Lappeenranta University of Technology

School of Business and Management

Master's Degree in International Marketing Management

MASTER'S THESIS

Music festival sponsorship as a tool for customer brand engagement

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how companies are utilising music festival sponsorship in order to create customer brand engagement. This study was implemented as qualitative research following deductive reasoning. Both topics of event sponsorship and customer brand engagement have been researched previously, but there is very little literature on the combination of the two.

The theoretical chapters of this study are based on previous literature, which consists mostly of academic research papers and books. In these chapters, the existing literature was reviewed in order to gain an understanding of the theories and the state of research at the time. The theories of customer brand engagement and event sponsorship were first reviewed separately and then combined in a short chapter using a specific model. The empirical data for this study was gathered from three semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were managers from companies that have sponsored some of the largest music festivals in Finland.

The findings of this study show that the case companies carefully consider which festival would be the best to sponsor for their specific goals. They also show that social media is used as a supportive method in order to increase engagement. Social media is used before, during and even after the festival. Another way of forming engagement before the festival is to launch products that are designed exclusively for a festival. The study results also show that the type of sponsorship functions a company does at the festival is greatly influenced by the type of product the company offers.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä:	Markus Svensson
Tutkielma:	Musiikkifestivaalien sponsorointi työkaluna asiakassitouttamiselle
Tiedekunta:	Kauppatieteellinen tiedekunta
Maisteriohjelma:	International Marketing Management
Vuosi:	2018
Pro gradu-tutkielma:	106 sivua, 1 taulukko, 1 kuva
Tarkastajat:	Professori Sanna-Katriina Asikainen Apulaisprofessori Anssi Tarkiainen
Hakusanat:	brändiin sitouttaminen, asiakassitouttaminen, tapahtumasponsorointi, musiikkifestivaalisponsorointi, sosiaalinen media

Tämän tutkielman tarkoitus oli tarkastella miten yrityksen hyödyntävät musiikkifestivaalisponsorointia saadakseen asiakkaat sitoutumaan brändiinsä. Tämä tutkielma toteutettiin kvalitatiivisen mallin mukaan ja siinä seurattiin deduktiivista päättelyä. Molempia tässä tutkielmassa olevia aiheita, brändiin sitouttamista sekä tapahtumasponsorointia on tutkittu aikaisemmin erillään, mutta niiden yhdistävää kirjallisuutta on hyvin vähän.

Tämän tutkielman teoreettiset osuudet perustuvat aikaisempaan kirjallisuuteen, mikä muodostuu pääasiassa tieteellisistä artikkeleista sekä kirjoista. Näissä osioissa olemassa oleva kirjallisuus käytiin läpi, jotta nykyisestä teoriasta ja tutkimuksen tilasta saatiin ymmärrys. Brändiin sitouttamisen ja tapahtumasponsoroinnin teorioita katsottiin ensin läpi erikseen ja sen jälkeen yhdistettiin lyhyeen osioon käyttäen apuna tiettyä mallia. Empiirinen tutkimustieto kerättiin tätä tutkielmaa varten kolmesta puolistrukturoidusta haastattelusta. Haastateltavat ovat johtajia yrityksissä mitkä ovat sponsoroineet joitain isoimpia musiikkifestivaaleja Suomessa.

Tutkielman tulokset osoittavat, että mukana olleet yritykset harkitsevat tarkasti mitä festivaalia he lähtevät sponsoroimaan saavuttaakseen heille asetetut tavoitteet. Tulokset näyttävät myös, että sosiaalista mediaa käytetään laajasti sponsoroinnin tukena, jotta brändiin sitoutuminen kasvaisi. Toinen keino saada aikaan sitoutumista jo ennen festivaalia on julkaista markkinoille tuotteita, mitkä on suunniteltu tiettyä festivaalia varten. Tulokset osoittavat myös, että sponsoroinnin tyyppi on vahvasti sidoksissa siihen, että minkälaisia tuotteita kyseinen yritys tuottaa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is hard to believe that I am finally writing this. It took a bit too long but I have at last made it this far, and I am completing my studies with this thesis. Being in the workforce postponed this, but now my studies are coming to an end. Studying at Lappeenranta University of Technology was a great learning experience, and I will always remember those years with a smile, even if at times it felt difficult. I feel lucky that I was able to meet so many amazing people from around the world during my studies at LUT.

First of all, I want to thank my parents for their incredible and endless support during my studying years. I also want to thank Katarina for always supporting and encouraging me, especially through the tough times. A big thank you to all my friends who I could share my time with at LUT. You made it so much fun! Thank you to my supervisor Sanna-Katriina Asikainen so her guidance through the process of writing this thesis.

Helsingborg 18.11.2018

Markus Svensson

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to research how Finnish companies who have been sponsors to music festivals have been able to create customer brand engagement with it. Customer brand engagement is something that has become a prevalent topic of research and discussion within marketing during the last decade. The empirical portion of this thesis will focus on music festival sponsorship. Festivals are very popular in Finland, with over two million participants in 2017 (Finland Festivals, n.d.). Because of their significant popularity, marketers have taken advantage of the situation. A large variety of companies from mostly the business-to-consumer sector, are doing music festival sponsorship. Not much of research has been done on customer brand engagement in the context of music festival sponsorship, so this study will share some light on the subject.

1.1. Background

The term engagement came to marketing literature from psychology studies done in the 1990's (Patterson et al. 2006, p. 2). Those psychology studies were done focusing personal and employee engagement mostly in working environments. How engaged is an employee to his/her work and employer? Patterson et al. (2006) noticed that these same principles and theories could be applied to the relationships between companies and their customers. From there the concept of customer brand engagement started developing, and it has been researched consistently to this day.

The theories of relationship marketing have also influenced the development of customer brand engagement (Brodie et al. 2011). Companies and marketers realised that there is great value in taking care of profitable customer relationships instead of focusing on acquiring new customers. Customer retention and customer satisfaction became the way to success because acquiring new customers takes more resources than trying to gain new ones (Vivek et al. 2012). Building and sustaining customer relationships is then something that relates to customer brand

engagement, although customer brand engagement is not only about sustaining existing relationships. Customer brand engagement is also different in the sense that it can take place between customers without the presence of a company. The similarities between engagement and relationship marketing are interactions that occur between a company and their customers. These interactions should not be only initiated by the customers, but companies also need to play an active role (Vivek et al. 2012, p. 129).

When compared to the concept of customer brand engagement, sponsorship has been studied a much longer time, and its history goes back over a hundred years. Sponsorship started in sports in 1911, and that is still by far the most significant subject of it. According to Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 591), 69 per cent of the sponsorship investments in North America in 2004 was spent on sports. Researchers of sponsorship have listed many reasons for companies to do it. According to Rowley and Williams (2008, p. 782-783), some of the biggest ones are: increasing brand awareness, creating brand image, re-position the brand in the minds of the consumer, increasing profit and achieving a larger market share. In this study, we will find out whether these reasons are right for the case companies and how is customer brand engagement generated alongside the reasons for sponsorship.

The case companies for this study were chosen because they have sponsored some of the biggest music festivals in Finland. The festivals that they have been involved with include Flow Festival, Ruisrock and Provinssi for example. Each of these festivals has tens of thousands of visitors every year. The large scale of the festivals and the sponsorship makes the research more valid. The three case companies are all very different regarding their size. This gives the empirical data a more comprehensive scope compared to if the companies would have been similar in size. The companies were also chosen based on that they all have operations in Helsinki, which made arranging the interviews more feasible.

1.2. Research questions

The purpose of this study is to research how companies that are sponsoring music festivals in Finland can increase the brand engagement of their customers or potential customers. After doing the literature review, it was apparent that this was a topic that has not been researched much. Customer brand engagement has been studied quite extensively which was useful regarding this study. Music festival sponsorship is a relatively rarely studied subject, but some reference was found for this study. The combination of these two themes forms a clear research gap. That is the foundation for setting the main research question as follows:

How is music festival sponsorship used in increasing customer brand engagement?

The objective is to gain an understanding of how companies see customer engagement as a part of the overall sponsoring strategy and whether customer engagement is a set goal or just a side product of sponsoring. In order to get a comprehensive picture of the topic of this research, three sub-questions were set. These three questions are to support the main question and to broaden the overall findings.

Social media has become a vital part of marketing and how consumers interact with brands. It is also one of the most common platforms for customer brand engagement to take place. That is why the first sub research question is as follows:

How does social media usage enhance engagement when used together with music festival sponsorship?

Sponsoring a music festival is a significant endeavour, and often companies use supportive marketing communications to inform consumers about what's to come beforehand. In order to maximise the effectiveness and to review the results, specific actions have to be taken after the sponsored event too. This is why the second sub research question is as follows:

What are the most critical actions to take before and after the event?

Choosing the right festival to sponsor is very important in relation to the goals of the company. For example, the demographics of the attending crowd can vary significantly between festivals so choosing the right one with the biggest target audience is essential. The specific strategy on how the sponsoring is implemented can also be dependent on the festival itself. This is why the third sub research question was set as follows:

How does event selection influence customer brand engagement?

1.3. Literature review

The theoretical literature that was utilised for this study is on the two subjects of customer brand engagement and event sponsorship. A more significant portion of the literature is about customer brand engagement since the main research question is about creating it. The role of sponsorship is a tool or method for the creation.

One of the first authors to research the concept of engagement in the context of marketing was Patterson et al. who published their paper in 2006. In that paper they gave customer engagement a definition: *customer engagement is the level of a customer's various "presence" in their relationship with a service organisation. The presences include physical presence, emotional presence and cognitive presence. Customer engagement is a higher-order construct, and it comprises of four components, namely vigour, dedication, absorption and interaction.* (Patterson et al. 2006, p. 3)

When Van Doorn et al. (2010) studied the concept, they called it customer engagement behaviour, and they argued that it goes beyond only transactions between a company and customer and could be defined as customer's behavioural manifestation that has a brand or firm focus. So customer engagement behaviour can occur outside of simple purchase behaviour, and it is created by motivational drivers. Van Doorn et al. (2010) also brings up a notion that customer engagement behaviour can manifest as a negative occurrence for the company. In their research paper, Van Doorn et al. (2010) propose five dimensions that can be used to describe

the nature of customer engagement. The five dimensions are *valence, form or modality, scope, nature of its impact and customer goals.*

Van Doorn et al. (2010) also created a conceptual model for customer engagement behaviour. In this model, customer engagement is in between three antecedent factors and three consequential factors. The three antecedent factors are customer-based, firm-based and context based. As a result, for the customer engagement, the consequences are divided into three groups: customer, firm and other.

After the work of Patterson et al. it was Brodie et al. (2011) who took the conceptualisation and definition of customer engagement further. Brodie et al. took the theories of relationship marketing and service management as the background for their research. Specifically, they studied the so-called service-dominant logic, which basic idea is that all business is based on the exchange of services. Brodie et al. found out that service-dominant logic has multiple premises that are very relevant to customer engagement. So based on the literature of service-dominant logic and relationship marketing Brodie et al. (2011, p. 258) presented five fundamental propositions as the definition of customer engagement. The five propositions are:

1. Customer engagement reflects a psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experience with a focal agent/object within specific relationships.
2. Customer engagement states occur within a dynamic, iterative process of service relationships that co-created value.
3. Customer engagement plays a central role within a nomological network of service relationships.
4. Customer engagement is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions.
5. Customer engagement occurs within a specific set of situational conditions generating differing engagement levels.

Linda Hollebeek (2011) has also studied customer engagement. In her research, she too took reference from the theories of relationship marketing and the service-

dominant logic. Additionally, she brought in social exchange theory, which argues that customers are predicted to reciprocate positive thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards an object when receiving specific benefits from the brand relationship. Hollebeek (2011) has a definition for customer engagement which is in line with many other researchers; *the level of a customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions.*

In 2012 Vivek et al. defined customer engagement as *the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with an organisation's offerings and/or organisational activities, which either the customer or the organisation initiate.* Similar to Patterson et al. (2006) Vivek et al. (2012) also recognise the emotional and cognitive elements of engagement. However, when Patterson et al. defined physical presence, Vivek et al. replace that with behavioural and social elements. The model that Vivek et al. developed identifies many aspects that will positively correlate with customer engagement. These aspects include value, trust, affective commitment, word of mouth, loyalty, brand community involvement, customer participation and involvement.

In 2016 France, Merrilees and Miller created an integrated customer brand engagement model, which is based on the research done by many authors beforehand. The model proposes two contributing drivers of customer brand engagement, which are a firm-led platform and secondly customer-centred influences. The most important firm-led drivers in the model are brand interactivity and brand quality. The customer-centred influences consist of brand involvement and brand self-congruity.

Now that we have examined some of the most prevalent theories and models of customer brand engagement, we can take a closer look at sponsorship. Because of a lack of literature on music festival sponsorship, this study was forced to utilise literature on event sponsorship and sponsorship overall. One of the first and most used definitions for sponsorship is by John Meenaghan (1983, p. 9) and it goes as follows: *Sponsorship can be regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organisation for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives.* Another definition to sponsorship was formed by The

International Events Group (IEG), which goes as follows: *cash and/or an in-kind fee paid to a property (typically in sports, arts, entertainment or causes) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property* (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, p 2).

One of the few researchers that have studied music festival sponsorship is Rowley and Williams (2008). The objective of their research paper was to investigate the impact of music festival sponsorship on brand recall, brand awareness, brand attitude, brand use and brand associations. Additionally, they also set to find out attitudes towards any potential adverse effects of sponsorship, such as an increase in alcohol consumption, underage drinking, theft, violence, health risks or commercial pressure. The results of the study showed that 44 per cent of festival attendees experienced some change in brand awareness.

A common aspect that was discussed by many researchers of event sponsorship is the similarities or the relevance between the sponsor and the event. According to Gwinner & Eaton (1999) McDonald (1991) suggests that product relevance can occur in two ways, either directly or indirectly. Direct relevance means that the products of the sponsoring brand are being used in the event. Indirect relevance will occur through image correspondence between the sponsor and event. In their research paper, Hutabarat and Gayatri (2014) talk about sponsor-event congruency. They came to the conclusion that stronger congruency between the sponsoring brand and the festival will result in better attitudes towards the sponsoring brand by the festival attendees.

1.4. Theoretical framework

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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│  Event selection │      │  Music festival  │      │   Social media   │
│                  │      │   sponsorship    │      │                  │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│  Antecedents:    │      │     Customer     │      │  Consequences:   │
│ - Customer-based │ ──▶  │      brand       │ ──▶  │  - Customer      │
│ - Firm-based     │      │    engagement    │      │  - Firm          │
│ - Context-based  │      │                  │      │  - Other         │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘

                          ┌──────────────────┐
                          │     Physical     │
                          └──────────────────┘

                          ┌──────────────────┐
                          │    Emotional     │
                          └──────────────────┘

                          ┌──────────────────┐
                          │    Cognitive     │
                          └──────────────────┘
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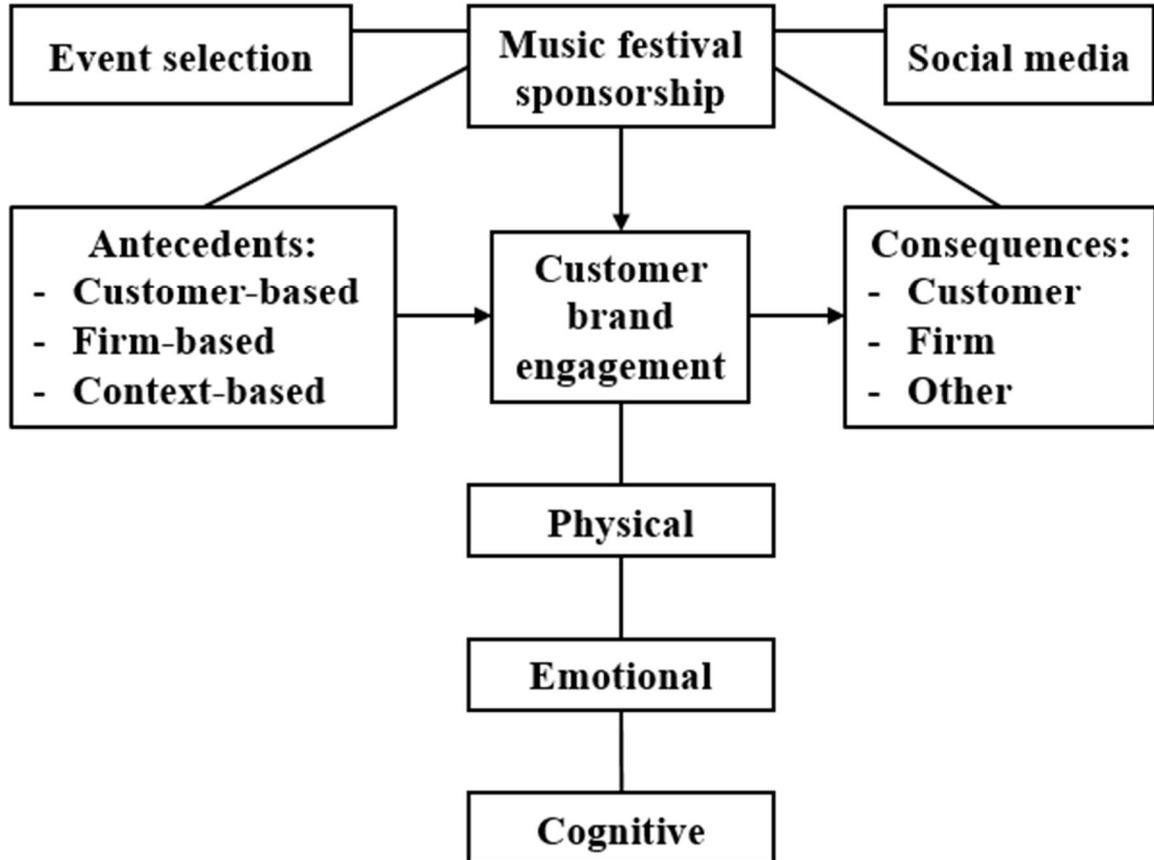
Figure 1. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study consists of the most prevalent models of customer brand engagement. It includes the antecedent and consequential factors from the model developed by Van Doorn et al. (2010). These factors are related to the second sub research question of this thesis. Customer brand engagement is placed in the middle of the framework with the three elements of engagement below. The elements or presences as Patterson et al. (2006) called them are: physical, emotional and cognitive. These elements were firstly theorised by Patterson et al. (2006) and later on by Linda Hollebeek (2011). Music festival sponsorship is placed as a precursor for customer engagement since that is the context were engagement is formed in this study. This is also where the main research question relates to the

theoretical framework. On the right side of music festival sponsorship, is where social media is placed. Sponsoring companies use social media in support to the actual sponsorship. How exactly it is being done is what the first sub research question is trying to answer. Music festival selection is placed on the left side of music festival sponsorship. Festival selection will significantly influence the engagement that can take place as a result of sponsorship; this matter is being examined with the third sub research question if this study.

