 89 projects are part of the dataset and were analyzed.

The data was obtained through desk research, that is defined “as the process of collating and coding existing information for analysis, without direct contact between researchers and research participants” and it is frequently used for qualitative analyses (Green, Cohen, 2021, p.2). Moreover, it is a suitable research method for this study as it wishes to uncover the subject of innovation in music festivals, which has not been widely studied yet.

The data was collected starting from the official websites of the music festivals, while also looking at research previously conducted on each case study and, because the websites presented articles and information that were not concerning only innovation projects, all the articles were scanned to select the ones presenting enterprises that aimed at introducing something new, until saturation point was reached.

DGTL owns a website for each of its editions, but the primary one is dgtl.nl, from where it's possible to explore all the locations of the festival through the top-left button.

Moreover, DGTL has a foundation, as mentioned before, called “DGTL revolution” that mainly focuses on sustainability, by creating systems that can be applied to different types of events, festivals, and organizations and works closely with companies, events and governments. It has its own website at revolutionfoundation.nl, which provides further insights on what the foundation does, and the viewer can find articles on circular systems and other resources as six videos, labelled as “revolutionary talks”, which provide insiders of the music festival sector with an online, educational program about the organization of DGTL festival. For the purpose of this study, only articles relevant to answer the research question were taken into account, resulting in 23 articles, from which 38 projects were derived.

EXIT Festival presents a general website for its first and main edition, which is the one in Novi Sad. As well as DGTL, the website comprehends various articles published by the organizations that provide insight into their projects and activities (EXIT, 2022). As mentioned previously, EXIT festival established the EXIT Foundation, which has its own website that allows the viewer to discover their activities (EXIT Fondacija, 2022). The projects listed on this website are twenty-three. Only articles relevant to answer the research

question were taken into account, resulting in 31 articles, from which 32 projects were derived.

Glastonbury festival has a comprehensive website that presents their festival and activities, while an external organization, V&A, worked in 2014 on a digital collection of the festival. The result is a website that wish to tell the story of the festival and functions as a Glastonbury Festival Archive (V&A, 2022). Only articles relevant to answer the research question were considered, resulting in 19 articles and 19 projects.

3.4 Data analysis and operationalization

The primary objective of this research is to develop its own conceptual framework to better understand innovation within music festivals. The method developed by Jabareen (2009) was followed for the analysis of the data, which consists of eight phases: mapping the selected data sources; extensive reading and categorizing of the selected data; identifying and naming concepts; deconstructing and categorizing concepts; integrating concepts; synthesis, resynthesis, and making it all make sense; validating the conceptual framework; rethinking the conceptual framework. While the phases developed by Jabareen (2009) are comprehensive, they were still adapted to fit this research. Therefore, the last two points regarding the validation and rethinking of the framework were not taken into consideration, as they could not happen within the terms set out by Jabareen (2009).

Moreover, the analysis was pursued using an inductive approach, as it “primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher” (Thomas, 2006, p. 238). This approach is particularly suitable for the current research as it is data-driven, “the research begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.12) and the research is also forming its own design, that will eventually develop its own framework (Liu, 2016). To facilitate the data analysis the software ATLAS.ti was employed for data storage, organization, management and qualitative analysis. Although the software does not have the capacity of coding the data, and should not be able to, as it is a duty of the research, it was useful in order to structure the work, maintain order during the data analysis and the construction of theory.

4. Results

In order to present the results of the analysis in an insightful way and respond to the research question, this section will firstly introduce the general findings and then, it will move to the new proposed framework that aims to assess innovation strategies adopted by music festivals. The new framework emerged mainly from the concepts found within the data analyzed, but it was developed also by taking into consideration previous frameworks and literature.

4.1 A framework for innovation strategies in music festival

The data was analyzed using an inductive approach, as mentioned in the previous section, which required a preparation of the raw data files and then a close reading of the text. After this step, the first categories were created, and the text was read multiple times to cross-check and to divide the text into segment and then into categories. Based on the analyses, the categories derived were fourteen. Table 1 presents them and their frequency.

Table 2

Category name	Frequency
Areas	28
Culture	21
Environmental Sustainability	31
Experience	57
External collaboration	43
Humanitarian action	9
Inclusivity	21
Concurrently with the festival	50
Internal process	4
Outside the festival	39
Political	2

Product	15
Service	12
Technology	10

After continuing revision, the categories were refined, and it was decided to include into the framework two categories about whether the projects were aimed at customer engagement and satisfaction or not, a decision that will be further explained later in the dedicated section. Moreover, it is important to note that experience was used to code projects that provided an experience to their recipients, and during the analysis, at a later stage, it was diversified from experience enhancer, as it was an important step for the finalization of the framework. In addition, the category social was created, and it will be further explained in the dedicated section.

Ultimately, the result is the framework presented below in Figure 1, that illustrate the final categories and their correlation to each other. The specifications will be discussed in-depth below, where the categories will be given a clear definition, their presence within the data and their alliance with previous literature will be demonstrated.