1.5. Definitions of key concepts

In this chapter of the study, the main concepts and theories that were used in it are explained and defined. In order to clearly understand what is being researched and how the concepts interact, it is crucial that the reader is aware of their definitions. After the theories are defined, the delimitations of this study are explained. This is also important so the reader knows what is being researched and what aspects are left out. Delimitations are done for both theoretical and empirical parts of the study.

Brand *is anything that identifies a seller's goods or services and distinguishes them from others. It can be a word, letter, group of words, symbol, design or some combination of these* (Albaum & Duerr, 2011). Philip Kotler (2011, p. 10) defines a brand as *an offering from a known source. A brand name such as McDonald's carries many associations in people's minds that make up its image: hamburgers, cleanliness, convenience, courteous service, and golden arches. All companies strive to build a brand image with as many strong, favourable, and unique brand associations as possible.*

Customer brand engagement or customer engagement is all the interaction that a consumer has with a specific brand. Often the interaction happens between a consumer and a company, but it can also happen between two or more consumers. In the latter example, the interaction between the consumers is somehow tied to a brand. Vivek et al. (2012) defined customer engagement as follows: *the intensity of*

an individual's participation in and connection with an organisation's offerings and/or organisational activities, which either the customer or the organisation initiate.

Sponsorship is the *provision of resources (e.g., money, people, equipment) by an organisation directly to an event, cause or activity in exchange for a direct association (link) to the event, cause or activity. The providing organisation can then engage in sponsorship-linked marketing to achieve either their corporate, marketing or media objectives* (Lee, Sandler & Shani, 1997).

Social media refers to all the various social networking sites and platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter. (Obar & Wildman, 2015, p. 5)

1.6. Research methodology

The theoretical literature of the study is mostly based on academic articles published in different marketing or other business journals. Some books were also utilised in the gathering of basic theories and information. From the academic literature of customer brand engagement and event sponsorship was then constructed the theoretical portion and the theoretical framework of this study. The goal was to gather as much information on these topics from as recent academic papers as possible in order to gain an understanding of the current state of research and trends. Before the most recent research was reviewed, the theories were explained on a basic level, and the most prevalent definitions were quoted.

This study was done utilising the qualitative method of research. In qualitative research, findings are not gathered by using statistical methods or other procedures of quantification. (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005) The attributes of the qualitative method include that the research is mostly on individual phenomenon or process and their characteristics are portrayed. Qualitative research also specifies phenomena from the perspective of the individuals who are part of them or by the meanings that the individuals have given the phenomenon in questions. (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen, 2005) Often qualitative studies are structured to follow inductive reasoning, where a general proposition is established on the basis of observation or

particular facts. This study is structured with deductive reasoning, which is a process of deriving a conclusion from a known premise or a theory known as true. So the research will begin at an existing theory and then see if the empirical findings will match the theory. The goal of the study is not to establish a new theory.

The empirical data for this study was gathered from three semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview the questions, topics and issues have been determined beforehand by the interviewer but the interviewee can freely give answers with their own words, and they can elaborate as much or little as they want. If the interviewer sees appropriate, he/she can ask follow up or subsequent questions in order to enrich the collected data. The same questions were utilised in all four interviews. The interviewees are marketing managers in companies that are sponsoring music festivals in Finland. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2008)

The interviews were recorded on audio, so the first part of the data analysis was to transcribe the audio files into text. The transcription was done as precisely as possible, and there was no summarising or paraphrasing at this stage. Once the data was transcribed, the analysis was done utilising one of the methods by Eskola and Suoranta (1998, p. 151). According to Eskola and Suoranta (1998, p. 151) qualitative interview data can be analysed by firstly unravelling the data and then analysed guided by the intuition of the researcher. This method was chosen because it was seen as the most efficient for this type of study.

1.7. Delimitations

In this research, the term customer brand engagement is being used as a synonym to other similar terms, such as brand engagement, customer engagement or consumer engagement. This is because in the literature these terms are being used to describe the same phenomenon and clear differences have not developed between them. Since customer brand engagement is still a relatively new concept, it is difficult to point out its precise place in the marketing realm.

Some researchers (Brodie et al. 2011) see that the theory developed from the concept of service-dominant logic while others (Patterson et al. 2006) talk about social psychology and the concept of employee engagement which then would help create customer brand engagement using similar functions. This research will only focus on the concept of customer brand engagement, so the theories it was based on have been delimited out. The literature on customer brand engagement also brought up more prominent theories such as relationship marketing, but it will not be discussed since it is a much broader concept.

Because of a lack of literature on music festival sponsorship, the literature on event sponsorship and sports sponsorship had to be included in the theoretical chapters of this research.

The empirical chapter of the research is focused on companies who have sponsored music festivals held in Finland. Although some of the companies taking part in this study also sponsor or cooperate with other types of events, they will be left out from this study. All of the companies taking part in this study sponsored at least two music festivals in Finland during the summer of 2018. The individuals, who were interviewed from each company, are in managerial positions working with the marketing of the company. Each of the interviews was approximately 30 minutes long, and the questions were mostly the same in order to gain comparable data.

1.8. Structure of the study

The structure of this thesis is divided into seven main chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of this study. The purpose of the introduction chapter is that the reader would get an understanding of the background and reasons behind the study. The goals and research questions are also presented in this chapter. This chapter also gives an introduction to the theories that are examined in this research by a literature review and a theoretical framework. To help the readers understand what is being discussed the key concepts are defined and explained. In the delimitations part, the reader will learn which theories and empirical areas are being studied and

which are left out. Lastly on the reader will learn about the research methodologies used for this study.

The second and third chapter presents the comprehensive theoretical background of this study. These chapters can also be called literature reviews. The reader will get an understanding of what has been studied on the concepts of customer brand engagement and event sponsorship and what are the main theories and results that have risen from the past researches. The main theoretical concepts of this study are given definitions, and they are explained in a precise manner. Many models and dimensions are presented and explained in these two chapters as well. The fifth chapter will bring together the most important theoretical models in this thesis.

After the theories of the study have been presented and defined, the design and methods of the research are presented. This is what composes the fifth chapter. The chapter is divided into five smaller parts. In this chapter, the reader will learn more about the case and how the data was collected and how it was analysed. The case companies are also introduced in this chapter. This chapter also includes the discussion on the reliability and validity if this research.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to the empirical findings of this study. The data collected from the interviews is written out and analysed. These findings are then compared to the theories that were discussed earlier.

The seventh and last chapter of this study is dedicated to discussion and conclusions. Here the empirical findings are analysed further, and they are compared to the research questions that were set in the first chapter. This last chapter also includes the theoretical contributions, practical implications and future research suggestions.

2. CUSTOMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT

The word engagement started appearing in the marketing literature in the mid-2000's (Hollebeek, 2011, p. 559). So it is a relatively new term in the field. It has been used next to a few already well-known terms within marketing. These new definitions include brand engagement (Goldsmith et al. 2011), customer brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2011), customer engagement (Patterson et al. 2006) and consumer engagement (Hudson & Hudson, 2013). Naturally, in the beginning, stages of the research on engagement, a single cohesive definition was not developed. In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the research done about engagement and try to gather a clear understanding of the theory.

Many of the early researchers of customer engagement started building the theory on the already existing theory of relationship marketing. So in order to get a cohesive understanding where customer engagement emerged we should also take a look at the basic principles of relationship marketing. The idea of relationship marketing is to focus more on customer retention and satisfaction rather than simply push for more single sales transactions. In relationship marketing, the high value of long-term customer relationships was really understood and appreciated. According to Christopher, Payne and Ballantyne (2002, p. 5), the goal of relationship marketing is to maximise the lifetime value of a customer. Recognising the most important and profitable customer groups is also very important. This is vital especially if the Pareto principle is true within the company's customer base. According to the Pareto principle, 20% of a company's customers will bring in 80% of the profits. It is now widely accepted in marketing literature that building sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships with selected customers are vital for the success of a firm.

With the increasing number of marketing messages people are exposed to in today's environment, companies are more and more interested in building two-way communication and touch point between themselves and their customers. According to Keller (2009, p. 142), the average person who lives in a city is exposed to 3000-5000 marketing messages every day. Also, the increased scepticism and awareness of marketing communications on behalf of consumers is driving

companies towards the same direction. People are more aware of what marketers are trying to accomplish with their marketing messages. This has lowered the effectiveness of many traditional types of marketing tools in certain markets. (Raziq et al. 2018, p. 679-680) The internet has also given consumers helpful tools in order to make better and wiser purchasing decisions. For example, checking for the best pricing options has become very easy and fast. Consumers also have a lot more options when it comes to media exposure. Utilising different types of media (print, television, and internet) for marketing is still one of the most important avenues for targeting customers in the B2C market. The two-way communication and connections between a company and its customers can be called customer brand engagement.

So what exactly is the customer engaging with in these situations? Albaum and Duerr (2011, p. 630) define a brand as anything that identifies a seller's goods or services and distinguishes them from others. A brand can be a word, letter, group of words, symbol, design or some combination of these. There are multiple ways and places where engagement can occur. In a traditional sense, one could think that engagement occurs only between the company and its customers. However, brand engagement can also happen in customer-to-customer environments. Different online communities are good examples of this. Discussions and recommendations about brands and products or services can occur for example in Facebook groups or online marketplaces like Amazon.

Before the term engagement was adopted by marketing researchers, it was used in psychology studies. These studies from the 1990's were mainly about work environments and employee roles. One of the most important researchers in this field was William A. Kahn. (Patterson et al. 2006, p. 2) He talks about personal engagement in the workplace as being a sort of preferred self that people employ in order to promote connections to the work and other people. He describes three levels of personal presences that can enable engagement. The three levels are physical, cognitive and emotional. (William A. Kahn, 1990) He also provides three different levels of psychological conditions for employee engagement, which are: meaningfulness, psychological safety and availability. By these definitions, we can reason that the more suitable and well balanced the work is the more engagement

can occur for the employee. Also, the chance of utilising the so-called preferred work self should be as safe as possible. These same levels or areas could also be used for examining the levels of engagement between customers and brands. For example, if a customer feels that interacting with a brand outside the simple purchase transaction can have negative consequences the likelihood of engagement is not high.

The term customer engagement was first defined in the marketing research context by Patterson et al. (2006, p. 3). They define it as *the level of a customer's various "presence" in their relationship with a service organisation. The presences include physical presence, emotional presence and cognitive presence. Customer engagement is a higher-order construct, and it comprises of four components, namely, vigour, dedication, absorption, and interaction.* These component and dimensions can be then again attached to engagement that happens between customers and brand, customers and products or customers and other individuals like potential customers.

The component of vigour refers to the level of energy and mental resilience while the customer is interacting with the organisation, brand or other consumers. The component of dedication refers to the level of enthusiasm and loyalty the customer has toward the brand. It also refers to being proud about the role of a customer. An example of this could be luxury clothing brands or sports cars. People are proud and feel accomplished when they are associated with the brands or when they talk about them to other individuals. Customer engagement with expensive luxury brands is probably on a much higher level than with cheap everyday products. The component of absorption refers to the level of how deeply the customer is engrossed by the brand. If the customer feels very happy about spending time interacting with a brand, then the absorption is high.

An example of this could be a long time customer of a car manufacturer who enjoys talking about the brand with other customers and spends time on it. The component of interaction is quite self-explanatory because it refers to the different interactions the customer can have with a brand, company employees, and an organisation or with other customers. This component includes one of the most common aspects

that many researchers have brought up about customer engagement. That is the fact that also interactions between customers themselves are part of the engagement. The research done by Patterson et al. on customer engagement started on service industries only. Later on when the research expanded other researchers started including markets and companies that operate with tangible products. (Patterson et al. 2006)

Brodie et al. (2011) were one of the first to comprehensively conceptualise and identify the definition of customer engagement. The base for their conceptualisation was also on relationship marketing and service management. Specifically, they examined the so-called service-dominant logic. The basic idea of service-dominant logic is to move away from traditional markets that are based on the exchange of tangible goods and products. According to service-dominant logic basically all business is based on the exchange of services. The services are based on the individual competencies of people. The competencies include skills and experiences that enable value creation. So even if the value exchange is in the form of a tangible product, it is merely a manifestation of the service competencies. (Lusch & Vargo, 2004, p. 10)

The Service-dominant logic is articulated using ten premises that describe relationships and interactions between customers and stakeholders, firms and other customers. (Lusch & Vargo, 2008, p 7) According to Brodie et al. (2011, p. 253), four of the ten premises are particularly relevant when the concept of customer engagement is being determined. The premise 6 says "the customer is always a co-creator of value". This highlights the interactions between the customer and other actors within the business relationship. Premise 9 says "All social and economic actors are resource integrators". This refers to value creation taking place within networks. Premise 10 says "Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary". This refers to the experimental and subjective nature of the value co-creation concept. Lastly, the premise 8 says "A service-centred view is inherently customer oriented and relational". This refers to the fact that service by its nature is always relational and interactional.

Based on the literature of service-dominant logic and relationship marketing and with the help of 13 other researchers of this topic Brodie et al. (2011, p. 258) present five fundamental propositions as the definition of customer engagement. The five propositions are as follows:

1. *Customer engagement reflects a psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experience with a focal agent/object within specific relationships.*
2. *Customer engagement states occur within a dynamic, iterative process of service relationships that co-created value.*
3. *Customer engagement plays a central role within a nomological network of service relationships.*
4. *Customer engagement is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions.*
5. *Customer engagement occurs within a specific set of situational conditions generating differing engagement levels.*

Later on, Vivek et al. (2012, p. 127) defined customer engagement as *the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with an organisation's offerings and/or organisational activities, which either the customer or the organisation initiate.* As Patterson et al. had earlier defined, the presence of engagement can manifest in physical, emotional and cognitive stages. Vivek et al. (2012, p.127) also define a cognitive and emotional element of engagement. However, they also include behavioural and social elements. The behavioural and social elements can include interactions that happen during purchasing products or services, but they also include elements that occur without purchasing or even plans of purchasing. This is clearly an indicator of customer engagement if there are interactions between a company and its customer that are initiated by the customer without the purpose of purchasing.

Vivek et al. (2012) also identify a shift in the focus of research when moving from traditional relationship marketing to a concept that includes customer engagement.

By their view focus of research is moving from retention of existing customers towards customer acquisition. Also, the interactions between company and customer are moving from being driven solely by the organisation towards interactions that are driven by existing and potential customers in conjunction with the organisation. In their theoretical model, Vivek et al. (2012, p. 135) identify many aspects that will positively associate with customer engagement. These aspects include value, trust, affective commitment, word of mouth, loyalty, brand community involvement, customer participation and involvement. If an organisation wants to increase customer engagement, it should strive to increase the aspects mentioned by Vivek et al. (2012). This applies to not only between the organisation and its existing customers but also with potential customers and within the customer-to-customer interactions.

The internet and different social media platforms are places where brand interaction without an intention of purchase can easily occur these days. Consumers are often happy to share their experiences with a product or service in order to help others in their purchasing decisions. Discussions can occur in the comment sections of Youtube videos or on Facebook. Post-purchase brand interactions are also common. Writing a blog post or making a Youtube video about a particular brand is an easy way to give it a review that is available to everyone who is interested. These types of customer engagement interactions also create word-of-mouth awareness for the brand in question. According to King, Racherla and Bush (2014), word-of-mouth from other consumers has a stronger impact on the decision making process than marketing communication that is coming from the company itself. This means there is great incentive for companies to try to increase the level of engagement with its customers because it can have a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts by the company. (Lou et al. 2017)

These kinds of interactions are what Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 254) call customer engagement behaviours. They argue that *customer engagement behaviour go beyond transactions and may be specifically defined as a customer's behavioural manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers.* Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 254) also take notice that brand engagement behaviour can manifest itself as a negative occurrence for the firm. An

unsatisfied customer may voice their experience on social media or on blog posts. Another negative possibility is that the customer simply stops interacting with the brand, including purchasing and other engaging behaviours. Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 255) bring up five dimensions that are used to understand the nature of customer engagement and the particular ways in which customers choose to engage. The proposed five dimensions are *valence, form or modality, scope, nature of its impact and customer goals.*

Valence refers to whether the engagement can be classified as positive or negative from the companies' point of view. The form or modality of the engagement refers to all the many different ways it can occur from the customers' point of view. In a simplified way it means what kind of, and the amount of, resources the customer utilises when interacting with a brand. An example of this would be a customer who takes time and effort to contact a firm in order to give them advice on product improvements or how to enhance the overall customer experience. The dimension of scope refers to the temporal and geographical aspects of the engagement. In long-lasting customer relationships, engagement can be ongoing throughout the life cycle, especially if the company has developed systems that enable and make it intuitive for the consumer. At the other end of the spectrum, there are occurrences of one-time engagement. Maybe the customer is unhappy with the purchase decision and exits the relationship immediately after the single interaction. The geographical aspect of scope refers to whether to impact of engagement is local or wider, possibly even international. A customer can interact with a firm face-to-face, or he can make a YouTube video about them. In these two cases, the possible scale of the impact is very different. (Van Doorn et al. 2010, p. 255)

That brings us to the next dimension, which is the nature of impact. The nature can be described by its immediacy, intensity, breadth or longevity. The immediacy of the impact refers to the quickness of the impact on any parts of the company. Through the internet, a single customer engagement can spread very quickly and reach a large audience also outside the company itself.

A similar example can be utilised for the breadth and intensity aspects of the impact. Because of the internet, the range of breadth is very wide. Then again intensity is

often very low if the engagement happens on a public online forum. Higher intensity can be reached if two people who trust each other talk about purchasing a product. In that case, the engagement can have a direct effect on the decision making. Longevity of the impact refers to how long will the impact affect the target audience. Again we can compare the internet versus word-of-mouth for example. An Amazon product review can be useful for other customers years after being posted, but a face-to-face conversation will likely have a much shorter impact. (Van Doorn et al. 2010, p. 255)

Van Doorn et al. (2010) created a conceptual model for customer engagement behaviour, where it is between three factors of antecedents and three factors of consequences. The three antecedent factors are customer-based, firm-based and context-based. These antecedent factors will affect which type of engagement will occur. The authors also recognise that many of the factors can have a direct effect on the engagement but also that the different factors can interact with each other and either enhance or inhibit the initial effect. After the customer engagement behaviour has formed its final dimensions, comes the consequences. The three consequence factors are customer, firm and other. Most customer engagement will manifest to some sort of consequence for either other customers, the firm itself or other outside entities.

This concept widens the theory of customer engagement and gives it more of a comprehensive definition. Some other researchers have also given definitions to the different aspects of customer engagement, but the conceptual model of Van Doorn et al. (2010) adds antecedent and consequential aspects. Of course, it should be taken into consideration that Van Doorn et al. (2010) are talking about customer engagement behaviour, versus customer engagement or customer brand engagement that others have researched. Whether or not these aspects in Van Doorn et al.'s (2010) model are applicable to the different cognitive and emotional levels of engagement that have been theorised by other authors is still unclear.

All of the three antecedent factors include a number of identifiable elements. Elements within the customer-based group are satisfaction, trust/commitment, identity, consumption goals, resources and perceived costs/benefits. When

compared to the elements in the other two factors, it would seem that these customer-based ones could have the most impactful effect on the nature of customer engagement. Many of the reactions that later manifest as customer engagement behaviour are based on emotion and cognition, that it would be logical to think that the factors that come from the customer itself would be the strongest. It is quite easy to think of examples of customer engagement behaviour that happen because of strong satisfaction or dissatisfaction for the customer. Customer identity and resources will also have a strong effect on the type of engagement that will occur. Some people might be more inclined in helping others, and that will increase the engagement. However, resources can be limiting factors even if the customer would be willing to interact more with a focal firm. Different consumption goals will also affect engagement behaviour. For example, if someone is trying to find the absolute best bargain on a certain product, they will likely engage with the brand a lot before making a purchase decision. Then again if the goal is convenience and spending as little time as possible, there will be less engagement behaviour. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

The second group in the antecedent factors are the firm-based elements. The firm-based element includes brand characteristics, firm reputation, firm size/diversification, firm information usage and processes and finally industry. Brand characteristics might be the strongest influencers from this group. Brands with high levels of value and better reputation can generate more positive customer engagement than smaller brands. Then again, if the brand has an excellent reputation customers' level of expectation is also higher. So if the expectations do not meet with the final experience, it could create negative engagement in the form of word-of-mouth for example. The size of the firm and its processes also has a great influence on the nature of engagement behaviour. Large companies have more resources, and they may have built platforms and systems that enable and encourage engagement behaviour to happen. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

The last group of the antecedent factors include the context-based elements. These elements are competitive factors, political, economic/environmental, social and technological. Competitive factors can create engagement behaviour, for example when a new superior product has been brought to the market. Customers of the

older existing product can start to demand similar features from the product that they are using. This kind of competitive disruption can cause a lot of customer engagement behaviour which can partly be negative as well. Political elements can affect customer engagement behaviour by having statutes or laws in place that demand a certain level of transparency from the company. This can enable consumers to make a purchasing decision based on their moral or ethical values for example. When a customer knows that the company they are interacting with shares similar ethical values as they do, it is more likely, they will engage with the said company. It is easier to share information through word-of-mouth about something that you believe in ethically. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

Now that we have examined the antecedents of customer engagement behaviour in the Van Doorn et al.'s (2010) conceptual model, we can move on to the consequences. As was stated before, the consequences have three different factors, which are customer, firm and others. Each of these three factors then has multiple elements within them. The elements in the customer factor are cognitive, attitudinal, emotional, physical/time and identity. Many of these consequences can appear from the same type of engagement behaviour. If a customer engages with a brand and the experience is very positive for him or her. Often the cognitive, attitudinal and emotional consequence is that they will continue to engage with the brand, possibly even in multiple ways. One's identity can also be partly shaped or re-enforced by strongly engaging with a brand. For instance, some people might wear clothing of an outdoors type brand, and by wearing those clothes, they will re-enforce their personal identity as a person who enjoys spending time outdoors doing different activities. For some other people driving and owning a luxurious car from a particular manufacturer will shape their identity and give them an image of a successful person. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

The second factor group from the consequences are the consequences for firms, which are financial, reputational, regulatory, competitive, employee and product. Financial consequences are certainly ones that the firm has to take into consideration when they are trying to manage engagement behaviour. Reviews, blogging, word-of-mouth, YouTube videos, for instance, can have a massive effect on purchasing decisions of potential customers. Whether the engagement

behaviour is positive or negative, it will create a financial consequence for the firm at the end. Highly engaged customers will also affect the reputation of the company. Badly managed engagement behaviour can hinder the reputation of a company very quickly, especially through the internet. On the other hand, someone who participated in an event that was organised by a company can spread positive word-of-mouth to many people.

Regulatory consequences can occur if customers engage in legal action against a company. The company might have to change something about the manufacturing process or a marketing tactic that they have been using. Highly engaged customers can also be very valuable for the company in terms of the competitive and product elements of consequences. These kinds of customers can help in the development of new products or services, and they can help improve existing ones. Engaged customers can have a lot of useful data, which can be utilised for improvements. In developing new products, engaged customers can take part in testing or giving ideas for the company. In software development, it is common to release beta versions of an application and give to highly engaged customers. They can then give the company valuable feedback and suggestions on how to improve the product before its final launch to the market. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

The third and final factor group from the consequences are the other consequences, which are consumer welfare, economic surplus, social surplus, regulation, cross-brand and cross-customer. As engaged customers spread information to a whole industry or to large masses of consumers, it can lead to all kinds of different improvement. Heighten competition among companies will often result in faster-developing technologies and improvements in services. Regulations and legal aspects can also improve towards the consumer, as engaged customers take action in defending consumer rights for example. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

As we can see from all the information Van Doorn et al. (2010) gathered about customer engagement behaviour, it can be very impactful on many aspects within an industry. There are multiple factors that play a role in the formation of engagement behaviour, and there are multiple consequences that come after it. This is why companies should try to manage the engagement behaviour as much as

possible. Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 261-262) have formed three main actions for companies to take in order to manage engagement behaviour. These actions are identifying engagement behaviour, evaluating engagement manifestations and reacting to key engagement behaviours.

One of the most critical aspects of identification is to find out what are the channels customers are using to engage. What are the most used offline and online channels? To who are the most interactions targeted? Is there more engagement on public forums or are one-to-one interactions between company and customer the most common form? Evaluation of engagement manifestations will have to include the consideration of short- and long-term consequences. The identified channels should then be considered as indicators among other scorecards and metrics. By identifying and evaluating most used channels, the company can gather valuable data. Once the engagement behaviours have been identified and evaluated, it is time to react to them accordingly. The processes and organisational systems must be in order so that the right personnel can access and utilise the data. For instance, if customers are giving the company many ideas for new products or improvements, the information should go to people who are responsible for product development. It could also be the right decision for companies to encourage and stimulate customer engagement. This can happen if the company provides platforms for it. There can also be a reward based system in place that will encourage customers to engage and to stay engaged. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

Linda Hollebeek (2011) is one of the researchers who has taken a closer look at the concept of customer brand engagement. Like the researchers that are mentioned before, she also takes a look at the theories of relationship marketing and service-dominant logic. However, she also brings in social exchange theory (SET), which predates the two others. According to SET, customers are predicted to reciprocate positive thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards an object when receiving specific benefits from the brand relationship. As relationship marketing and service-dominant logic states, an engaged customer will proactively make contributions to a brand relationship, social exchange theory takes a look at the underlying motivations and reasons for doing so. From the companies' perspective, they should strive towards a situation where the customers' level of positive thoughts reach a

level where they will manifest in interactive behaviour. If the exchange of goods or services is received as being exceptional, the exchange between the company and the customer might later include social exchanges that do not include any purchase. This social exchange is still seen beneficial by the customer. Additionally, the costs of social exchange post-purchase can be very low for the customer.

Hollebeek's (2011, p. 555) research identified three themes and a definition for customer brand engagement. The results were gathered based on the previous literature and the empirical data. Her definition of customer brand engagement is: *The level of a customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions.* The three themes of customer brand engagement are immersion, passion and activation. The identified themes represent the degree to which a customer is willing to use relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioural resources in specific interactions with a focal brand. These interactions will include brand-related concentration and positive affect and energy. Hollebeek further details the themes as follows;

Immersion is defined as a customer's level of brand-related concentration in particular brand interactions', and as such, reveals the extent of individuals' cognitive investment in specific brand interactions. The empirical data also brings up a so-called "time flies" aspect when immersion is high within the brand interactions. Customers tell that when they are interacting with a highly engaging brand they are enjoying themselves, and they tend to not think about other subjects or matters at that time. (Hollebeek. 2011, p. 566)

Passion is defined as the degree of a customer's positive brand-related affect in particular brand interactions', and as such, reveals the extent of individuals' emotional investment in specific brand interactions. Passion occurs when customers describe being passionate about an engaging brand or when they feel obsessive, loving and/or adoring towards said brand. Also, feelings of pride and being a fan are associated with passion. (Hollebeek. 2011, p. 567)

Activation is defined as a customer's level of energy, effort and/or time spent on a brand in particular brand interactions'. The theme of activation simply comes down to putting time and effort into the brand. It may be spending time online researching

products or talking about the brand with other people or sharing your thoughts about on social media. (Hollebeek. 2011, p. 569)

Based on many of the studies and authors before, France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) furthered the field of customer engagement by clarifying the theories and by developing an integrated customer brand engagement model. The model proposes two contributing drivers of customer brand engagement, which are a firm-led platform and secondly customer-centred influences. The most critical firm-led drivers in this model are brand interactivity and brand quality. It is important to realise that customer brand engagement is not initiated and maintained only by the customers. Firms play an equally important role in it. According to France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) Wong and Merrilees (2015, p.586) state that "*managers need to play a role in connecting to customers through the brand and not passively wait for customers to do all the work engaging with the brand. It has to be a two-sided approach.*"

According to France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) the influence of brand quality is well established in the customer-brand relationship literature. They propose that the same could very well be the case for customer engagement. According to Mitra and Golder (2006) perceived brand quality represents consumers' view of how well a brand meets their requirements and expectations. Based on that notion it is easy to assume that customers would be more willing to engage with companies that meet or exceed their requirement and expectations. As it has been established previously, customer engagement is cognitive, emotional and behavioural actions. At least for positive engagement pattern to form, one requirement could be the perception of brand quality. Of course, if the engagement is negative and a one-time occurrence, the requirements will not be the same. A perceived poor brand quality could manifest on a negative review or complaint towards the company. In their research paper France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 124) present their first hypothesis: *Perceived brand quality will have a positive effect on customer-brand engagement.*

Although brand quality has been a more relevant topic within marketing research itself, the concept of brand interactivity is not as well-known, but it could be as important when customer engagement is concerned. France, Merrilees and Miller

(2016, p. 124) define brand interactivity as the customer's perception of the brand's willingness and genuine desire for integration with the customer. For instance, a company that has set up multiple platforms and systems that enable customer engagement will most likely be perceived as highly brand interactive. These platforms and systems can mean well-functioning customer service, website, online forums and groups, active social media presence for example. These are all channels that the company can establish, and they will increase brand interactivity and through that help and encourage customer engagement. Customers will feel more welcome and appreciated when they see that the brand also clearly is interested in interacting with them. As interactions become more common, more trust will form in the relationship between the company and the customer. Based on these conceptual and theoretical reasons, France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 125) present their second hypothesis as *Brand interactivity will have a positive effect on customer brand engagement.*

As was previously stated the integrated model of customer brand engagement has two main contributing drivers, now we will take a closer look at the customer centred influences. In this model, the two highlighted customer centred antecedents are brand involvement and brand self-congruity. According to France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) brand involvement is widely acknowledged as influential to customer brand engagement. For instance, Bowden (2009, p. 66) considers involvement to be a part of the process of customer engagement. Bowden's model proposes that customer engagement includes increased levels of involvement that is simultaneously supported by increased levels of trust. Based on the theoretical and some empirical evidence France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 125) present their third hypothesis as *Brand involvement will have a positive effect on customer brand engagement.*

The other driving influence of customer centred engagement is brand self-congruity. Similar to the customer based consequences in Van Doorn et al.'s (2010) model that includes identity, brand self-congruity matches the images of the consumer and the brand. Customers will more likely associate with brands that re-enforce and express their self-identity. Consumers will naturally seek for products and brands that fit their personality. The more aligned the brand and the customer's self-identity

are, the more engagement will occur between them. According to France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 126) many researchers like Sprott et al. (2009), Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010), Ramaseshan and Stein (2014) have shown a strong empirical link between brand self-congruity and customer-brand relationships. So it could be theorised that the same link appears between brand self-congruity and customer brand engagement, although it has not been thoroughly tested yet on an empirical level. France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 126) propose that when there is alignment between the brand and the customer, the customer is more likely to develop a sense of belonging, passion and immersion to the brand which then leads to stronger engagement. This proposal leads to their fourth hypothesis: *Brand self-congruity will have a positive effect on customer brand engagement.*

After France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) have proposed their drivers and antecedents of customer brand engagement, they suggest two main consequences. These consequences are brand value and brand loyalty. They cite from Vargo and Lusch (2008, p.8) the notion that the customer is always a co-creator of value. This supports the proposal that customer brand engagement would correlate with perceived brand value. A customer, who feels passion towards and is immersed in a brand, is expected to have higher levels of perceived brand value. Thus France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 127) present their fifth hypothesis: *Customer brand engagement will have a positive effect on brand value.*

As for brand loyalty, France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) bring up the studies of Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Dwivedi (2015) which both identify brand loyalty intent as being one of the consequences of customer brand engagement. It would seem logical that a customer who is deeply connected and passionate about a brand would also be loyal towards that brand. According to France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 131) brand loyalty is identified as a consequence of customer brand engagement by the research of Bijmolt et al. (2010) who show that engaged customers have a more active brand voice, by Kumar et al. (2010) how show that engaged customer provide more feedback to the brand and by Vivek et al. (2012) who show that engaged customers advocate the brand to others more often. Based on these theories and empirical findings France, Merrilees and Miller (2016, p. 127)

propose their sixth hypothesis as *Customer brand engagement will have a positive effect on brand loyalty.*

Based on the quantitative empirical findings, France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) show that all six hypothesises are supported by the data. The discussed four antecedents show statistical significance and prove that both customer centred influences and firm-led drivers can lead to customer brand engagement. Equally strong empirical evidence is found to show that customer engagement does have an influence on brand value and brand loyalty. So the hypothesised consequences were also correct.

In the marketing environment of today, it is almost impossible not to mention social media no matter what the specific area of marketing is being discussed. No wonder, since utilising social media in marketing can very effective because of its cost-efficiency, responsiveness, time-efficiency and directness. All these are beneficial attributes in terms of engagement with customers. However, there are still questions about the motivations of customers interacting with brands on social media. For instance, what makes a customer to like the Facebook page of a brand? What does that like actually mean regarding customer behaviour?

According to Halaszovich and Nel (2017), many companies have developed strategies for connecting with customers on social media since there is such potential to develop, maintain and enhance customer-brand relationships. Companies often implement "pull" campaigns in order to gain social media following. A "pull" campaign is when the customer is required to like or follow the brand's page, in order to enter a competition for instance. Halaszovich and Nel (2017) question whether a customer's social media behaviour based on a "pull" strategy will ultimately contribute to the development of meaningful interactions between the brand and the customer. Would it be better for the company to interact with its customer utilising different methods and build engagement that way? Would that engagement ultimately lead to more followers on social media? Halaszovich and Nel (2017, p. 121) formed their two main research questions as:

1. How does customer brand engagement influence customers' intention to "Like" the brand's fan page on Facebook?

2. Is the influence of customer brand engagement on intention to "Like" the fan page of the brand a conditional effect of brand trust?