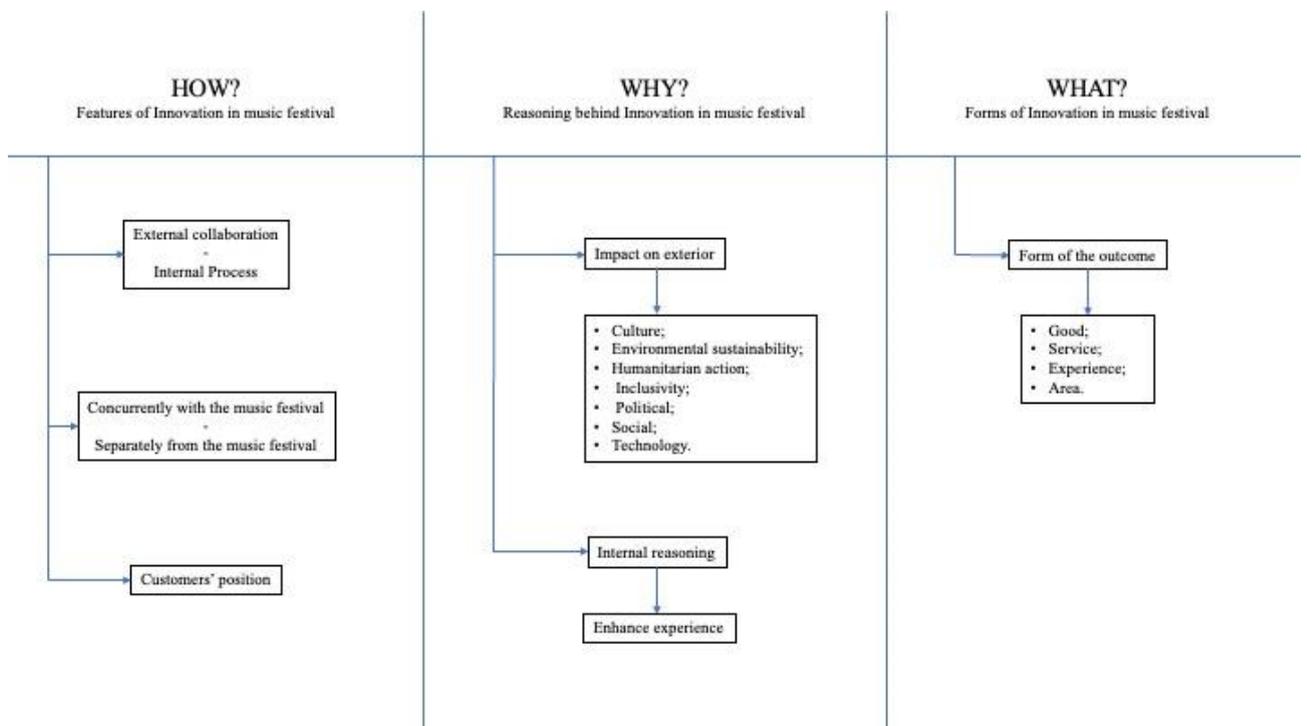


Figure 1

4.2 Features of innovation strategies in music festivals

Based on the research and the data, the first level of the framework was created to comprise six different categories that belong to three different themes. This level was created to give a first look at the features that can distinguish strategies to innovate for music festivals, as it appeared that all the projects analyzed had them in common.

4.2.1 External collaboration or internal process

External collaboration indicates those projects that were developed in collaboration with or even independently by companies or institutions not belonging to the music festival, while internal process indicated those projects that were developed as a result of an internal process of the music festival.

External collaboration represented the 68% of the projects analyzed, while internal process made up the remaining 32%, from which we can conclude that music festivals balance their involvement with external resources with internal assets in order to achieve the desired outcome of an innovation strategy, thus external collaboration and internal process are added as the first theme of the framework.

An example from the data that can further explain external collaboration can be taken from the DGTL project directed to lower the impact of travelers that fly to the location of the music festivals:

“We proudly present a novel solution, created with our new partners: SkyNRG, an Amsterdam based pioneer in sustainable aviation fuel, and CHOOOSE, a climate tech developer from Oslo, who work to integrate climate action into everyday life.” (DGTL, article 10, para. 3).

In the case of the collaboration between DGTL, SkyNRG and CHOOOSE, the project falls under the category external collaboration as it is on one side a partnership with businesses that are not part of the DGTL organizing team and on the other it allows to provide a service that is not involved in the organization of the festival itself.

While an example of internal process can be taken from the dataset of Glastonbury Festival, which introduced in 2015 a new scheme regarding food consumption on site:

“Affordable food is very important to us at Glastonbury Festival

and since 2015 many of our Traders have been helping Festival-goers go easy on their pocket, with our Food For A Fiver scheme. [...] Our Food For A Fiver scheme makes it possible to sample a huge range of delicious world cuisine without breaking the bank.” (Glastonbury, article 12, para. 3.

Here Glastonbury worked on a scheme using its internal resources, that aims to provide a product to its customers that requires adaptation from the usual operations of the catering team.

Moreover, based on the analysis, it can be concluded that these two categories are not mutually exclusive and music festivals tend to take advantage of networking possibilities. In certain cases, some projects that were created as an external collaboration, were then adapted by music festivals to become part of their internal processes, and vice versa, projects that were internally developed by music festivals, were made available to other partners or organizations to make use of them. Below two examples, one for each case, are listed.

Firstly, one example is the collaboration between DGTL and Innofest from which the music festival was able to reduce their CO2 emissions, thanks to the innovative idea of Mobiele Stroom:

“The entrepreneurs of Mobiele Stroom generate off-grid energy from biogas. But heat is also released during that process. During DGTL Festival they test whether they can use this heat to heat rooms and circulate air. This allows the festival to reduce a significant amount of CO2 emissions.” (DGTL, article 19, para. 9)

The idea from Mobiele Stroom was applied to the music festival, making changes to the structure of its logistics, and it was possible thanks to the partnership with Innofest.

While the second situation can be further understood from the project of DGTL, that through its foundation “Revolution Foundation”, provides a program related to volunteers that can help other events and organization to better themselves:

“The Revolution Foundation uses her volunteer program to help all (partner) events and organizations reaching their (social) sustainability goals. [...] Our volunteer program plays a key role in

supporting and strengthening sustainable systems as they are implemented at events or within businesses.” (DGTL Foundation, article 22, para. 1).

Taken these considerations into account, this theme of the first level of the framework looks at the protagonists behind the development of a project, that can come from external partnerships and networking, or from internal resources, but also includes the crucial possibility of exchanging ideas, as in the last two examples.