Halaszovich and Nel (2017, p. 121) use the definition for customer brand engagement from Hollebeek et al. (2014): "*A customer's positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions*". Customer brand engagement is further defined by detailing the three dimensions in it. The cognitive facet of customer brand engagement refers to brand-related thought processing and evaluating. The emotional dimension of customer brand engagement can be defined as *brand affect is defined as a brand's potential to elicit a positive emotional response in the average consumer as a result of its use* (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001, p. 82). The behavioural, or activation dimension, can be defined as the customer's level of energy exerted in interacting with the focal brand (Patterson et al., 2006, p. 3).

One of the most prevalent aspects of engagement behaviour is the spreading of word-of-mouth (WOM), or in the context of social media more specifically electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). WOM can be defined as *informal person-to-person communication between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organisation or a service* (Halaszovich and Nel, 2017, p. 122). As was stated before, the impact of WOM can be much more significant than other forms of marketing communication. The impact of eWOM could potentially be even greater since on social media one person can reach large groups of family, friends and acquaintances.

According to Halaszovich and Nel (2017, p. 122), Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) define eWOM as: *any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customer about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet*. Although similar in nature, there are differences between traditional WOM and eWOM. For instance, the non-verbal communication and social cues are not present in eWOM. Because of this, the connection can be deeper and more meaningful when people are communicating face-to-face. One other noticeable and significant difference is that the potential size of the audience in eWOM is much bigger. Consumers can reach each other beyond

country borders and people from all kinds of social and cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, cultural differences can also be seen as something that makes the message less impactful.

In Halaszovich's and Nel's (2017, p. 123) conceptual model, there are two main reasons for a customer to like a brand's Facebook page. The first one being that the customer wants to stay informed about news and recent events related to the brand. The second reason to like a brand's page on Facebook is to spread positive WOM about that brand. By liking a brand page, the customer will automatically (depending on privacy settings) spread positive WOM to his/her own friends on Facebook. The "like" will be shared on the customer's own news feed, therefore people can see that this person has positive feelings towards the brand. The same model also hypothesises three aspects that will positively influence the intentions for liking a brand page on Facebook, whether the reason is to stay informed or the spreading of positive eWOM, the aspects are the same. The three aspects are cognitive processing, affection and activation.

The results from Halaszovich and Nel (2017) quantitative study confirmed that the two "like" intentions were correct. Most of the reasons customers like a brand's Facebook page are based in either information seeking or in spreading positive eWOM about the brand. Actually based on the study results, spreading eWOM was a more common reason to like a brand page. From the three aspects that could positively influence liking a brand page on Facebook, cognitive processing and activations were confirmed. That means that affection does not influence a customer to like brand pages on Facebook. To answer the two main research questions set by Halaszovich and Nel (2017), the first one being about customer brand engagement's influence on the intentions to like a brand's page on Facebook. The results show that from the dimensions of customer brand engagement, *cognitive* and *behaviour* activity do positively influence intentions to like a brand page on Facebook. For the second question, the results showed that the activation dimension of customer brand engagement is very influential on intentions to like a brand page when brand trust is high. Oppositely when brand trust is low, the emotional dimension of customer brand engagement was influential on brand page likes.

In their research paper Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) bring forth the suggestion that there is still confusion, lack of clarity, coherence and consistency in the research and conceptualisation of customer/consumer engagement. It is true at least in the sense that there are still multiple terms (e.g. customer engagement, consumer engagement, customer brand engagement) that are used basically as synonyms with each other. The authors also state that there seems to be a lack of consensus on what customer engagement is since some researchers base it on psychological aspects and others emphasise the behavioural activities. Similarly, the dimensionality of customer engagement seems to have some inconsistencies. Although one could also state that most authors would agree that the dimensions of cognition, emotionality and behaviour are all included, at least in some capacity. Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) call for further research in order to solve these inconsistencies.

Another criticism by Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) is about the fact that most of the studies have focused on the engagement between a consumer and a brand (product or service) or company. However, engagement with other marketplace players can also be very impactful or at least noticeable for the brand or company. Engagement between interactive and like-minded consumers should be researched more. The internet has given an opportunity for this kind of interaction to take place, and they can be called online brand communities. According to Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015), it has been researched that like-minded consumers consciously join groups in order to interact about a focal brand or other objects. Muniz and O'guinn (2001, p. 412) were the first to define brand communities as *specialised, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand* (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015).

Same time as the internet grew dramatically fast, online brand communities also came more and more common. Interacting with people who have interests in similar brands or product groups became so much easier. These brand communities have become very valuable also for outside parties like researchers and the brands themselves. The engagement aspect is always very prevalent when examining social media or other online communities because their interactive nature is so

strong. It has been shown through research that engagement in online brand communities emerges through the same processes as does other customer engagement. These processes are cognitive, affective and behavioural. (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015)

The findings from the study by Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) show, that the most popular platforms among the participants to engage in brand communities were Facebook and Twitter. Other popular social media platforms mentioned included YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram. Since the study was done in 2015, it is possible that the popularity of different social media platforms has changed. For instance, Instagram has experienced significant growth since then. Many of the study participants also use multiple platforms for engagement. The results show that each of the platforms provides a different reason for participation. Some social media platforms a better suited for interacting with the brand itself and others are better for interacting with other consumers.

Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015, p. 35) continue to unveil the study results by presenting a set of dimensions for customer engagement in online brand communities. The main dimensions are the previously mentioned affective engagement, cognitive engagement and behavioural engagement. The dimension of affective engagement is shown to include two sub-dimensions, which are enthusiasm and enjoyment. (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas. 2015, p. 35)

- *Enthusiasm reflects a consumer's intrinsic level of excitement and interest regarding the online brand community.*
- *Enjoyment is indicative of the consumer's pleasure and happiness derived from interactions with the online brand community and its members.*

The dimension of cognitive engagement refers to a set of functioning mental states that a customer can experience towards the brand that he/she is engaging with. The cognitive dimension is also shown to include two sub-dimensions, which are the elements of attention and absorption. (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas. 2015, p. 36)

- *Attention is the cognitive availability voluntarily dedicated to interacting with the online brand community.*
- *Absorption is indicative of the inability to detach oneself once interacting with the online brand community.*

Somewhat surprising results emerged related to the levels of absorption some customers experience. A number of participants told about considerable difficulties in detaching from the online brand communities once engaged. Though the levels of absorption were different in many of the platforms and some specific events could also increase absorption momentarily.

The third and final dimension of customer engagement in online brand communities is behavioural engagement. It encompasses all beyond purchase behaviour towards a brand or company, which comes from motivational drivers. The behavioural engagement dimension includes three sub-dimensions, which are sharing, learning and endorsing. (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas. 2015, p. 36)

- *Sharing is a collaborative and interactive exchange driven by the motivation to provide resources. In a social media context, sharing can manifest itself through shares, comments, posts, tweets, replies or direct messages.*
- *Learning and improving their skills is a key aspect of online community participation and social media is particularly suited to this goal, as it allows users to post their questions freely and receive feedback from other knowledgeable members, or the brand itself.*
- *Endorsing occurs when consumers actively recommend specific brands products, services, organisations and/or ways of using products or brands.*

Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015, p. 37) present brand loyalty as one of the primary outcomes that emerge from engagement in brand communities. For instance, other members of the community can have a strong impact on the purchase behaviour and decision making of someone interacting with them. If other members of the community can influence someone to make a purchase, thus being a member of the said community will increase brand loyalty. The study results also showed cases where brand community members would defend the company

against other competing rivals. Brand loyalty could also be maintained if the company itself is engaged with dissatisfied customers on social media. This type of engagement by the company can stop the consumer from abandoning the brand.

3. EVENT SPONSORSHIP

The history of sponsorship is over a hundred years old already. One of the first well-known examples of this is the sponsorship of the Indianapolis 500 race by Firestone and Bosch, which started in 1911. From the 70's to early 80's sponsorship was still not a very popular form of marketing, although some sporting events were getting sponsors regularly. It was the Los Angeles Olympic games that kick-started and exploded the use of sponsorship as a marketing tool. Over 400 million dollars' worth of sponsorship was sold for those Olympic Games. As a result, many companies realised that they could increase sales revenues by utilising sponsorship. (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, p 20)

One of the first and now also one of the most often used definitions of sponsorship is by John Meenaghan (1983, p. 9) and it goes as follows: "*Sponsorship can be regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organisation for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives".*

In their research paper Lee, Sandler and Shani (1997, p. 161) quoted the definition by Sandler and Shani (1989)*: "The provision of resources (e.g., money, people, equipment) by an organization directly to an event, cause or activity in exchange for a direct association (link) to the event, cause or activity. The providing organisation can then engage in sponsorship-linked marketing to achieve either their corporate, marketing or media objectives".*

The international events group (IEG), a company that tracks and analyses sponsorship, defines it as: "*cash and/or an in-kind fee paid to a property (typically in sports, arts, entertainment or causes) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property*". Another definition for sponsorship formed by The Exordium Group is: "*a mutually beneficial relationship most often between a corporation and event or rights holder, for the purpose of enhancing a product or corporate brand".* (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, p 2)

According to Johnston and Spais (2015, p. 298) Cornwell and Maignan (1998), who reviewed the research done on sponsorship from before 1996, recognised five main

topics that researchers focused on, these topics on sponsorship were: the nature of sponsorship, managerial aspects, measurement effects, strategic use and legal/ethical considerations. Later on, it was shown by Walliser (2003) that there were fewer studies about the conceptualisation and definition of sponsorship, which seems like a very natural evolution from the emergence of a new marketing tool. Walliser (2003) also noticed a shift in that many researchers were moving away from sports into other domains of sponsorship, like cultural, social and environmental sponsorship. Moving on to the early 2010s, the large-scale analysis of studies by Johnston and Spais (2015) recognised the most prevalent subjects. Many of these subjects are the same that were researched in the 2000s. The mentioned subjects are business-to-business relationships with professional sports brands, sponsorship and its relationship with corporate social responsibility and the measurement of sponsorship value, particularly its economic impact on shareholder wealth.

When talking about sponsorship, most people will probably think about sports and how companies sponsor athletes and team. According to Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 591), 69 per cent of the 11,14 billion dollars spent on sponsorship in North America in 2004 went to sports. Why has sports sponsorship become such a huge part of the overall spending on sponsorship? Part of the reason could be that at least in North America, sports have become such an integral part of the culture. Star athletes are some of the most followed celebrities in the world and watching sports is a very popular past time activity. Sports can also provoke strong emotional reactions and connections in people, for example towards a hometown team or a favourite player. This can be very beneficial for marketers, as they can attempt to attach a brand to that emotional connection.

There can be multiple reasons for sponsoring an event. Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592) list eight of the most significant ones.

1. *To identify with a particular target market or lifestyle.* Event sponsorship is very effective in targeting certain customers based on their geography, demography, lifestyle or behaviour.
2. *To increase awareness of company or product name.* Building brand awareness and recognition can be achieved through sponsorship.

3. *To create or reinforce consumer perceptions of key brand image associations.* The image of the event can be used to modify the image of the brand.

4. *To enhance corporate image dimensions.* In addition to the image of certain brands, also the company's own image can be altered with sponsorship.

5. *To create experiences and evoke feelings.* The experience of the event and the feelings that it brings up can be possibly linked to the brand itself.

6. *To express commitment to the community or on social issues.* When the sponsored event is created by a non-profit organisation or charity, it shows that the company cares about social issues or the environment for example.

7. *To entertain key clients or reward employees.* For strengthening customer relationships or giving your employees an experience, the company can give out VIP tickets to events for instance.

8. *To permit merchandising or promotional opportunities.* Often the sponsorship of an event is linked together with other marketing tools.

The International Events Group (IEG) has made a similar list of reasons for sponsoring an event. The ten reasons they list are: heighten visibility, shape consumer attitudes, provide incentives for retailers/dealers and distributors, entertain clients, recruit/retain employees, create merchandising opportunities, showcase their product from competitors and drive sales. (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, p. 22) As we can see from both of these lists, event sponsorship can be a very versatile and comprehensive marketing tool. Another aspect that also makes sponsorship versatile is the fact that there are different types of sponsors. The right type for a company will be dependent on its resources, the event type, goals of sponsorship and other details. Skinner and Rukavina (2003, p. 34) list six different sponsor types, which are:

1. Title sponsor - sponsor is part of the name of the event.
2. Presenting sponsor - mentioned after the name of the event.
3. In-kind sponsor - cash is not provided, but service is.
4. Official sponsors - a product that is an event's exclusive sponsor.
5. Media sponsor - print, radio, television or website sponsor.
6. Co-sponsor - company that is part of an event with other sponsors.

This study looks at companies that are sponsoring music festivals in Finland. These companies are media sponsors and co-sponsors of the festivals. Most of the sponsors of music festivals in Finland are also one of these types, possibly some type 3 sponsors might exist as well.

Rowley and Williams (2008, p. 782) also list out the biggest reasons for companies to use sponsorship in their marketing strategy, which are: increase brand awareness, create brand image, re-position the brand in the minds of consumers, increase profit over a short period and to achieve a larger market share. According to Rowley and Williams (2008, p. 783) Gwimmer (1997) suggests that the two most important reasons for sports or arts sponsorship are to increase brand awareness and to establish, strengthen or change brand image. There are apparent differences between sports and arts sponsorship. For instance, the scale of the audience can be much larger in sports. If a company is sponsoring the Olympics or the World Cup, the audience will be worldwide with numbers in the billions. That also means that the audience is gathered from people that are from multiple different cultural backgrounds and belong to a number of demographics. Sponsoring arts, a music festival, for example, should be targeted to a more geographically bounded and homogeneous audience.

The research done on music festival sponsorship is still relatively limited. Although massive brands have started to sponsor music festivals, there is little research about the impact it can have on brand awareness or customer brand engagement. For certain companies and brands, music festival sponsorship can be an excellent marketing tactic, because of the popularity of festivals and the somewhat homogenous audience they have. When a company is trying to reach young adults, or in some cases teenagers, music festival sponsorship could be a powerful tool for doing so. However, because of the lack of empirical evidence, more research needs to be done. More usable data should be gathered for both the sponsoring companies and for the event promoters. (Rowley & Williams, 2008) In their research paper, Rowley and Williams (2008) are trying to fill these gaps in the literature. Their objective was to investigate the impact of sponsorship on brand recall, brand awareness, brand attitude, brand use and brand associations. Additionally, they also set to find out attitudes towards any potential negative effects of sponsorship, such

as an increase in alcohol consumption, underage drinking, theft, violence, health risks or commercial pressure.

The findings of Rowley and Williams (2008) showed that for most (34 %) of the respondents who had attended music festivals, there was no change in brand awareness towards a sponsoring brand. Although this might seem like a bad result for the sponsoring companies, 44 per cent of the respondents experienced at least some change in brand awareness. In terms of changed attitudes towards a brand, there were substantial differences in the results depending on the festival in question. This means sponsoring companies need to consider very carefully which festivals they choose to sponsor, bearing in mind that not all attitude changes are positive. When asked about product usage before and after a music festival, there was virtually no difference. This would indicate that music festival sponsorship is best suited for improving brand awareness and attitudes, rather than immediate growth in sales. Although in the long term, increased brand awareness and positive attitudes could manifest as sales growth. The respondents were also asked about values they would attach to brands that were sponsors in the festivals they had attended. It seems that in some cases the respondents associate similar values to the sponsoring brands as they would to the brand of the festival itself. The mentioned values were such as fun and young. (Rowley & Williams, 2008)

The association between the sponsored event's values and the brand's values can also be called image transfer. It happens when event attendees transfer the brand image of the event itself to the brand image of a sponsorship. According to Gwinner and Eaton (1999, p. 47), the two main reasons for sponsorship are to increase brand awareness and to establish, strengthen or change brand image, as was stated before. However, most of the research has focused on issues related to brand awareness. Because of this, it is essential to also take a look at sponsorship in terms of brand image.

Brand image is structured on linkages that the consumer holds about the brand. The linkages, which can also be called brand associations, can be developed from multiple different sources such as brand experiences, products attributes, price information, positioning, marketing communications, packaging or user imagery and

usage occasion. These brand associations can be influenced by marketing tools, such as sponsorship. If a brand is sponsoring an event or a celebrity, for example, it is possible that through linkages the pre-existing associations that the consumer has towards the event or celebrity transfer to becoming a part of the brand associations of the sponsor. So in cases like these, the image of the event or celebrity is transferred to the sponsoring brand. If a company is trying to change the brand image of their products to become younger and fun for example, sponsoring music festivals could be a good decision, as was shown by findings of Rowley and Williams (2008).

There should always be congruence between the event and the sponsorship brand. Because of the varied nature of the different music festivals that are held in Finland, not every event will be suited best for every brand. When marketing managers are planning which festival to sponsor, demographic factors should be taken carefully into consideration. Audience demographics can be very different between two festivals, for instance, Pori Jazz festival and Weekend Festival in Helsinki. Companies that are contemplating sponsorship need to think which event will reach their specific target audience the best. (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999)

When looking at the associations between the event and sponsor, it is important to examine what is it precisely that builds congruence for their brand images? One aspect of it is the product relevance to the sponsored event. How similar or dissimilar is the product or service to the sponsored event? According to Gwinner and Eaton (1999, p. 49) McDonald (1991) suggests that product relevance can occur in two ways, either directly or indirectly. Direct relevance means that the products of the sponsoring brand are being used in the event. For instance, if a guitar manufacturer sponsors a music festival or sports drink sponsors a marathon. Indirect relevance will occur through image correspondence between the sponsor and the event. According to Gwinner and Eaton (1999, p. 49) Gwinner (1997) uses the terms functional based and image-based similarity, for describing the same phenomena of product relevance.

Considering the indirect relevance or image-based similarity, Gwinner and Eaton (1999, p. 49) give an example of Cadillac Automobiles sponsoring the Master's Golf

tournament. In this case, they both share an image of prestige and quality. Gwinner and Eaton (1999, p. 49) hypothesise that the image transfer will be stronger when the similarity between the sponsoring brand and the event is based on functionality, compared to a situation where no similarity occurs. The same applies if the similarity is based on image or is indirect in its nature, image transfer will be stronger than when no similarities occur. The research results show that both of these hypothesises are supported by the empirical data. It was also found that functional, or direct, similarities will build stronger image transfer than image-based similarities. (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999)

The aspect of sponsor-event congruency has also been studied by Hutabarat and Gayatri (2014). They as well came to the conclusion that stronger congruency between the sponsoring brand and the festival will result in better attitudes towards the sponsoring brand by the festival attendees. These findings are in line with the findings of Gwinner and Eaton (1999). Based on both of these findings we can conclude that if the goal for sponsorship is a change in image, a change in positioning or image transfer, congruency and some kind of similarity between sponsor and event is vital in reaching those goals. The results from the study by Hutabarat and Gayatri (2014) show that positive attitudes toward the sponsors brand image will impact purchase intentions. Increased sales will most likely be a goal for all companies, and now it has been established that image changes through sponsorship are one option for doing it.

Gwinner and Eaton (1999) conclude from their research paper that brand positioning goals may be reached with event sponsorship. However, it requires careful measuring and examining of the target audiences perception of the event's brand image. The event's brand image needs to be positioned in a way, which is in line with positioning goals of the sponsoring brand. If a suitable event is available and the sponsorship is done correctly, image transfer can occur. A suitable event is such, which will have either functional similarities or image-based similarities with the sponsoring brand. The findings from Gwinner and Eaton (1999) show that if there are no similarities with the event and the sponsoring brand, image transfer is unlikely. In order to increase the likelihood of image transfer, the sponsoring company should adjust their other marketing communications to integrate with the

upcoming event. On the other hand, if the goals of sponsorship are only to increase brand awareness, image similarities are not that important.

According to Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009), who furthered the research on image transfer, taking the image aspect of sponsorship to account is very important. Based on their more recent study, company managers should realise that brand image matters even more than was thought before. Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009) emphasise that sponsoring companies need to make an effort to understand event image through the eyes of those market segments the brand is trying to reach. Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009) also further confirm that a right fit between the event and sponsoring brand will improve the effectiveness of the sponsorship. In their research paper, they empirically prove that image transfer will be stronger among those consumers who perceive a good fit between event and sponsor. It should be said again that it is unclear whether this is also true in the context of music festivals since this particular part of the study was done with fans of NFL (National Football League) teams.

When event selection is being made, company managers should strive to segment consumer into specified groups and then target the groups which contain the most potential customers. Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009, p. 3) suggest that segmentation could be done based on whether a consumer can be considered a high or a low identified fan. Highly identified fans could be targeted customised messages that emphasise the in-group status of the sponsor. Whether this type of segmentation is possible in music festival selection is not clear. It would be difficult to segment festivals based on which ones have a more significant number of highly identified fans and which ones have a lower number.

Because of the lack of literature on music festival sponsorship, the literature on sporting event sponsorship has been utilised in order to examine the theory and the latest trends in sponsorship in general. There are many similarities between music events and sports events, so it could be reasoned that many of the theories and empirical findings would also be applicable to music festival sponsorship. In both events, the attendees come there to watch entertainment often in a large crowd of people. The sponsoring brands are also often similar, for instance, food and

beverage brand are often present of both events, partly because the event's audience will most likely consume food and drinks during the event. This makes sporting and music event very suitable events to sponsor for food and beverage companies.

In their research paper, Choi et al. (2011, p. 7-8) suggest that companies who sponsor sporting events can gain many benefits from, it including brand awareness, brand enhancement, brand loyalty, organisational promotion and sales increase. Brand awareness is definitely an outcome of sponsorship that has been brought up by many other researchers as well. For instance, Kotler and Keller (2006) had brand awareness as one of the main reason for using sponsorship and Rowley and Williams (2006) found from their study that 44% of music festival attendees experienced at least some change in brand awareness towards the sponsoring brands. On the other hand, whether sponsorship will lead to sales increase has been somewhat inconsistent in the literature. Some authors do argue, like Skinner and Rukavina (2003) that sales can increase as a result of sponsorship but Rowley and Williams (2006) came to the conclusion that it did not affect sales. Then again it should be pointed out that some authors are talking about sponsorship in general and some specifically music festival sponsorship.

If the goals of sponsorship are to reshape or reposition the brand image of a product or service, can those actions lead to purchase intention or purchase behaviour? According to Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009, p. 8) through image transfer, it is possible to affect purchase intentions. They asked their study participants two questions regarding the effects of sports sponsorship on purchase intentions, which were: "When you shop for products or services, how often do you purposely look for those sold by sponsor of ___ football?" and "In general, how much does the fact that a firm is a sponsor of ___ football enter into your buying decision when you are shopping for products?". The results from these questions indicate that a significant positive effect was made to purchase intention with image transfer. These results should be taken into account by company managers when considering festival sponsorship, especially the fit between event and sponsor is essential.

Choi et al. (2011, p. 9) propose customer purchase intention as one of the most important factors that marketing can affect. Therefore according to them, also sponsorship should aim to change customer purchase intentions. According to Choi et al. (2011, p. 12) Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined purchase intention to represent an individual's propensity to consume depending on the internal or external motivation for future behaviour. Sponsorship should be constructed in a way that the effect on consumers' motivation for future purchase behaviour is maximised.

According to Choi et al. (2011, p. 12), Lapio and Speter (2000) stated that 70% of Nascar fans displayed purchase intention towards sponsoring brands aligned with Nascar. This shows that at least in the context of sports fans, sponsorship can have a significant effect on purchase intention. Unfortunately, this statistic cannot be applied similarly in the context of music festival sponsorship. The difference is in the type of fandom. A sports fan is most often a fan of a particular team or athlete, and when they see a brand sponsoring their favourite team, purchase intention could increase. However, when it comes to music festivals, the attendees are most likely not fans of the festival itself but rather the bands and artists that are performing at the festivals. So if a brand is sponsoring the festival, it will not have the same emotional connection with the attendee because the sponsorship is not with the object of his/her fandom.

The findings from Choi et al. (2011) study demonstrated that there is an overall positive perception towards the event sponsors. The event participants acknowledge that sponsors will provide a better service to the event. These findings support what Anderton (2011) pointed out in his paper. As the costs of organising a festival have escalated, the festival organisers have had to turn to sponsorship in order to keep the ticket prices affordable. Factors that have contributed to the rising ticket prices include licensing fees, security, insurance, artist fees, on-site technologies and elaborate stage shows. Choi et al. (2011) did not specifically find whether their study participants realise that sponsorship will keep ticket prices low, but it could be so since the overall perception for sponsorship was found to be positive. Choi et al. (2011) also found that the positive perceptions toward sponsorship will translate into purchase decisions of sponsors products or services.

As purchase decisions have been made, the behaviour could potentially develop into brand loyalty.

Is it possible that music festival sponsorship could have negative consequences for the sponsoring company? Many of the biggest festivals in Finland have artists performing who are from the so-called indie scene. The history of music festivals is also rooted in non-commercial and somewhat leftist ideologies. Although many of the world's most prominent popular music artists also perform at these festivals, a large portion of the crowd comes because of the smaller independent artists. Could the corporate sponsorship manifest in negative attitudes toward the brand by these audience members? Cummings (2008) interviewed festival organisers in her research paper, and one of them said that the sponsors have to make sense and fit the festival. Once again similarity and congruency come into play because if they are high, festival attendees will perceive sponsors as less commercialised. Even if some festival attendees would find sponsors as a negative aspect, most people living in modern western societies are exposed to thousands of marketing messages every day so going to a festival would just be more of the same, and they would be able just to ignore most of it.

The study participants, who were festival attendees, of Cummings' (2008) also, recognised that sponsors would keep ticket prices lower. To counter this notion that festival attendees could reject the sponsors because of over-commercialisation is the proposal made by Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009) who argue that image transfer will be stronger among high-identified fans. So what is a high-identified fan in this context? Again this study was focused on sports sponsorship, so a high-identified sports fan displays long-term loyalty to their favourite team and supports them with both their time and financial commitments. These types of fans often develop an in-group mentality, which includes the athletes or team that they are supporting, coaches and other fans. The members of the in-group will be perceived as very positive, and it is possible that brands that are sponsoring the athletes or team will also be included to the in-group. This will lead to significantly higher image transfer from event to brand compared to low-identified fans. Based on this it could be speculated that the same is possible among music fans. If a company is sponsoring a festival, will the image transfer goals be more successful among high-

identified fans? Unfortunately, empirical data about this is not available at the moment.

4. CONNECTING THE THEORIES

Now that we have taken a close look at the literature of both customer brand engagement and music festival sponsorship we should see how they fit together in the context of this research. There are multiple theories and models that have been discussed mainly on the side of customer brand engagement. Fitting them all together would be rather challenging. So the conceptual model created by Van Doorn et al. (2010) was chosen from customer brand engagement for bringing the theories together. This same model was also utilised in the theoretical framework of this study. From the model, we will specifically examine the antecedent factors of customer engagement in the context of music festival sponsorship.

From the sponsorship side of the theories, we will examine some of the most common goals for sponsorship. Event-sponsor congruency is also an aspect that will be discussed and how it relates to the model developed by Van Doorn et al. (2010). Event-sponsor congruency has been researched by Hutabarat and Gayatri (2014) and Gwinner and Eaton (1999) as were seen previously. We will also discuss image transfer, which has also been researched by Gwinner and Eaton (1999).

As was mentioned previously, the antecedent factors from Van Doorn et al. (2010) model include customer-based, firm-based and context-based factors. Some of the most important factors affecting customer engagement according to Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 256) are attitudinal antecedents, satisfaction and trust/commitment for example. If a festival attendee is very satisfied with his/her festival experience, further engagement with a sponsor brand is probably more likely. The specific goals of the sponsoring company will obviously play an important role as well. The sponsorship must be implemented in a manner that will enable the festival attendee to experience the brand and experience potential satisfaction as a result. If the sponsoring brand is already familiar to the festival attendee, additional trust/commitment is possible to gain from a well-executed sponsorship. Trust/commitment can also form as a result of image transfer. If the festival's brand image is very trustworthy, it is possible that a consumer will see the sponsor in a

similar light. For image transfer to happen the festival and sponsoring firm must have congruency. If the two do not fit well together the forming of trust/commitment towards a sponsor brand is unlikely, and so customer brand engagement will not happen after the festival. Alternatively, there will not be an increase in it if some engagement is already happening.

The identity of the consumer is also a factor that will have an effect on engagement in a music festival environment. It could be a hindering or completely inhibiting factor at a music festival. Companies, who produce alcoholic drinks a relatively common type of sponsor at a music festival, just like one of the case companies in this study. If the consumer identifies as someone who does not drink alcohol at all, this will obviously prevent engagement with alcohol brands. Then again it is entirely possible that the same person would be glad to engage with a brand like Paulig. This person could be positively surprised to be able to buy high-quality coffee products at a music festival, where so many people are drinking alcohol. In order for engagement to happen, in many cases, the consumption goals of the consumer need to be fitting. At music festivals, many companies are looking to engage with consumers by selling their products. So if the consumption goal of the festival attendee does not fit what the sponsoring brand is offering, engagement will be less likely to take place.

The last two factors from the customer-based antecedents are resources and perceived costs/benefits. In a festival context, the consumer will obviously have to have the resources to attend a festival. Resources will also play a role during the festival, for example, how much money is a festival attendee is willing to spend. More spending will ultimately manifest as more brand engagement. Then there are sponsors that do not sell their products at the festival, which means that resources are not as much of a limiting factor for engagement. At music festivals, consumers have to also weigh the costs/benefits of how they spend their time. Often the choice might be whether to see a performance or to engage with some of the sponsoring brands. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

Now we can move on to the firm-based antecedent factors for customer brand engagement. In a festival context, brand characteristics and firm reputation are probably the most influential. Brand characteristics will have a significant role in

event-sponsor congruency. As was discussed earlier, a good fit and congruency between the event and sponsor will have a positive effect on customer brand engagement. Brand characteristics are also something that managers need to take into account when planning music festival sponsorship and its goals. Whether the goal for sponsorship is increasing brand awareness or image transfer, brand characteristics will play a role in it. The characteristics of a brand will also influence which festival is the right one to sponsor, in terms of the target audience. If the audience perceives the characteristics are fitting to the festival, engagement could be more likely. (Van Doorn et al., 2010)

In the conceptual model of customer engagement behaviour, Van Doorn et al. (2010) include firm size to the antecedent firm-based factors of engagement. In the context of music festival sponsorship, as long as the there is good congruency between the event and sponsor firm size should not be a significant limiting factors for engagement to form. If the sponsor type is a co-sponsor for example, the company does not have to be large in order to successfully implement the sponsorship (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, p. 3). Firm industry is the last firm-based factors listed by Van Doorn et al. (2010). The industry where the company operates does determine whether festival sponsorship could be a viable form of marketing for the firm. Firms that operate only in business-to-business industries are most likely not going to utilise music festival sponsorship since the festival audience consists of mostly consumers.

Lastly, we will take a look at the context-based antecedent factors from Van Doorn et al. (2010) conceptual model, competitive factors being the first on that list. These factors are related to event selection and event-sponsor congruency. Companies that are planning music festival sponsorship should be aware of what other sponsors the festival will have and what types of roles the other sponsors are playing at the festival. If a direct competitor is going to sponsor a specific festival, it would probably be smart not to try and sponsor the same one. Doing it could be risky, and it could lead to decreased customer brand engagement.

The context-based factors also include political, economic/environmental, social and technological elements. Political factors could be influential to engagement if

the music festival has a lot of artist/bands that have a political message in their music. This is relatively rare in mainstream music festivals, but it should be considered by the sponsoring companies. Environmental factors are something that sponsoring companies can utilise in order to demonstrate their corporate social responsibility. If the festival itself has a reputation for being very environmentally conscious, the sponsor can strive for image transfer where that reputation will attach to them in the eyes of the consumers. (Van Doorn et al. 2010)

5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the designs, structure and methods of this study. It is important to clearly set the designs and methods so that the purpose and expected results can be correctly understood. This chapter will also help the forming of a complete picture of the empirical part of the study together with the empirical findings and the conclusions. Firstly, the research context will be discussed to clarify the purpose, environment and subjects of the study. The second part of the chapter will focus on the data collection methods. In that section, the reasons for choosing the particular data collection methods will be discussed and also why the case companies were chosen. The third part of this chapter is where the case companies and the interviewees are introduced and presented. The fourth part of this chapter will talk about how the empirical data will be analysed. Finally, in the fifth part of this chapter, the reliability and validity of the study will be discussed.

5.1. Research context

This study takes a look at companies who have been sponsors of music festivals in Finland and the different operations surrounding the event sponsorship. Mainly the study will analyse the connections that are formed between the sponsoring companies and their customers as a result of music festival sponsorship. This specific market and the type of marketing will be a major determining factor on what type of study methodologies can be utilised. This business environment will also greatly narrow down the potential companies who would be eligible to participate in the study. Although the number of large music festivals held in Finland is relatively large, the amount of sponsoring companies is still small compared to many other markets.

This study will be conducted as a qualitative research. Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 25) describe qualitative research as a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. So there is a

clear contrast to the quantitative research methods which focus more on analysing numbers or other forms of larger data samples. Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 279) further explain the nature of qualitative research as being inductivist, constructionist and interpretivist, although not all of these attributes must be in use in order for a study to be considered qualitative. The inductive aspect of qualitative research is based on the relationship between theory and research, more specifically where theory is generated out of research. The constructive aspects of qualitative research detailed by Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 280), imply that social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals rather than a phenomenon which is separate from the ones involved in its construction. The last aspect mentioned by Bryman and Bell is the interpretivist nature of qualitative research. It shows a contrast from the natural scientific model of quantitative research because the focus is on the understanding of the social world through examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants. Following this logic, it could be said that qualitative research can be less accurate compared to quantitative since there is the aspect of interpretation by the researcher.

Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 220) describe qualitative research as something where your research question will increase your understanding of a particular issue, as long as the questions are "why" or "how" questions. According to Maylor and Blackmon qualitative research is important since research in business and management deals not only with organisations but also with people that are in them and people as individuals, for example, customers. People will attribute and attach meanings, thoughts and feelings to the situations in which they find themselves in. These meanings, thoughts and feelings can be challenging to analyse utilising quantitative methods. The social structures and environments that people operate in are different from the physical objects and systems that are studied mostly in the natural sciences. These are the reasons why qualitative research is important.

Since this study will analyse the sponsorship operations of three companies, utilising a qualitative study method was the best option it. Examining only three companies and their marketing strategies will not produce a large number of data that could be usefully analysed with quantitative tools. The data that was gathered from the company interviews are mostly not in numerical form. That is also one of the reasons

why a qualitative research approach was chosen. As Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 25) stated in their book, usually qualitative research emphasises words rather than quantifiable data. The definition by Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 220) similarly supports the choice of a qualitative research approach. The research questions of this study are all "why" or "how" questions.