4.2.2 Concurrently with or separately from the music festival

It emerged from the data that projects either happened during the event of the music festival or separately from it, thus it was determined that the second theme of the framework looks at whether the projects take place during the days of the actual music festivals or the rest of the year. A normal assumption would be that project and strategies created by music festivals strictly concerns only the actual event and everything evolves around those couple of days or a week of the year, which also results in a vast majority of the literature to concentrate on activities that happened during festival days (Bowen and Daniels, 2005; Lee and Hsu, 2013; Wilks, 2011;). Contrary to this, the data analyzed showed that 43% of the projects analyzed are executed outside the festival sphere, which also relates to the non-use value of music festivals. As demonstrated by Andersson et al. (2012), that conducted a study to introduce the concepts Use and Non-use values and saw how they can estimate the total value of a music festival. Although they found that use value, such as economic impact, represent the largest value of a music festival, it is crucial to consider the non-use values, that can take the form of social, cultural and environmental impact, which represent 30% of the total value of a festival. Therefore, this study integrates into its framework a concept dedicated to differentiating projects and strategies developed to take place concurrently with the festival and outside the festival sphere, in order to understand more precisely the impact that music festivals can have and how they can innovate.

Glastonbury provides an example of an innovative project that happens concurrently with the festival:

“Since 2009, DeafZone has been working alongside our own Accessibility team to support Deaf Festival-goers at Glastonbury. [...] DeafZone provide a team of 20 BSL interpreters that cover music

performances on the Pyramid and Other stage. [...] As well as interpreting duties, the DeafZone Tent Crew also offer Deafhood awareness information and British Sign Language (BSL) classes and perform BSL poetry throughout the Festival.” (Glastonbury, article 9, para. 1,2,4).

Here Glastonbury operates directly during the days of its major music festival and the core activities of this projects are developed to be carried out uniquely during the days of the event.

EXIT Festival provides a case for the concept “separately from the music festival” with its involvement in the creation of the Creative Climate Leadership program:

“EXIT Foundation [...] has launched a Creative Climate Leadership program for artists and professionals in the field of culture to explore the cultural dimensions of climate change of importance for the future of our planet.” (EXIT Foundation, article 22, para. 1)

The program has seven partners, and among its activities there are training courses, conferences and events. Below, a description of one of the activities, taken from the final evaluation report:

“A five-day intensive course designed to fast-track participants to lead collaborative climate action, develop their leadership skills, and amplify the impact of their work. The course was attended by 25 participants from 10 different countries – FI, FR, IE, ME, NL, UK, CN, AU, TR ZW – and facilitated by Julie’s Bicycle and PiNA.” (EXIT Foundation, CCL public evaluation report, p. 9)

4.2.3 Customers’ position

The examined data shows how the customer’ stance in the project is a relevant feature to correctly categorize it, therefore, the third and last concept of the level “features of innovation strategies in music festivals” concerns exactly the customer, which is one of the primary actors of this type of events. The study by Andersson et al. (2012), that was mentioned in the previous section, also demonstrate the significance of Festivals’ attendees, to which accrues the biggest rate of the Use value of music festivals. This information is even

more crucial if the fact that Use value comprises 60% of the total value of a music festival.

Moreover, festivals' attendees and their position represent one of the most studied factors in the field of festivals and events (Luonila, Kinnunen, 2019; Lee, Hsu, 2011; Gursoy et al., 2006; Alonso-Vazquez et al., 2018) and Getz et al. (2010) also mentions the importance of research that looks at how people and groups experience music festivals and give meaning to them.

Therefore, in view of the aforementioned reasons and taking into account the findings from the data, the framework proposed in this study considers relevant to include a concept that refers to customers' positions. Specifically, the two concepts are "directed to customers" and "not directed to customers".

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic that affected the entire world, the event sector and music festivals suffered particularly, since they had to cancel the majority of their celebrations in accordance with the various regulations of local authorities. Along with everyone else, also DGTL Festival postponed its 2020 edition, but designed a project to stay relevant and still provide a glimpse of the festival to customers:

"On April 11th and 12th, we are proud to present 'DIGITAL DGTL' – the world's biggest living room festival. Bringing to your home a taste of our iconic DGTL sound, the two day event will publish multiple streams simultaneously for our community stuck indoors." (DGTL, article 12, para 1)

In this example taken from the dataset, the music festival developed a project that is aimed at customers and their satisfaction.

While in the case of "not directed to customers", it can be better explained through the project from EXIT Festival:

"The Project "Contemporary and Traditional Cultural Tourism Route" (CULHUSRBTOUR) [...] aims to develop a new tourist route and establish a new cross-border link. Cultural-tourist cross-border cooperation CULHUSRBTOUR was created as the cooperation between the EXIT Foundation, which thus continues the mission to expand the common community in the region, and the National Heritage Park in Ópusztaszer, Hungary. Partners have already

30organized four tourist events within the year and a half of the project, including music, visual arts, painting and photography, joint art meetings, workshops and study trips to both partner countries, primarily aimed at young people. The results of the cooperation include unique 3D tours of the Petrovaradin Fortress and the National Heritage Park in Ópusztaszer.”(EXIT, article 10, para. 1)

The project “Contemporary and Traditional Cultural Tourism Route” has a cultural character and its aim is to stimulate tourism; these factors are related to music festivals, but the type of activity described above does not primarily aim at providing something to customers of the music festival, nor to attract new ones.

Eventually, it is important to note that this study focuses on innovation and the strategies employed by music festivals to innovate, which makes this distinction even more relevant, if the definition of media innovation proposed by Garcia (2018, p.3) is to be taken into account, where the author considers it as “the capacity to react to changes in products, processes and services through the use of creative skills that allow a problem or need to be identified, and to solve it through a solution that results in the introduction of something new that adds value to customers and to the media organization”, therefore concluding that innovations in media should not aim to produce something only directed to customers, but also with the aim to add value to the organization itself. The mentioned considerations confirm the need to include a concept dedicated to target that the innovation strategy aims to in the framework.