Although qualitative research is often implemented in an inductive manner, this study follows much closer to the deductive research principles. The goal of this study is not to form new theory, but rather to be theory and literature based. After there is a comprehensive understanding of the current literature, the empirical findings can be compared to them. The new information that should come from this study is based on the fit between the existing literature and the context of music festival sponsorship in Finland.

This study can also be described as a case study. Although the study includes multiple cases, or companies, calling it a multiple case study is not necessarily mandatory. For example, Robert Yin (2003, p. 46) categorises single-case studies and multiple-case studies under the same umbrella of case studies. His general description for case studies is: *case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.*

So why was the method of case studies chosen over other available study types? According to Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 121) the case study approach is suitable if the goal of the study is to investigate in depth a particular case or cases which can be clearly identified as a bounded system. They continue to describe case studies as valuable if capturing the complexity of a phenomenon including its intricacies and its context is important. The data collection methods that Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 121) most commonly associated with case studies are interviews, observations and other documents. Based on this description I believe that the case study method is clearly the best option for this research.

5.2. Data collection methods

The companies that participated in this study were chosen on the basis that they all sponsored some of the biggest music festivals in Finland during the summer of 2018. Since there were only three case companies, it was vital for this study that festival sponsorship was something that the companies took seriously and wanted to invest in. This made the collected empirical data more valid. Another criterion for the chosen companies was that the interviews could be done in Helsinki. This made the data collection faster and more efficient. Also the fact the three companies operate in different industries and are varied in terms of their size, brings a bit of diversity to the data.

The primary data for this study was collected from three semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview can be described as an interview where the questions have been determined beforehand, but the interviewees are free to give answers as narrowly or widely as they want. According to Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2008, p. 47), the interviewer is free to change the order of questions in a semi-structured interview, although in this study the main questions were kept in the same order. Small additional questions were used between the main questions in some of the interviews. The decision to use semi-structured interviews was based on the nature of the research questions and the number of interviewed companies. In order to get the best understanding of the reasons behind the actions done by the companies, the interviewees had to have the freedom to talk about them in an elaborative manner. A structured interview would have been too limiting for a study like this. Constructing a structured interview with pre-set answers would have been very difficult in this situation because of the lack of detailed knowledge about the companies that were chosen for this study. The only known fact was that all these companies had sponsored music festivals during the summer of 2018. On the other hand, using unstructured interviews would have been too free form. In order for the data to be comparable between the companies, it was best to have some structure to the interviews and to keep the main questions the same.

The second primary reason for choosing the semi-structured interview style was that there are only three companies taking part in this study and the collected data was qualitative. According to Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 239), structured interviews are close to survey questionnaires and for that reason are rarely used in qualitative research. If the number of participating companies was much higher and the research questions were in a different form using structured interviews could have been feasible. However, when the study's empirical part includes three companies, it is vital to gain as much data from each of them. This is also why semi-structured interviews were the best option.

According to Ghauri and Grönhaug (2005, p. 132), unstructured and semi-structured interviews demand more skill from the interviewer. Because in structured interviews the questions and the multiple answer options are determined beforehand, they require less input from the interviewer. In semi-structured interviews, we might often obtain information about personal, attitudinal and value-laden material and the interviewer must be ready to react to these materials accordingly. This leads us to one of the advantages of structured interviews, there is uniformity between the interviews and they are easily replicable. On the other hand, unstructured and semi-structured interviews have the advantage of discovery. The interviewer can ask subsequent and additional questions in order to enrich and expand the data collected.

The interviewees were chosen to this study based on their positions in the companies who have been sponsors to music festivals in Finland during the recent years. The interviews were done Helsinki during September and October in 2018. Marianna Mänttäri from Paulig was interviewed on the 21st of September in Vuosaari at the company headquarters. Henry Ahlavuo from Vallila Interior was interviewed on the 2nd of October in Vallila at the company headquarters. Mikko Koskinen from Kyrö Distillery Company was interviewed on the 5th of October in Punavuori at the company's Helsinki office. All of the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

5.3. Introduction of case companies

Paulig (Oy Gustav Paulig Ab) is a Finnish company that mainly focuses on the production and selling of coffee products. They also sell ready to drink coffee and chocolate products, filter papers and services. The company was founded in 1876 in Helsinki. The founder Gustav Paulig was a German-born businessman who moved to Finland and started to import colonial goods such as salt, spices, flour and coffee. The company became quickly successful thanks to the vision of its founder. Gustav Paulig understood the importance of branding from the very beginning, and that is something that is still present in the core of the company. (Paulig, n.d.)

Today Paulig is the biggest company in its market in Finland, and it also operates in the Baltic countries, Russia and its neighbouring countries, Sweden and Norway. The company is a part of the Paulig Group, a family-owned corporation in the food industry. They also have multiple other well-known brands in the foods and snacks industry. Paulig has three coffee roasters which are located in Helsinki, Tver, Russia and Porvoo. The company has approximately 590 employees, and its annual sales are 353 million euros. (Paulig Group, n.d.)

The interviewee from Paulig was Marianna Mänttäri, who is a concept designer at the company. She is one of the people responsible for the music festival sponsorship that the company has done during the past few years. The interview was done in Helsinki on the 21st of September.

Vallila Interior (Oy Vallila Interior Ab) is a Finnish company that designs and sells interior textiles and interior design products. They also specialise in project interior design services. The company was founded in 1935 by a Swiss-born businessman Otto Berner. In the beginning the company was called Suomen Silkkituote Oy and they built their first own office building in 1939 in the neighbourhood of Vallila in Helsinki. In 1944 the name of the company was changed to Vallilan Silkkitehdas Oy, and their operations started to grow after the wars with the rest of the economy in Finland. In the early years the company produced mainly fabrics for clothing, such as fabric for sweaters and lining for coats. In the 1960's the company started to focus more on interior textiles and designs. The company name was changed to

Vallila Interior in 1987. The ownership and control of the company has stayed within the Berner family to this day. Mathias Berner, who is the grandson of the founder Otto Berner, is now the chief executive officer of the company. (Vallila Interior, n.d.)

Today the company operates in multiple countries, and they even founded a subsidiary, Interia International, to function as an export company. They also have an online store that sells products to all EU countries. In 2017 the company had 125 employees, and its annual sales were approximately 38 million euros (Vallila, n.d.). The interviewee from Vallila Interior was brand manager Henry Ahlavuo. He is responsible for the marketing of the company, which includes music festival sponsorship. The interview was done in Helsinki on the 2nd of October.

Kyrö Distillery Company (Rye Rye Oy) is a Finnish company that produces and sells alcoholic beverages, mainly gin and whisky. It was founded in 2012, but actual manufacturing started in 2014. The company was founded by three friends who wanted to start producing whisky and gin from rye. The idea came to them while being in a sauna and drinking rye whisky. Rye is probably the most Finnish of grains and rye bread is very popular in Finland. This is why the founders thought that there should be a Finnish whisky made of rye. (Kyrö Distillery, n.d.)

The actual distillery is in Isokyrö, which is located in the western part of Finland close to the city of Vaasa. The distillery was founded in an old dairy. Within the first year of producing gin, they sold about 5000 bottles. Next year in 2015 the business exploded because Napue Gin, the gin produced by Kyrö Distillery Company won an award from the International Wine and Spirits Competition for being the best gin in the world for gin & tonic drinks. Since then the company has experienced fast growth and has about 30 employees and a turnover of 4,5 million euros in 2017 (Kauppalehti, 2017). The products of Kyrö Distillery Company are sold in Alko and a great number of bars around Finland. (Kyrö Distillery, n.d.)

Today the company also has an office in Helsinki. Most of the sales and marketing operations are done in there. In order to grow even more internationally, one of the founders of the company has moved to the United States to gain access to the US market for the company. The interviewee from Kyrö Distillery Company was Mikko

Koskinen. He is one of the founders and responsible for marketing and branding in the company. The interview was done on the 5th of October in Helsinki.

All of the three companies participating in this study sponsored multiple music festivals in Finland during the summer of 2018. These festivals are some of the biggest music festivals in Finland with tens of thousands of visitors. Music festivals, in general, are very popular in Finland. According to Finland Festivals, which is a non-profit organisation that helps festival organisers, over 820 000 tickets were sold in 2017 altogether. (Finland Festivals, n.d.) This number of sold tickets is huge even though a couple of the biggest festivals in Finland are not included in their statistics.

The table below shows which festivals were sponsored by the companies in this study in 2018 and the attendance number of each festival.

Table 1. Music festivals that the case companies sponsored and their attendance numbers in 2018. (* attendance could not be found)

Paulig	Vallila Interior	Kyrö Distillery Company
Sideways, 26 000 (Sideways, 2018)	Sideways, 26 000 (Sideways, 2018)	Sideways, 26 000 (Sideways, 2018)
Ruisrock, 105 000 (Ruisrock, 2018)	Provinssi, 76 000 (Provinssi, 2018)	Provinssi, 76 000 (Provinssi, 2018)
Flow Festival, 84 000 (Flow Festival, n.d.)		Ilosaarirock, 65 500 (Ilosaarirock, 2018)
		Bättre Folk, *
		Superwood, *

From these attendance figures, we can see that sponsoring a large music festival has the potential for exposing many people to the brand of the sponsoring company. Depending on the type of sponsor a company is, music festival sponsorship can be a very cost-effective way of marketing in terms of the number of people that can be reached.

5.4. Data analysis methods

Since the interviews were recorded on audio, the first part of the data analysis was to listen and transcribe the interviews to text. In some forms of qualitative research transcribing text will include detailed descriptions about hand gestures, facial expressions and tone of the voice, but in this research that is not necessary, so the transcription will only include the words and sentences spoken by the interviewees. The spoken words by the interviewees were transcribed exactly as they were spoken, there was no summarising or paraphrasing. The interviews were done in Finnish so the transcriptions are also in Finnish, only when direct quotations were used the words were translated into English. (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 318)

Transcribing the interview data is important for many reasons. Firstly it will improve the precision of the data because it will be easier to access and to check after being transcribed into text. Secondly making comparisons between the case companies will be much more efficient. After all, comparing and finding similarities between the case companies is very important in terms of the final conclusions of this study. Taking direct quotes from the interview will also be faster and more efficient once the data is in text form.

According to Eskola and Suoranta (1998, p. 151), there are three ways qualitative interview data can be analysed. First, one is that the data is unravelled at the beginning and then the data is analysed guided by the intuition of the researcher. The second option is to firstly unravel the data and then coding it before starting the actual analysis. The third option for analysing interview data is to combine the unravelling and coding phases into one cohesive phase. In this research, the first option was utilised. The interview data was transcribed, which in this case is the unravelling phase, and then the data was analysed. Although most of the data analysis was done after all the interviews were completed, some simple analysis was possible to do already during the interviews. While interviewing three companies, it was possible to make observations about the commonality, recurrence or division of certain phenomenon. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2008, p. 136)

Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 316) point out that qualitative research has adaptable properties, which means that the results of an on-going analysis will inform and interact with your upcoming data collection. So when the data is collected from a series of interviews, the findings from the first one could justify making alterations to the subsequent interview questions or to adding new questions.

Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2008, p. 136) continue to describe the analysis techniques of qualitative data as non-standardised. Compared to the analysis of quantitative data, there are many more different ways of working. There is not one single method that is universally regarded as the best for analysing qualitative data. This means that there is a certain freedom for the researcher to try different methods and test which is the most suitable. The same is said by Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 317) as they point out that there are no rigid rules or stages for undertaking a process of qualitative data analysis. They advise researchers to follow the approach which best fits the overall study design and the nature of the data.

In this study, the data was analysed mostly based on the interviews questions. Since the interview questions were almost the same for all interviewees, they were a logical common ground to base the analysis on. Firstly each company's answers were analysed individually. Once the data was analysed separately, the next step was to compare them between each other. This was a way for finding out similarities and differences in the strategies of the case companies. The other base for data analysis is the theoretical chapter of this study. All the theoretical data gathered from books and scientific papers was compared to the empirical findings from real-world situations.

5.5. Reliability and validity

According to Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 91) reliability of research is the extent to which a research method like an interview or questionnaire will reproduce the same results when used more than one time. In other words who replicable the study is? How easily will the same results be found in another situation or context?

Reliability is a better indicator of quality for quantitative research than a qualitative one. This is because in qualitative research there are more variables in the collected data and the research is often context specific. By the very nature of qualitative research, the exact results would be difficult to reproduce. The researcher is interpreting words instead of numbers so the study conclusions will most likely be different even if the context and the empirical environment were similar.

Yin (2009, p. 45) has a little different interpretation of what reliability in qualitative research is. He talks about it as if the exact same study were to be replicated that the findings and conclusions should be the same. Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 92) describe the situation as other researchers replicating the study with similar circumstances and conditions. So whether this study has good reliability depends on how reliability is defined. If the Daymon and Holloway approach is taken, it could be said that the reliability of this study is not perfect. Like it was stated before, there are so many variables involved in research, that if the study was replicated by other researchers in similar circumstances, differences could emerge between the findings.

On the other hand, if the Yin approach would be taken, the reliability would be much better. When the empirical data was analysed, the amount of interpretation and paraphrasing was kept to a minimum. Transcribing the interviews word by word was one of the methods of trying to make sure that the characteristics and background of the researcher would not influence the findings and conclusions. Throughout the study minimising errors and biases was kept in mind, as if an auditor would check everything that was done. (Yin, 2009, p. 45)

The second important measure of quality in research is its validity. Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 92) describe validity as the soundness and rigour of the study. In terms of qualitative research, Daymon and Holloway describe two types of validity, which are internal validity and external validity. Internal validity *is the extent to which the findings and the research account accurately reflect the social world of those participating in the study and also the phenomenon which you are investigating.* According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), the only way of ensuring internal validity is to show the study findings to the study participants, only they can

judge it. In this case, the study findings will not be shown to the participants before publishing the whole research. External validity *or generalizability exists when your findings and conclusions are applicable to other contexts, settings or a larger research population.*

Yin (2009, p. 40) also describes internal and external validity as quality measurements for qualitative research, but he also adds a third type, which is construct validity. Yin's definition of construct validity is *identifying correct operational measures for the concept being studied.*

As for the validity of this study, definite conclusions are difficult to state. I believe that it is easier to claim that the internal validity of this study is on an acceptable level if compared to the external validity of the study. To say that the findings would not reflect the social world of the study participants would mean that the interviewees were lying during the interviews and I find that highly unlikely. The case companies represent companies that have sponsored many of the biggest music festivals in Finland, so in that sense, their operations should not be very unusual or out of the ordinary.

External validity is harder to demonstrate. Since the empirical population only includes three companies, generalising the findings is difficult, although the companies do represent different firm sizes when it comes to music festival sponsors. This does give the study results some generalizability. However, whether the findings of this study are applicable to other contexts, for example, the sponsorship of other types of event is impossible to say.

6. FINDINGS

In this chapter of the thesis the empirical findings of the research will be unravelled and analysed. The results from the interviews will be looked through and compared to the theories that were discussed earlier. Differences between the three participating companies will also be discussed in this chapter.

6.1. Engagement through festival sponsorship

The reasons behind why companies decide to become sponsors of music festivals seems like a logical point to start going through the empirical findings. Just as with any other marketing operation the reasons or goals for doing it can vary greatly. Some of the most significant reasons for event sponsorship were listed by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592), as was written in the theoretical chapter for sponsorship of this thesis. If we reflect the empirical findings from the case company interviews, we can see that most of the reasons listed by Kotler and Keller are true in these cases.

The first reason for event sponsorship listed by Kotler and Keller (2006, p.592) was: to identify with a particular target market of lifestyle. Based on the empirical findings, we can say that this reason is also one of the reasons for all three case companies to make sponsorship a part of their marketing strategy. For Paulig, one of the reasons for sponsorship was to identify with a younger consumer base. Demographic targeting is one of the best ways of utilising sponsorship since the audiences can be very demographically similar in a certain music festival. Paulig wanted to reach a younger target audience, so they decided to sponsor Ruisrock. Ruisrock has a much younger audience when compared to some of the other big festivals in Finland, although the audiences in many of the biggest music festivals will be younger than the general population.

Reaching the younger consumers was also one of the reasons for sponsorship that was mentioned by Vallila Interior. For Vallila Interior sponsorship was also about

maintaining the already existing younger consumer base. Based on the yearly operations of the company, summers are a good time to re-enforce customer relationships since it falls in between the spring and autumn seasons when the new collections are introduced to the market. The lifestyle aspect from the reason by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592) is also present is the mindset of Vallila Interior. Since the more common target audience for the company is a 40 to 55-year-old woman, sponsoring a music festival, they can attach a lifestyle to the brand that will seem more appealing to students for example.

For Kyrö Distillery Company the lifestyle aspect is more important than the demographics of the festival audience. One of the core brand values of Kyrö Distillery Company is "Rehellinen hifistely" which can be loosely translated as honest connoisseurship. It means that they appreciate people who are passionate about music, flavours or art for example. Music festivals will often attract people who are passionate about music, food and drink and who are willing to spend money on them. So Kyrö Distillery Company wants to identify their brand with the lifestyle of appreciation of arts and flavours. Although lifestyle is at the front and centre with sponsorship, the demographics of a festival must be kept in mind. Kyrö Distillery Company mentioned that one festival that was discussed and considered was Ruisrock. However, at this point, the company did not see it as a good fit, because the products of the company could have been seen as too expensive for the young audience. Expensive products would make the brand feel exclusive, but that is not part of the strategy of the company. Kyrö Distillery Company wants to feel inclusive to the consumer.

The second reason for event sponsorship listed by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592) was: to increase awareness of company or product name. This is something that again all three case companies wanted to achieve with music festival sponsorship. Increasing brand awareness is probably always a goal for most companies, and music festivals are a good place to target consumers who might not be familiar with a certain company or product. This is something that was specifically mentioned by Kyrö Distillery Company when asked about the reasons why they have decided to become sponsors for music festivals. They said that festivals have a lot of people

who do not usually go to bars that often, so a festival is an excellent place to reach that consumer group and thereby increase the awareness of the company.

Kyrö Distillery Company is also in a different position compared to the other two case companies, because they sell alcohol products. The Finnish laws and legislation limit significantly the marketing and advertising of alcohol products. That leaves a company like Kyrö Distillery Company very few options if they want to increase the awareness of their products. Taking the Finnish laws into consideration, festivals sponsorship is probably one of the most effective ways to market alcoholic products.

For Paulig, music festival sponsorship is a way to increase brand awareness. Although they have many different products and they have their own brands, the company wanted to approach festival sponsorship with the company's umbrella brand as the main focus. In addition to increasing the brand awareness of the company's brand, they also selected some products that they wanted to introduce to the target audience. One specific product that was chosen for festivals is Paulig's Frezza. Frezza is a cold coffee drink that is sold in small bottles and containers. A part of Paulig's strategy was to give away Frezza drinks at the campsite of Ruisrock. As was mentioned before, Ruisrock's audience is quite young when compared to some of the other biggest festivals in Finland. From the overall audience of Ruisrock, a larger section of young people usually stays at the campsite. Older people tend to prefer hotels and other types of accommodation. So by giving away Frezza drink at the Ruisrock campsite, Paulig could really connect and reach a young audience as it was in their goals for festival sponsorship. This action combines the first two reasons for event sponsorship listed by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592).

Vallila Interior also wants to increase brand awareness with music festival sponsorship. They mentioned that since the company does not have as many brick and mortar stores as they used to, doing festival sponsorship is a good way to keep brand awareness high among consumers. They also see music festival sponsorship as a cost-effective way of doing outside advertising, as they called it. Just like Paulig, Vallila Interior wants to make a connection to younger people with music festival sponsorship. Although they feel that young people have received their brand well,

they still want to increase awareness and simultaneously keep up the existing awareness among young people. From the two big festivals that Vallila Interior was a part of in the summer of 2018, Provinssi was the one that had the biggest potential for increasing brand awareness. Provinssi's audience is also a bit younger than that of Sideways.

The third and fourth examples of reasons for event sponsorship by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592) are also recognised from the empirical data. These two reasons are: to create or reinforce consumer perceptions of key brand image associations and to enhance corporate image dimensions. These are dimensions that also relate to the aspects of sponsor-event congruency (Hutabarat & Gayatri, 2014) and products relevance to the sponsored festival (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). All three case companies talked about that there needs to be a good fit between the company and the festival. A good fit between the brand images is especially important. Vallila Interior mentioned for example that the festival must feel cultural and artful. It cannot simply be only about partying and drinking alcohol. The image of being cultural and artful is something that by choosing the right festival to sponsor Vallila Interior can reinforce in the eyes of the consumers. When the festival's own image is also cultural and artful, the reinforcement is more powerful.

Product relevance is not necessarily directly that strong in the case of Vallila Interior, but their products can have indirect relevance. Direct product relevance in the case of music festivals could form if a music instrument manufacturer would be a sponsor. In the case of Vallila Interior, the indirect relevance occurs on the basis of their brand image. Just like Vallila Interior said in their interview they want to sponsor festivals with cultural and artful brand image dimensions. When a fit forms based on the image dimensions of the event and the sponsor there is indirect relevance. (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). According to Gwinner and Eaton (1999) direct relevance occurs when the products of the sponsoring brand are being used at the festival. The products of Vallila Interior are used as decorations and covers at the festivals they sponsor. So it could also be said that there is direct product relevance.

In the case of Kyrö Distillery Company, the aspect of image transfer was brought up. Image transfer was discussed in the theories of sponsorship. According to

Gwinner, Larson and Swanson (2009), a right fit between the event and sponsoring brand will improve the effectiveness of the sponsorship. This is something that has been taken into considerations at Kyrö Distillery Company. They have also thought about the specific image elements that can transfer at the festivals they have chosen to sponsor. At Provinssi the image transfer is related to the fact that the company's manufacturing facilities are located close to the festival area. This gives the brand a sort of local feeling and being a sponsor for a festival in that area will only reinforce that local image of the brand. From Ilosaarirock Kyrö Distillery Company is looking to transfer image elements such as being fun and brisk. They also point out that the people who are behind the festival have lots of love for what they do and this is something that also applies to Kyrö Distillery Company. Having passion and love for what you do is an image element that can then transfer to the brand of the company in the eyes of the consumers. Sideways is a new festival when compared to many others that have been discussed in this study. From there Kyrö Distillery Company wants to transfer an image of being fresh and new. Both the festival and the sponsoring company are quite new, so they are a good fit in that sense.

When asked about the importance of the festival's own image and how it relates to the brand images of Paulig's products, they said that it is very impactful. Paulig is looking to reinforce the images of their own brands as forerunners or trailblazers with festival sponsorship. This means that the festival must have the image of a forerunner and something that wants to innovate and reform. As a corporate image dimension, Paulig mentioned reliability. They want to work with festivals that have an image of being reliable, and they want avoid festivals that are famous for being poorly managed or for creating bad feelings for the festival goers. So working with music festivals that are seen as reliable from the perspective of the consumer, Paulig can also reinforce their own corporate image as being a reliable company.

Now we can take a look at how these reasons and strategies for sponsorship can manifest as customer engagement. In the theoretical chapter for customer engagement, there is a reference to Patterson et al. (2006) who said that customer engagement can have presence in three different forms: physical, emotional and cognitive. Reflecting these presences to the reasons for music festival sponsorship, I believe it can be argued that emotional engagement is the strongest that can occur.

If we think about music festivals in general, we could say that they are full of emotions. Being surrounded by your friends and experiencing a concert of an artist you like can create strong emotions in a person. At best these emotions can include happiness, joy, love, excitement or fun. The sponsoring companies are then most likely hoping that on the basis of the emotions that people are feeling at the festival would form emotional engagement with their brands. If consumers attach the emotions that they feel at a festival to the sponsoring brands, it would probably increase engagement also after the event.

Physical engagement is obviously also possible to happen at music festivals. The reason for arguing that emotional engagement is the strongest that can occur is that simple physical engagement without any emotions attached to it will not have a lasting impression in the consumer. From the case companies in this study, Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company are the ones that can create physical engagement with the festival audience. This is because their products are sold at the festival. Vallila Interior does not sell their products in the festival itself they only have their brand and designs visible to the audience. Paulig has had their own pop-up coffee shop at the festivals that they have sponsored. When the festival audience buys coffee from the Paulig, they are physically engaging with the brand. Same applies to the products of Kyrö Distillery Company, the only difference is that they do not have their own stand or selling point. Kyrö Distillery Company works in cooperation with the bar that is responsible for the alcohol serving at the festival. However, similar engagement can still form because audience members can buy their products and enjoy their drinks at the festivals.

So what were the antecedent factors for the emotional and physical engagement that can form at music festival between the sponsoring companies and the festival audience? As we can recall Van Doorn et al. (2010) listed three antecedent factors, which were customer-based, firm-based and context based. All of these three have then multiple identifiable elements. The customer-based elements are satisfaction, trust/commitment, identity, consumption goals, resources and perceived costs/benefits. How do these elements reflect to the case companies of this study?

At least for Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company, the customer-based element of satisfaction is present. Consumers at music festival want to buy the products Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company are selling because they will get satisfaction out from them. The element of trust is most likely present with Paulig's customers. Paulig is the oldest and most well-known company from the three participating in this study. It means that a lot of people are already familiar with the brand and they trust it. When festival-goers see that Paulig is selling coffee there, they probably know trust what they are getting if they choose to buy one. Of course the same can be true for Kyrö Distillery Company as well, but there are fewer people who are familiar with their brand and who trust it.

The element of identity might be strongest with Vallila Interior and Kyrö Distillery Company. As a brand that designs interior fabrics, Vallila Interior could provoke engagement in consumers who identify as fashionable or trendy. For Kyrö Distillery Company the identifiable element in their brand could be the aspect of enthusiasm or being a connoisseur. Some people who like drinking whiskies or gin but don't want the most basic or common brands might feel they identify more with a brand like Kyrö Distillery Company's.

The element of consumption goals can be an antecedent for engagement with all three of the case companies and their customers. With Vallila Interior the difference is that consumer cannot buy the product at the festival itself. However, engagement can start or strengthen during the music festival which can later on manifest as a purchase. If the consumption goal of a festival goer is to get a coffee or a gin and tonic, for example, engaging with Paulig or Kyrö Distillery Company at the festival could very likely happen.

The next antecedent element of customer engagement is resources. Resources are something that can enable customer engagement to happen, or it can also be a limiting factor. In the context of music festival sponsorship, firstly the consumer must have the resources to attend a festival. Tickets to music festivals can be expensive, and other costs might include travelling and accommodation. For some people engagement simply cannot happen because of the lack of resources. Others, who have the ability to attend a festival, might be unable to engage with a brand because

of lack of time or money. Then again for many people resources are not a limiting factor and engagement can happen if other factors are in support of it. The last element from the antecedent factors, which is perceived costs/benefits, is similar to resources in a sense that it can be either increasing engagement or decreasing it.

The second group of antecedent elements listed by Van Doorn et al. (2010) were firm-based, which include: brand characteristics, firm reputation, firm size/diversification, firm information usage and processes and industry. Brand characteristics are very important in the music festival sponsorship context because they need to fit well with the festival. This relates to the brand image congruency that has been discussed earlier. If the brand characteristics are such that don't seem fitting to a music festival environment, consumers are less likely to engage with the brand. Companies like Paulig and Kyrö Distillery who sells beverages fit to a festival environment very well. At least in Finland food and drinks have become vital parts of a music festival, so consumers are expecting to get the same quality products as they do outside the festival in their normal lives. That is why Paulig's and Kyrö Distillery Company's brand characteristics fit music festivals well. Vallila Interior's brand characteristics are also fitting to a music festival but for different reasons. Their brand characteristics might include being cultural, artful, fashionable or youthful. These things, when coupled with the right music festival that appreciates them, will support customer engagement.

Firm reputation is something that greatly impacts whether a firm gets to even be a sponsor to a music festival. Vallila Interior mentioned that they have been invited to many festivals to cooperate and to sponsor. This would not be possible if the company had a bad reputation. Kyrö Distillery Company also needs good firm reputation since they cooperate with the bars that handle the alcohol serving at a festival. Obviously good reputation is also needed in the eyes of the consumers. Having a bad reputation would significantly hinder the likelihood of customer engagement. Firm size is also something that has an impact on the possibility of being a music festival sponsor. If the company is very small they most likely will not have the necessary resources to be a sponsor, at least to a major festival. Firm industry is the last element from the company-based antecedents. The industry that the sponsoring company operates in is very important.

Firstly it should be mostly in the business-to-consumer markets. Using music festival sponsorship as a marketing tool for business-to-business markets would not very effective since the audience at a festival consist of consumers. The industry should also be fitting to a festival environment. If there are similarities between the festival and the firm industry customer engagement is more likely. The industry should also be something that does not exclude part of the festival audience. If the industry is for only women or to a certain age group, for example, a large part of the festival audience is not within the target group of the company, and that would be a very inefficient way of marketing.

The last group of antecedent factors are the context-based elements. Those elements are competitive factors, political, economic/environmental, social and technological. Competitive elements in a festival sponsorship context are things that the company should consider. What other companies are going to sponsor the festival? At least the sponsor should avoid festival that already has sponsors from the same industry that they are operating in. Having to compete for the same customers in a festival setting would have an adverse effect on both companies. Political elements are the second group in the context-based factors listed by Van Doorn et al. (2010). Political elements are not very prevalent at music festivals, but it could be something that the sponsor needs to consider. A music festival might have artists performing who have a certain political message in their music. If this message is against what the company is doing, then sponsoring that festival would not be a smart decision because the festival audience might have the same political mindset as the artists do and customer engagement would be very unlikely.

Economic and environmental elements will always have an effect on consumer behaviour and the markets. However, at the moment at least in Finland, the situation is such that enables many music festivals to be successful, and many companies are happy to cooperate with them. Social and technological elements are very important and prevalent in terms of customer engagement. This is because of social media. Both the festivals themselves and the sponsoring companies use social media greatly as a marketing tool and to enable customer engagement.

This takes us to the actions that music festival sponsors do in order to increase customer engagement. Both Paulig and Vallila Interior use social media already before the festivals starts to inform and engage their customers. A festival ticket raffle is a very common method of encouraging consumers to engage with the brand before the festival. From the three case companies in this study, Paulig has been most active at organising ticket raffles. In the summer of 2018, Paulig used the hashtag #pauligfestarikesä to active their customers. In order to be eligible to win tickets to a festival, people needed to share a picture of themselves on Instagram using the hashtag #pauligfestarikesä, and they had to tag Paulig's Instagram page to the picture. As of now when writing this thesis, the hashtag has 1310 posts on Instagram. That means that Paulig got at least that many consumers to engage with their brand outside the festivals. Then of course when the people who follow the hashtag users saw the post, they also got exposed to Paulig's brand, so the impact was larger than just 1310 people. Paulig mentioned that they wanted to give each winner and their three friends tickets to the festival in order to make sure the winners would have a good time and to emphasize that drinking coffee is a social occasion.

Additionally, to the ticket raffles Paulig has a social media personality that is called Paulig's Paula. Paulig's Paula operates using Instagram and Snapchat where she has her own accounts. They call her an ambassador of good coffee. Paula's job is to share the latest news about Paulig's products and to connect and engage with customers. Paula operates year-round, but she was a big part of informing and engaging the customers about the festivals that Paulig sponsored during the summer. Paula would tell her followers a couple of days before a festival what would be happening there and she would give small reports during the festival as well. She also interviewed some of the festival organisers and talked about how they are taking into account environmental aspects in organising a festival for example. Paulig's Paula has almost 5000 followers on Instagram, and she is very active also with talking with her followers.

Vallila Interior has also had ticket raffles on social media, but they had a more straightforward approach to it. In order to be eligible, you only needed to like and share a post made by the company. Vallila Interior mentioned that they wanted to maintain a low threshold to get as many people as possible to engage with the brand

and to gain awareness quickly. In addition to the ticket raffles, Vallila Interior has used a multi-channel strategy to inform their customers about the upcoming festivals. Outside the usage of social media, Vallila Interior has another way of getting their customers to engage with the brand before the sponsored festival happens. The company produces tote bags, which all have different exclusive designs tailored to one festival. In the summer of 2018 Vallila Interior sponsored Sideways and Provinssi festivals, so they produced different tote bags for each festival. The designs will be done in a way which will complement the image and audience of the festival. The design for Sideways followed current trends closer since the festival is in an urban setting where a big part of the audience is quite fashion conscious. The design for Provinssi was more colourful and more approachable and better suited for a large mainstream audience.

In contrast, Sideways' design was a bit more challenging and suited for trendsetters. These same designs are used in the overall decorations and covers at the festival areas. The festival tote bags are sold before the festival happens in limited numbers. The idea of the bag is not to be a great sales success but rather a sort of fun collector's item that will simultaneously work as a method for increasing customer engagement.

At this point, we should take a look at what type of sponsors the case companies in this study are. As was mentioned in the theoretical chapter of this study, Skinner and Rukavina (2003, p.34) have created a list of six different sponsor types. These sponsor types are: title sponsor, presenting sponsor, in-kind sponsor, official sponsor, media sponsor and co-sponsor. Vallila Interior could be called an in-kind sponsor. That is because rather than simply exchanging cash for brand visibility at the festival, they use their services and products as the added value. This is still a beneficial exchange for both parties. The festival will get an exclusive design that will decorate the festival area, and Vallila Interior will get their designs and brand logo in front of thousands of audience members. Vallila Interior could also be categorised as a media sponsor. This is because their logo was featured on the festival web pages and they were mentioned on radio. Using radio was done in cooperation with a third partner, Basso Radio. They also used raffles to get the audience engaged. They would draw tickets and Vallila Interior's tote bags

alternately. Kyrö Distillery Company and Paulig operated mostly as co-sponsors in the festivals that they were involved with. This means that they were part of the festival with other sponsors. Being a co-sponsor seems like a cost-efficient type of sponsoring as long as there is a good fit between the company and the festival and the other sponsors are not in direct competition with each other. Along with being a co-sponsor, Paulig was also a media sponsor to the festivals they cooperated with. The media share of the overall sponsorship was done mostly through social media platforms. Paulig and the festival had agreed that the festival would mention Paulig in their own social media channels a number of times.

Now that we have taken a look at the reasons for music festival sponsorship and what actions the case companies have taken before the festival to engage with their customers, we should take a closer look at what happens in the festival when it is going on. Paulig's main method of interacting and engaging with consumers at a festival is their pop-up coffee shop. The pop-up coffee shop sold two types of filter coffee, espresso-based coffees and cold brew coffee drinks. The idea is to serve the festival audience high-quality coffee at an environment where people are generally not expecting to get it. As was mentioned before, Paulig also did some product giveaway, mainly with their Frezza brand line. First, one being at Ruisrock's campsite where in the morning they dispensed Frezza drinks to people who were waking up in their tents. The second occasion of giving out Frezza drink was at Flow Festival where Finnkino and Paulig had organised a pop-up movie theatre in cooperation. The audience members who went to see a movie there was given a Frezza drink. Lastly, Paulig also made agreements with the festivals that they would provide coffee drinks to the hundreds of volunteers who work there. A big portion of the volunteer workers are young, so they also fit Paulig's target audience for music festival sponsorship.