4.3 Reasoning behind innovation in music festivals

Based on the data and its analysis, it was identified the need to dedicate a level of the framework to the motives behind those projects as this study, as mentioned before, looks at strategies. Mintzberg (1987, p. 11) defines strategy as a plan, “some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guideline to deal with a situation”. Therefore, to better understand how music festivals innovate and which strategies they use to do so, it is important to analyze their plans and what they aim to reach with them. It emerged from the research, that the second level of the framework should comprise two themes with eight categories, and it regards the reasoning behind innovation in music festivals.

4.3.1 Impact on the exterior

Based on the examined data, it was possible to identify that all of the music festivals under examination build projects that focus on influencing and effecting causes that do not primarily bring a profit to the music festival, and these causes ranged from a wide variety of different categories. Therefore, it was identified the need to create this first theme of this section, that is impact on the exterior, meaning that the music festival with its project aims at having an impact on one of the seven categories: culture, environmental sustainability, humanitarian action, inclusivity, political, social, technology. The peculiarities of each category will be explored later in the section, now the choice of impact on the exterior will be better explained.

The studies that research into the impact of music festivals are multiples, with a great share of them concentrating on the effects of music festivals on its outside sphere (Laing, Mair, 2015; McKay, Webster, 2016; Pavluković et al., 2017; Wilks, 2011) and it has been widely demonstrated that their effects are major under various aspects. Moreover, Getz (2008) found that festival organizers need to measure the success of their events not only based on economic remunerability but also on outcomes of other nature. Therefore, it was decided to include this concept in the framework as it is crucial to gain a better overview of the reasons why certain music festivals pursue projects that have an impact on factors outside of their sphere, in order to understand how successful they can be and how they help music festivals innovate and maintain their relevancy.

The categories were chosen based on the analysis of the data and represent factors that projects can concentrate on, with the purpose to have an impact on that area.

Culture referred to projects with the aim of sustaining and developing symbols of a certain culture, to valorize them and for the profit, economical or not, of the community tight to that culture. One example from the dataset is the participation of EXIT Foundation, organizer of the EXIT Festival, in the nomination of Novi Sad as European Capital of Culture:

“EXIT Foundation team led the candidacy of Novi Sad for European Capital of Culture in 2021 to victory. [...] With the slogan “For New Bridges “Novi Sad had won victory over Herceg Novi in the final round, thus becoming Capital of Culture in the selection of cities that come

from the countries – candidates for membership in the European Union.” (EXIT, article 18, para. 1)

EXIT Foundation aimed at valorizing Novi Sad and its culture by leading a project that proposed the city to receive one of the most important recognitions in the cultural field, which brought profit to the city of Novi Sad, where the festival usually takes place.

Environmental sustainability can be defined as “a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity” (Morelli, 2011, p.5). Based on this definition, the projects under this category need to have the objective of contributing to progress in terms of environmental sustainability, while also advancing the structure of music festivals so that it’s more environmentally sustainable and helps maintaining the condition cited above.

DGTL festival provides relevant examples for this theme, especially because the festival has set the goal to become the first circular festival in the world (DGTL, 2022), through a drastic change in its organizational structure and the employment of massive resources into the projects that follow this journey:

“30% of the daily human water usage is for flushing the toilet. This water is used for flushing materials packed with valuable nutrients. So precious drinking water is used to wash away precious nutrients. Together with researchers, toilet suppliers, and processors, we started a pilot to realize a circular sanitary system at the event. We are working towards the end of the ‘waste’ status of urine and feces by 2022. Urine is converted into (grey) water and feces into compost. For example, we extract valuable nutrients and fertilizers from the material that comes from the toilets and, therefore, reduces the use of drinking water.” (DGTL, article 9, para. 32)

Moreover, as mentioned before, DGTL festival started a foundation with the aim of sharing its knowledge about the possibility to turn a festival into a circular ecosystem, the foundation is called Revolution and provides various tools that can be accessed and utilized

by festival organized from anywhere:

“The Revolution Foundation provides sustainable and circular systems for festivals, events, and organizations. We work together closely with events, companies, and governments to design and implement circular blueprints, accelerating the transition to a sustainable economy. In doing so, we provoke a radical shift in the behavior of festival-goers, partners, businesses, and governments all around the world. Our projects demonstrate that it is possible to transition to circular systems without having to compromise on quality or experience. We believe that this is the best way to introduce the world to a new economic paradigm, in which we distance ourselves from the ‘linear’ (take-make-waste) era.” (DGTL, article 20, para. 1)

Humanitarian action refers to the projects that aim at showing solidarity, through donations or other forms, and has clear intentions of providing humanitarian aid, that is “saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity during and in the aftermath of crises” (OECD, 2012). Below an example from the dataset of a projects that belongs to the category Humanitarian action, from EXIT Foundation:

“EXIT AID – a program to help those endangered by unprecedented floods marked the social activities of the EXIT Foundation in 2014 by organizing a large number of actions in cooperation with music stars, the B92 Fund, Blic Foundation, VODAVODA and EXIT volunteers. [...] During the two-night exclusive party, which featured the main stars of the festival, Jamiroquai and DJ Example, and the donor dinner, together with the Municipality of Budva, over 140,000 euros of aid was raised for the vulnerable.” (EXIT, article 25, para. 1)

The aim of this project was to provide support to a community that was living a crisis caused by unexpected floods.

Inclusivity refers to the projects that aim at leveraging barriers that would otherwise

hinder the participation to an activity related to the music festival, of a certain group of people based on grounds such as gender, race, class, sexuality, disability. DGTL Festival provides an example of a project appertaining to Inclusivity:

“We’ve packed our efforts into the DGTL Safeexperience Project. [...] Together with Rave Scout Cookies, we developed our Festival Ethics, which we hope will aid in the development and maintenance of a safe space where everyone can express and experiment with their own sense of freedom. [...] We devised a set of three pillars that represent our Festival Ethics, those being: Harassment Free Space, Harm Reduction, Collective Accountability.” (DGTL, article 5, para. 3, 5, 8)

Political refers to the ones that relate to the government or public affairs of a country, and they could aim at bringing awareness to particular topics or show a clear political stand, such as the case of EXIT Festival with Silent Balkans Majority:

“In response to the growing national tensions in the region, on the initiative of the EXIT team, an informal group of prominent artists and public figures from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has drawn up an open letter to the public. The signatories to the text [...] urge the public in the letter to openly oppose extreme nationalist rhetoric that has taken over the region, with increasing frequency of fascist and ultra-right slogans.” (EXIT, article 21, para. 1)

Social refers to the projects that aim at positively impacting social conditions directly or indirectly, and the definitions was inspired by Park (2007) and its definition of social impact, but it was decided to include only positive impact as the projects in discussion should aim at innovating music festivals and therefore the consequences they have on the external sphere should be positive in order to be considered successful, otherwise they would not bring value to the event and they would give it a bad connotation in the eyes of society. The social impact of music festival has been studied before, and various measurement scales have been developed (Delamere et al., 2001; Fredline et al., 2003; Small and Edwards, 2003), confirming the relevancy of this topic.

Glastonbury provides an example of a social impact on the exterior with its donation to rebuild a local historical site that thanks to the renovation will be able to host activities of the local community:

“Pilton’s 12th century Tithe Barn was wrecked by fire in the 1950s. But it was stunningly restored in 2005 thanks to a grant of £400,000 from English Heritage, alongside a further £100,000 from Glastonbury Festival. [...] Said Michael Eavis [founder of Glastonbury Festival]: ‘I would have to say that this is one of the things I have done in my life that I am most proud of. The barn belongs to the village and it is very satisfying to know the Festival has put something back into Pilton’. The Pilton Tithe Barn is now run by a charitable trust, and is available to hire for private functions.”

Moreover, the social theme wasn’t included at first, as it was thought to be the main name for the entire concept covering the six other themes but considering other relevant literature and that the definition of social was not suitable to cover the themes such as sustainability, technology or humanitarian action, it was decided to transform it into an individual theme and find a more comprehensive name for the concept.

Technology is the last theme under the concept Impact on the exterior and refers to the project that concern technology innovations and aims at advancing the music festival technologically. Robertson et al. (2015) found the technology is a great tool to secure the successful future of music festival and their designing, through the employment of new and virtual landscapes and the enhanced sensory feelings and imaginations that technologies can provide.

One example of the employment of technologies can be taken from the dataset regarding EXIT Festival:

“EXIT Festival enters the Metaverse and announces the presentation of unique digital art in the form of Non-Fungible Tokens, or NFTs. EXIT’s first NFT collection is being created in collaboration with major music stars of today and will be available in the next few weeks. Most of the NFTs in EXIT’s collections will be made for use in

the Multiverse, in the development of which EXIT is involved. In this exciting and innovative 3D web reality, powered by the latest technologies, musicians and authors will be placed at the centre of the music industry. In line with EXIT's philosophy that live experiences are irreplaceable, the festival's NFT collection will be multidimensional, as it will feature a specially created live experience in addition to cutting-edge digital art." (EXIT, article 3, para. 1, 2, 3)

Laing and Mair (2015) found that "developing strategies for social inclusion that aim to benefit the community in a broader sense may have a greater impact on these outcomes than current efforts, which appear to be largely directed at festival attendees", which confirms the need to take into consideration further implication than only the internal ones, and therefore the need to be able to explore the various typologies of reasoning behind a innovation project.

4.3.2 Internal reasoning

Although it was proven that music festivals that aim at having a positive impact on the outside of the event are more prone to be successful, it is important to consider what reasons are behind innovation projects that can be amenable to the will of having an impact on the inside of the event itself, which is also an indicator of success.

Through the analysis of the data, it was possible to obtain one category under this theme, which is Enhance Experience. It was already mentioned in the theoretical framework that this study considers music festivals as part of the experience economy, and therefore one of the aims of innovation projects should be to enhance the experience offered to customers. There are a large number of projects in the dataset that could be categorized under this theme (57 out of 89), but to better understand the peculiarities of it, one example will be listed below:

"WaterAid are back at Glastonbury 2019, and they are tripling the number of their water kiosks to 37 to support the Festival's new ban on the sale of single-use plastic drinks bottles. You can stop by for as many refills of fresh, clean water as you like, for free! So make sure you bring a reusable bottle." (Glastonbury, article 11, para. 1)

4.4 Forms of innovation in music festivals

Previous studies emphasized on the need of differentiating innovation into typologies to facilitate the process of measurement, and various framework with diverse types of innovation have been proposed (OECD, 2005; Schumpeter, 1934). The case of music festival, as remarked before, is peculiar, therefore for the proposed framework, previous types of innovation were taken into consideration, but they were then adapted to music festivals using the findings from the data, to provide a comprehensive list of the forms that innovation strategies can take in music festivals. Based on the findings and existing literature, the third and last level of the framework was identified and concerns the outcome of innovation strategies and the forms they can take in music festivals.

The framework includes four types: good, service, experience, and area. This theme doesn't look at the process of creating and implementing an innovation strategy, but at the outcome of those projects and the forms it can take. This is important to note as it could be easily confused with the first level of the framework.

Starting from good, its definition is "refers to an offering by a for-profit or a not-for-profit organization to potential customers for use or consumption to satisfy a need and a want" (Varadarajan, 2018, p. 155). In the case of this framework, an outcome can be considered a good if it's an offering by the music festival, or by an external partner if made during the event of the music festival, to potential customers for use or consumption to satisfy a need and a want.

DGTL provides an example of this category again with its partnership with Innofest, which was presented above in the section "External collaboration or internal process":

"Calix tests a 3D printed cup holder for festival visitors, making it easier to keep hardcups with them. By doing so, the entrepreneurs hope to accelerate the transition to sustainable hardcups." (DGTL, article 19, para. 10)

In regard to service, Grönroos (2001) defines it "as an activity or series of activities of a more or less intangible nature that normally, but not necessarily, take place in the interaction between the customer and service employees and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of the service provider, which are provided as solutions to customer problems". This definition is also suitable for the category in the proposed framework and an example from

the dataset is the Payconiq app:

“This year, DGTL Amsterdam is cashless. That means paying directly at the bar with your debit or credit card as well as with your smartphone via Payconiq. The Payconiq app allows you to pay with your smartphone – quick and easy. Simply download the app from the App Store or Google Play Store and connect your bank account.”
(DGTL, article 16, para. 1)

Moving to experience, it was already defined in this study, as it represents a central part of it, using the definition by Pine and Gilmore (1998) that see it as something that “occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event”. This definition can be applied also to experiences as the outcome of innovation projects, and an example is the evolution of the Glastonbury’s Pyramid stage, which through its constant renovation is now able to provide to festival attendees a unique experience:

“Glastonbury has always been at the cutting edge of stage technology and design, pioneering new approaches to sound, light and video experiences. While the sun setting behind the Pyramid can provide a dramatic natural backdrop, stage designers have also created spectacular light, video and pyrotechnic shows for night-time events. Technical demands increase every year as ambitious performers strive to create something new. Today, the scale of Glastonbury’s backstage areas is immense, often with production crews working on a changeover between acts of 15 minutes.”
(Glastonbury, article 19, para. 9)

The final concept is Area, which refers to projects that have as an outcome the creation of a new physical area of the music festival. Although it is not present in any other framework, the data analyzed for this study showed that an area of a festival is still a crucial structural part of it, and it should be taken into account when studying music festivals. Moreover, the projects categorized under this concept could not be included in none of the other three concepts, therefore a specific concept for it was needed.

“Get to know EXIT Festival’s Pachamama stage and zone! [...] Pachamama Stage manifests a new way of life and gathers people from all around the world, creating a colorful and unique energy field. This festival oasis of peace at the Petrovaradin Fortress has been designed to both inspire and promote tolerance, as well as enable visitors to have an unforgettable experience, encountering the vibrations of ancient instruments such as shamanic and African drums, Tibetan and planetary gongs, didgeridoo, as well as Hindu songs Kirtan and Bhajan. This stage evokes a sense of community, it is filled with interesting and interactive content celebrating nature, harmony, mindfulness and love.” (EXIT, article 1, para. 1, 3)

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study investigated strategies that music festivals employ to innovate and, more specifically, it looked at the case of EXIT Festival, DGTL and Glastonbury Festival of contemporary performing arts, three music festivals active in Europe with different backgrounds and history.

In light of the findings and the developed framework, this final chapter will present an answer to the research questions, as well as featuring the theoretical and practical implication of this thesis. Finally, further recommendation for future research will be shared.

5.1 Innovation strategies in music festivals

The aim of the multiple case study was to answer the following research question: *What strategies do music festivals in Europe employ to innovate?* And the sub-questions, that helped guide the research: *What types of innovation projects music festivals undertake? How do these innovation projects help music festivals stay relevant in the music industry?*

Findings demonstrated that innovation activities undertaken by music festival can be observed in three ways. Firstly, innovation strategies can evince various features regarding the centrality of the customers, the location where the project is implemented and whether the strategy is collaborative or part of an exclusively internal process. It was possible to conclude that although customers play a crucial role in the ecosystems of music festivals, projects regarding innovation should also go further than providing a benefit to the customer, balancing the attention between the consumer's needs and projects with different focuses. Although, customers are one of the primary sources of profit for music festivals, it is important to invest in projects not directed to them, as they could improve the image of the festival or indirectly create profits. Moreover, the same logic applies to another feature of innovation projects in music festivals, which regards the location where they are implemented. The data demonstrated that not all the projects analyzed are executed during the days of the event itself, rather a high number of them (39 projects out of 89) were external to the event. Then, from the findings it was found that innovation strategies are not constructed exclusively from internal processes, and eventually, networking plays a crucial role in the development of innovation strategies in music festivals.

Secondly, it emerged from the findings that most of the project that bring innovation into music festivals focus on having an impact on the exterior. As mentioned before while presenting the results of this research, there is a range of 8 categories that have an impact

on our society and music festivals employ to innovate, which are also amenable to current challenges such as environmental sustainability or inclusivity. Thus, the current findings show that, although innovation strategies can and should be developed with the aim of contributing to the advancement of internal processes of music festival, equal importance should be paid to external situation, which do not imply to focus only on the immediate surrounding of the festival, but to expand their reach to also further collaborations. Moreover, when looking at strategies with the aim of having an impact on situation internal to the music festivals, this research has shown that investments should go forward enhancing experiences. As noted above, music festivals are part of the experience economy, and it was confirmed that their success is tight to valuable experiences.

Lastly, from the data and the research it was possible to deduce that innovation strategies can take four different types of forms, that are good, service, experience, and area. This study acknowledges that not solely good and services can be the forms of outcome of innovation strategies, but experiences and areas play a crucial role as well. The data showed that music festivals invest much energy into creating new experiences and areas and upgrading existing ones.

In conclusion, this thesis indicates that the innovation strategies that music festivals design do not show a particular set of features or that they can be constrained to a singular typology, instead the current study suggests using a holistic view. Therefore, each part of the strategy should be analyzed and built as a singularity, and then combined with other parts that suits it, to better develop a successful strategy that not only considers the strengths of a feature, but also how it interacts with other aspects of a project and to the setting and surroundings of a music festival. Moreover, from this study it can be deduced that music festivals that consider the themes in the proposed framework to develop their innovation strategies, are more prone to become relevant also outside of the music sector, in which music festival have been already proven to play a crucial role (Holt, 2020).

5.2 Theoretical implications

The results of this study offer some theoretical implications and contributions to the field of innovation and music festivals research.

The need for a suitable framework to analyze innovation in music festivals, also in consideration of the expansion of the experience economy, was already introduced earlier. Other frameworks developed previously by other scholar were useful to establish this

research, but did not suit the case of music festivals, as some were focused on products such as the one from Schumpeter (1934), while other frameworks looked at innovation as a process, which is the case of Hall, et al. (1975) and Van de Ven and Poole (1989). The proposed framework of this study views innovation as a process, but it provides categories that are suitable for music festival, which is a feature that was not present in other previous frameworks.

Moreover, as music festivals were analyzed as part of the experience economy, this framework contribute to the ongoing discussion about this topic, by providing categories that can be utilized and developed to be applied to research on other sectors of the experience economy.

Another implication of this study is related to music festivals, as this research has proven the potential of innovation for the growth of events, that can contribute to the development of the music sector and society. Previous research has not provided enough attention to this topic, as much of the literature is focused on the roles, meanings and impacts of festivals in society and culture, festival tourism and festival management, while a great opportunity is represented by developing a unified theory of festival experiences (Getz, 2010). This thesis has shown that this path of research should be followed.

Furthermore, the findings show that innovation strategies in music festivals do not present a fixed set of features. Rather, their parts should be analyzed as singularities and then build to be then studied as a whole. This finding suggests that in the case of strategies for music festivals, researchers should employ an holistic view, given the complexity of the topic and the intertwinement of music festivals both within themselves and with the outside.

5.3 Practical implications

In addition to the theoretical implications, the present study contributes in several ways to the music festivals and experience industries. This thesis is the first comprehensive investigation of innovation in music festivals and the insights gained from this study showed that innovation is a powerful tool in the hands of festivals organizers that can help them maintain their relevancy. This study provided some contribution that can help guide the next moves of this industry.

Firstly, from the findings it can be deduced that nowadays music festivals are not constrained to only the event itself and the days during which it takes place, therefore professionals of this field should consider investing more efforts into building successful

and solid businesses, instead of stopping at organizing an event. The findings demonstrated that networks are an essential part of this journey and collaborations within the music sector but also outside of it should be encouraged and implemented.

Moreover, this thesis builds on the theory that customers play a central role in the success of music festivals, but it adds important and new contributions as it shows different approaches on how this problem can be faced. Firstly, it introduced the possibility to develop projects that are not directed to customers in the first place but could bring awareness around the festival and improve their image to festival goers. Furthermore, this thesis provided insights on experiences and their relevancy not only to innovate music festivals but also as an attraction for customers.

Finally, this thesis presented a framework that can be utilized by organizers of music festival to assess innovation strategies within their activities. This contribution can help them analyze their existing projects and guide them into developing new ones, as well as encourage them to create long-term plans, which is not a widely explored and advances practice in music festivals.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

This thesis has contributed to the existing knowledge of music festivals and innovation, and its results could be used to expand further this field of research. Due to its limitations, the research has shown some gaps that could be filled by new studies.

Firstly, as mentioned before, music festivals nowadays are not constrained to the days of the event itself, therefore further research should concentrate on this. As the need for music festivals to develop as businesses grow, studies that analyzes their possibility of development should provide guidance to practitioners of this field, which could also contribute to the advancement of the music sector and consequently of the economy, as the capacity of this sector was proven.

Regarding the matters outside of the event, a further study could develop the external aim of music festivals, analyzing it to gain better insights on this topic, as this research has proven its central role to the innovation of music festival. An important contribution would be to provide guidance to festivals organizers on which projects they could focus on, in order to direct their investments wisely with the purpose of gaining a return for their business, while also support benevolent causes.

Moreover, this research has proven that successful strategies for innovation do not

necessarily direct their project to customers, and a greater focus on how these projects can bring advantages to music festivals could produce interesting findings that could encourage professionals in this field into developing this typology of strategies, while also providing direction that would diminish the chances of failure.

In regard to the internal processes of music festivals, the current study introduced the importance of areas in music festivals. A further study could assess how they are designed and create strategies to develop them in order to enhance the experiences provided by music festivals.

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, this study developed a framework to assess innovation strategies in music festivals, but it did not focus on the outcome of these strategies, therefore further investigation is recommended to answer these questions. Considerably more work will need to be done to establish complete guidelines in the field of innovation in music festivals, which is part of wide sector that could bring advancement to our society under many aspects. The scope and size of the research has produced a framework that can be considered complete, but additional studies could help expand and validate it.

This thesis has made important contributions to the existing literature on innovation and the festivals sector, it enabled a better understanding of the current advancement of these topics and the experience economy, while also facilitated future research in this field.

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Appendix A Units of Analysis

<i>TITLE</i>	<i>URL</i>
DGTL	
Your ultimate guide to DGTL Amsterdam 2022	https://dgtl.nl/your-ultimate-guide-to-dgtl-amsterdam-2022
The Hard Cup System at DGTL Amsterdam	https://dgtl.nl/the-hard-cup-system-at-dgtl-amsterdam
The complete lineup and timetable fro our night program	https://dgtl.nl/the-complete-lineup-and-timetable-for-our-night-program-is-here
DGTL Crew training	https://dgtl.nl/dgtl-crew-training
Festival ethics	https://dgtl.nl/festival-ethics
Behind the stages	https://dgtl.nl/dgtl-amsterdam-2022-behind-the-stages
DGTL X Apple Music	https://dgtl.nl/dgtl-x-apple-music
DGTL x splitt	https://dgtl.nl/forgot-to-secure-a-saturday-ticket-download-the-splitt-app
Sustainability	https://dgtl.nl/sustainability
Lower your footprint	https://dgtl.nl/lower-your-footprint
Digital DGTL: Reflections on the first edition of our virtual festival	https://dgtl.nl/digital-dgtl-reflections-on-the-first-edition-of-our-virtual-festival
Digital DGTL: worlds biggest living room festival	https://dgtl.nl/digital-dgtl-worlds-biggest-living-room-festival
Sustainability decoded	https://dgtl.nl/sustainability-decoded
Zero emission	https://dgtl.nl/zero-emission
DGTL is cashless	https://dgtl.nl/dgtl-is-cashless
Introducing Skyline	https://dgtl.nl/introducing-skyline
Sustainability projects 2019	https://dgtl.nl/sustainability-projects-2019
DGTL x Ace Tate	https://dgtl.nl/dgtl-x-ace--tate-present-refract-by-atm-model-art
Enter the world of DGTL through Art Skyline	https://dgtl.nl/enter-the-world-of-dgtl-through-art-skyline
Revolution foundation: about us	https://revolutionfoundation.nl/
Revolution foundation: circular systems	https://revolutionfoundation.nl/circular-systems-2/#energy
Revolution foundation: volunteer program	https://revolutionfoundation.nl/volunteer-program/#forvolunteers
Revolutionary talks	https://revolutionfoundation.nl/revolutionary-talks/#xander
EXIT Festival	
Pachamama	https://www.exitfest.org/en/pachamama
No Sleep: the stage that became a festival	https://www.exitfest.org/en/no-sleep-the-stage-that-became-a-festival

EXIT entering the Metaverse and launching an exclusive NFT collection	https://www.exitfest.org/en/exit-entering-the-metaverse-and-launching-an-exclusive-nft-collection-in-collaboration-with-major-music-stars
EXIT Festival presents exclusive VR project at EXPO 2020 Dubai	https://www.exitfest.org/en/exit-festival-presents-exclusive-vr-project-at-expo-2020-dubai
All info about payment at EXIT Festival 2021	https://www.exitfest.org/en/all-info-about-payment-at-exit-festival-2021
EXIT and Deezer together to bring the ultimate music festival experience	https://www.exitfest.org/en/exit-and-deezer-together-bring-the-ultimate-music-festival-experience
Visa and EXIT Festival	https://www.exitfest.org/en/visa-and-exit-festival-new-touchless-way-to-pay-at-the-jubilee-festival-edition
EXIT Foundation launching new project: incredible destinations	https://www.exitfest.org/en/exit-foundation-launching-new-project-incredible-destinations-events-from-the-ancient-bac-fortress
About Most	https://mostmusic.eu/about-most/
Culhursrbtour	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/culhursrbtour/
First World Peace	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/first-world-peace/
Stay clean	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/stayclean/
	https://www.stayclean.rs/about
Creative History Balkans	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/creative-history-balkans-tour/
	https://www.creativehistorybalkans.com/about/
Conscious Revolution	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/conscious-revolution/
ShareLove	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/sharelove/
Aces of Western Serbia for children	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/aces-of-western-serbia-for-children/
Observatory reconstruction at petrovaradin fortress	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/observatory-reconstruction-at-petrovaradin-fortress/
Nomination for Novi Sad 2021	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/nomination-for-novi-sad-2021/
Nomination for Opens	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/nomination-for-opens/
Aces for children	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/aces-for-children/
Silent balkans majority	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/silent-balkans-majority/
Creative Climate Leadership	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/creative-climate-leadership/
	https://www.exitfondacija.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Creative-Climate-Leadership-Public-Evaluation-Report_FINAL.pdf

Youth Fair	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/youth-fair/
Mix the city: the Balkans	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/mix-the-city-the-balkans/
EXIT Aid	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/exit-aid/
Rebrand Serbia	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/rebrand-serbia-national-branding-of-serbia/
Guys, who's driving home	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/guys-whos-driving-home/
Serbian creative industries conference	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/serbian-creative-industries-conference/
Sports bazaar	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/sports-bazaar/
Ads for life	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/ads-for-life/
State of exit zone	https://www.exitfondacija.org/en/projects/state-of-exit-zone/
<i>Glastonbury Festival</i>	
Worthy causes	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-causes/
Our litter picker charities	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-causes/our-litter-picker-charities/
Water aid	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-causes/wateraid/
Pilton tithe barn	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-causes/pilton-tithe-barn/
Local benefits	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-causes/local-benefits/
Emerging talent competition performing	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/information/emerging-talent-competition-performing/
Worthy pastures family friendly campsite	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/worthy-pastures-family-friendly-campsite-on-the-farm-this-summer/
Deafzone celebrates 10 years at Glastonbury	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/deafzone-celebrates-10-years-at-glastonbury/
Download our 2019 app	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/download-our-2019-app-keep-your-phone-charged/
Bring your reusable bottle and wateraid will fill it	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/bring-your-reusable-bottle-and-wateraid-will-fill-it/
Food and shopping at this years festival	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/food-and-shopping-at-this-years-festival/
Green Glastonbury	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/green-glastonbury-recycling-at-glastonbury-festival/
Areas	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/areas/
Food for a fiver scheme returns	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/food-for-a-fiver-scheme-returns-for-glastonbury-2017/

RNIB is our health charity of the year for 2017	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/rnib-is-our-health-charity-of-the-year-for-2017/
VA to host three day Glastonbury Weekender	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/va-to-host-three-day-glastonbury-weekender/
Glastonbury launches reusable british steel pint cups	https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/glastonbury-launches-reusable-british-steel-pint-cups/
Glastonbury festival stage design	https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/glastonbury-festival-stage-design#slideshow=168570&slide=0

Appendix B Framework for assessing innovation strategies in music festivals