Ruisrock festival has a VIP area where Paulig was operating in. Paulig's Paula was also at the VIP area, and one of her missions there was to arrange a cold brew drink school for specific social media influencers. Social media influencers being persons who have significantly large social media following and they might work in cooperation with brands. Paulig did not have any contracts with the social media

influencers, but if they would share something in their channels, it would only be a bonus for Paulig.

From the theoretical chapter of this study, we can remember the integrated customer brand engagement model developed by France, Merrilees and Miller (2016). The model proposes two contributing drivers for customer brand engagement, which are the firm-led platform and the customer-centred influences. We can now take a look at how Paulig's strategy reflects to the firm-led platform from the model. The two main drivers in the firm-led platform are brand interactivity and brand quality. Paulig is definitely pushing for brand interactivity with their type of festival sponsorship. Because of the pop-up coffee shop, consumers can interact with the brand at the festival. As France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) define it, brand interactivity as the customer's perception of the brand's willingness and genuine desire for integration with the customers. I believe that music festival sponsorship in itself shows the brand's willingness to interact with the customers. It shows initiative and that the company wants to be active and literally be at the same place with consumers. One of the aspects that can increase brand interactivity is to have multiple channels for the brand to engage customers. This is something that Paulig is doing with its festival sponsorship. Next to the pop-up coffee shop, Paulig has a very strong social media presence, and they did two types of product giveaways. Using all these channels will reinforce the customer's perception that Paulig is indeed interested in engaging with them. Especially doing the product giveaways at Ruisrock's campsite in the morning is very powerful when it comes to brand interactivity. The more interaction happens between Paulig and their customers, more trust will form in the relationship which will hopefully lead to more engagement.

The second driver of firm-led brand interactivity is brand quality. Mitra and Golder (2006) defined brand quality as the representation of the customers' view of how well a brand meets their requirement and expectations. In the case of Paulig and in a festival sponsorship context, the company is trying to exceed the requirement and expectations of customers. One of the goals of the pop-up coffee shop was to offer customers high-quality coffee made by professional baristas. In the normal everyday life of consumer this is not necessarily something that would exceed their expectations, but in a music festival setting it is more unusual and it could lead to

people being positively surprised. Based on these observations we can say that Paulig is really doing its role in order to influence consumer perceptions of their brand and showing its willingness to engage with them.

Vallila Interior's approach to music festival sponsorship is quite different from what Paulig is doing. Possibly one of the biggest reasons for this is that Vallila Interior's products are very different in terms of their usage and consumption. Paulig produces and sells coffee which is consumed quickly and can be consumed almost anywhere. Vallila Interior designs, produces, and sells home interior products made from different fabrics. The life cycles of these products are much longer than that of a cup of coffee. This also makes the purchasing process different from buying some coffee. People will most likely spend more time evaluating different options when they are looking for interior products for their home. That is why it would not be smart for Vallila Interior to actually sell their products at a music festival. The company has instead focused on increasing their brand awareness and targeting certain consumer groups with music festival sponsorship.

When the festival is going on, the primary method of getting consumers' attention are the decorations and designs of the festival's appearance. The decoration included things such as the fences of the festival area, gates, mixing booths, stage decorations and building decorations. These designs are developed exclusively for the festivals and will not be used anywhere else, except for the festival tote bags that were mentioned previously. At Sideways and Provinssi festivals in 2018, at least some of the main gates to the area were decorated with large designs made by Vallila Interior. So when the festival attendees entered the area, they were immediately exposed to the brand and products of Vallila Interior. These designs will not only make the festival look more artful and nicer, but it will also connect Vallila Interior's image to the festival in the minds of consumers. Vallila Interior mentioned that they want to work with festivals that have an artful and cultural image, so working with them and being a part of the appearance of the festival they are increasing the artful image values of those festivals. The idea is not to simply have advertisements at the festival area but rather to be a part of the overall look of it and to improve the entertainment value.

In this age of cell phone cameras and social media, having the designs of a company all over the festival area will give them a lot of visibility. Many people share pictures from their festival experience on social media, and by having Vallila Interior's designs in the background, they will gain organic visibility and brand awareness. The brand logo is also visible at the festivals, but it is not a large part of the designs.

According to Vallila Interior, their designs are relatively recognisable in themselves, and many people will connect with the brand through social media. At Sideways festival, Vallila Interior had this thing called Funny Bunny Photoshoot. It consisted of two large cardboard rabbits that had the Sideways' exclusive design on them. One of the rabbits had a hole in its head so that people could place their faces in it and takes pictures. This is a way for the company to encourage the festival attendees to engage with the brand and to possibly share those pictures on social media in order to gain even more visibility for their brand. Apart from the festival decorations, Vallila Interior has not done anything else within the festivals. When asked about this subject they said that they have tried having a stand and a few people working among the festival audience, but the company has come to the conclusion that it is not the best option for them.

Although Vallila Interior has a significant role in the appearance of the festival, they still are mostly a co-sponsor. This means that they have to compete against other sponsoring brands for the attention and engagement of the consumers. According to Vallila Interior, many other sponsors will also put up their brand on a large wall or picture in order to gain awareness and visibility. So the challenge becomes how to stand out from the competition. As was discussed previously one the methods of standing out from the rest, is that Vallila Interior develops their designs exclusively to the festival and they take into account the festivals image and target audience.

Now that we an idea of what Vallila Interior does at festivals, we should see how their methods relate to the theories of customer engagement. As was done with Paulig, let's see how the integrated customer brand engagement model by France, Merrilees and Miller (2016) relates to Vallila Interior. Let's firstly take a look at brand interactivity from the firm-led platform. As was said about Paulig, only the fact that Vallila Interior has decided to make music festival sponsorship a part of their

marketing shows the consumers that they are willing to interact with them. The same type of physical interactions that happens with Paulig is not possible in the case of Vallila Interior since they do not sell their products at the festival. The interactions are more on emotional and cognitive levels. Physical interactions took place before the festival in the form of the festival tote bags.

In the case of Vallila Interior, brand interactivity at a music festival is really dependent on how consumers will perceive their designs and how much social media visibility will form. The Funny Bunny Photoshoot is one thing that is truly brand interactive. Since festival attendees are encouraged to take pictures with the cardboard rabbits, it shows the willingness and genuine desire of Vallila Interior to interact with consumers. Another method of interacting with consumers at Sideways festival was a raffle that was done in cooperation with other companies involved with the festival. The raffle was done with scratch tickets that had Vallila Interior's design and logo on it. Prizes for the raffle included tickets to other concerts, magazines and Vallila Interior products for example. The Funny Bunny Photoshoot and the starch ticket raffle are important in terms of brand interactivity because having multiple channels for it to take place will ultimately increase the possibility of positive perception by the consumers and lead to customer brand engagement.

The second driver in the firm-led platform is perceived brand quality. Higher the perceived brand quality is, more engagement will happen between a brand and its customers. Vallila Interior is trying to keep their brand quality high by developing their designs for the festivals and making them as good as possible. Based on music festival sponsorship only it is hard to determine what are the requirements and expectations that consumers have towards Vallila Interior's brand quality. Some of the audience members are probably positively surprised when they see the festival area and how it has been decorated. The expectations of those people can be exceeded and there for giving Vallila Interior higher perceived brand quality.

On the other hand, exceeding the expectations of people who are already familiar with the brand could be very hard. However, by doing music festival sponsorship, Vallila Interior can influence the emotions and feeling which people attach to their brand. This could then lead to brand engagement in the form of a product trial. If the

expectations that formed during the festival were met, it means that Vallila Interior's brand quality is on a good level.

Now that we examined the operations of Paulig and Vallila Interior we should lastly take a closer look at Kyrö Distillery Company's methods of doing music festival sponsorship and what happens during the festival. Their operation mainly revolves around cooperation with the bar that is responsible for the alcohol serving at a festival. The things that Kyrö Distillery Company is capable of doing at a festival are greatly dependent on the type of products that they sell. Just like we saw with Paulig and Vallila Interior, the type of product or service the company is offering will determine what kind of sponsorship is most effective for them to do. The most significant determining and in this case limiting factor on the type of sponsorship Kyrö Distillery Company is capable of doing are the Finnish laws and regulations on the marketing of alcoholic products. Especially products that have over 22 per cent alcohol, which most of Kyrö Distillery Company's products do. The Finnish law prohibits all marketing of those products except for a few exceptions. These exceptions include: (Valvira, 2015)

- advertising at a place of serving, resale or manufacturing
- a seller can publish a product catalogue or product prizes
- advertising targeted to sellers of alcohol
- advertising on foreign publications

These regulations leave the company with only one option really in the context of music festival sponsorship. They can only operate at a place of serving within the festival area. This is why they must cooperate with the bar that is doing the alcohol serving at the festival. Doing something similar that Paulig does at festivals like giving out products at a campsite, would be against the law.

In most cases of sponsorship, Kyrö Distillery Company has two methods of creating brand awareness and brand visibility at music festivals. The first one is having their brand logo visible to the festival audience. Because of the laws and regulations, the logo can only be at the place of serving. The company logo has been put on the back wall of the bar, and they have had large weather balloons over the bar with the brand logo on them. The balloons at least gave the brand visibility a little further than

just the close proximity of the bar. The second method for increasing brand awareness and also connecting to the consumers is what the company calls "puolesta kyröttäjät" or "Kyrö queuers". The idea being that these Kyrö queuers will stand in line for the customer and once they have reached the bar the customer will come and order the drink that they want and pay for it. So if there are long queues, the customer does not have to spend time standing in line and that way they can have more enjoyable festival experience. The Kyrö queuers have shirts on with the brand logo on them, so visibility is gained that way too. This is a very unique way of connecting with consumers and spreading positive emotions. Even if the customer did not buy a Kyrö Distillery Company's product after utilising a Kyrö queuer, they would likely attach positive emotions and images to their brand which can lead to engagement later on.

The Kyrö queuers are also the company's biggest method for creating brand interactivity at a festival. I believe that customer's perception of the brand's willingness and genuine desire for interacting and integrating with the customer can be greatly affected with the Kyrö queuers. Although setting up multiple channels or platforms for interactivity and engagement is very difficult because of the Finnish laws, using the Kyrö queuers really shows the consumers that the company is interested in them. The queuers did not have a set message that they were supposed to give to the customer but they did have knowledge about the products and manufacturing if the person was interested in discussing them. Brand interactivity is also formed at the bar when customers are buying Kyrö Distillery Company's products.

The perceived brand quality of Kyrö Distillery Company can also be affected by the Kyrö queuers. As Mitra and Golder (2006) defined it, perceived brand quality represents consumer's view of how well a brand meets their requirements and expectations. The Kyrö queuers are something that most consumers are not expecting, so it can lead to improved brand quality. The brand image transfer that the company is looking for from the festivals can also increase perceived brand quality. As the company is still relatively new, doing sponsorship for established and well-trusted music festivals can manifest as improved brand quality. If the festival is

well trusted and has a good reputation, this image can transfer to the brand of Kyrö Distillery Company.

Nevertheless ultimately the most vital factor of perceived brand quality is the actual products that the company is manufacturing and selling. Similarly to Paulig, Kyrö Distillery Company is hoping to offer festival goers high-quality products that they might not be expecting. The perceived brand quality will mostly be based on the perceived quality of the products themselves.

From these case company examples, we can conclude that the best methods of sponsorship are heavily dependent on the type of product or service the sponsoring company is offering. For companies like Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company who produce mostly drinks, selling them at the festival is an obvious choice. It seems that having something additional next to selling is a good decision, like Paulig's product giveaways at the campsite of Ruisrock or Kyrö Distillery Company's Kyrö queuers. For a company like Vallila Interior selling products at the festival was not the best choice. They have decided to utilise their core competence for sponsorship, which is the designing of fabrics that can be used as decorations all over the festival area. Normally the company designs and produces products that are used to improve the appearance and atmosphere of homes, so the same competence is used for music festival sponsorship.

Since we have now discussed what the case companies have done before the festival takes place and what happens during the festival, we should also take a look at what these companies are doing after the festival in order to gain the most benefits from it. Paulig and Vallila Interior both mention that they utilise reports that the festivals write after the event. From these reports, sponsors can get information on how much visibility they got during the festival and what kind of feedback they got from the festival audience. All case companies also said that is it very difficult to estimate what kind of effects the sponsorship had on sales or on activity on social media. Increasing brand awareness was a goal for all case companies, but measuring how it developed after a festival is almost impossible. Even if there are spikes in sales or in social media followers for example, direct causality is very hard to prove.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this final chapter of this thesis, the findings and results will be concluded and discussed. Firstly the study findings will be concluded in terms of the research questions that were set for this thesis. Then the theoretical contributions will be discussed. Practical implications and suggestions for future research will finalise this thesis.

7.1. Conclusions for sub research questions

The first sub research question will be the start of analysing and concluding of the findings. The first sub research question of this thesis is:

- How is social media used together with music festival sponsorship in order to enhance customer brand engagement?

According to the findings of this study, one of the most common ways social media is used together with music festival sponsorship is arranging ticket raffles before the festival. Paulig and Vallila Interior used this method for getting their customers active and to engage with the brand already before the festival happened. This is what Halaszovich and Nel (2017) call a pull strategy in order to gain social media following. This was the case with Vallila Interior, who used a pull campaign where they asked consumers to like and follow the brand's page in order to enter a ticket raffle. Vallila Interior's brand manager Henry Ahlavuo mentioned this in the interview: *There have probably been some really simple raffles with a low threshold on Facebook and Instagram with a like and share principle. With these festivals we have not had anything complex.*

With the ticket raffle Vallila Interior can get consumers to engage with the brand before that festival, but whether or not that will lead to further brand engagement on a longer time period is still unclear. If the requirement of taking part in the raffle is to

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like or follow Vallila Interior's social media page, how many people will unfollow them after the raffle in done? Still, the company decides to use them, since according to Henry Ahlavuo they are an easy and effective method for gaining fast visibility and awareness, and the festivals often offer them to their sponsors. So even if the company cannot guarantee any long-term benefits from organising ticket raffles, they are still worth doing since their cost is very low and they do not require much time or resources.

Vallila Interior also utilises social media in informing consumers about their exclusive festival products. As was discussed in the findings chapter, Vallila Interior produces tote bags that have the exclusive designs of a specific festival. Before the festival, the company will use multiple social media channels to let people know that the tote bags are available to purchase.

Paulig has also utilised ticket raffles in social media before the festivals took place. The main method for Paulig is their social media personality *Paulig's Paula (Pauligin Paula in Finnish).* As concept designer Marianna Mänttäri from Paulig mentioned: *In terms of festivals we have used our Paula as a communication channel and communication person for the last few years.* In addition to Paulig's Paula's social media channels, the company also uses the pages with their brand name in support of festival sponsorship. These channels are mostly used for posts when the festival is going on. This is similar to what Vallila Interior and Kyrö Distillery Company have also done. All three case companies in this study have posted pictures on social media during the festivals that they have sponsored. These posts are possibly not done in order to increase customer brand engagement but to have an effect on the image of the brand.

The way Paulig organizes their ticket raffles is a bit different from Vallila Interior. Their method demands more effort from consumers. In order to be eligible to take part Paulig's ticket raffle, consumers needed to share a picture on their own social media page using the hashtag #pauligfestarikesä and to tag Paulig's profile to that picture. There was also a specific theme that the picture needed to follow. In the summer of 2018 the theme was a summer highlight moment of happiness. In addition to sharing a picture on their own pages, people needed to follow Paulig's

page as well. The threshold for Paulig's ticket raffle was definitely higher than Vallila Interior's, but that possibly made the brand engagement a little stronger. At least Paulig's method reached a larger audience, since people needed to share a picture in their own pages their followers all were exposed to Paulig's brand.

From the three case companies in this study, Paulig was the most active user of social media during the festival that they were sponsoring. Paulig's Paula would make multiple posts on her Instagram stories and on Snapchat about what was going on at the festival. She operated almost like a reporter and shared the festival atmosphere to her followers. She also did some short interviews from the festivals and shared them on social media. In Ruisrock she interviewed one of the festival organisers, and they talked about how the festival is taking environmental factors into account.

At least Paulig and Vallila Interior have also considered the social media usage of the festival audience itself. Marianna Mänttäri from Paulig said in the interview: *We try to think of things that would look nice and interesting at our pop-up coffee shop, something that consumers would like to share (on social media).* Vallila Interior has considered the same thing, except that they are visible to the festival audience all over the festival area, not just at one or a couple of points. This is what Henry Ahlavuo said in his interview: *Yes we think about that our designs will act as backdrops for photos and it has worked great in terms of that. We have tried to include small and large elements to the designs in order for them to look good at close and also from afar.* By designing their festival appearances this way the companies hope to gain extra brand awareness through people's social media channels. Vallila Interior also had the Funny Bunny Photoshoot that encouraged festival attendees to take pictures of a cardboard rabbit that had the company's designs on it. These photos could be then shared through social media if the consumer so decided.

From these observations, we can conclude that most of the social media usage by the sponsoring companies is done already before the music festival takes place. Paulig was the only company in this study that mentioned social media usage after the festival had happened. Ticket raffles seem to be an often utilised method for

getting consumers to engage with the brand in relation to music festivals. It is a very cost-effective way of gaining short-term brand awareness, but its long-term contributions to customer brand engagement are difficult to prove. Another method of social media usage that all three case companies utilised are simple posts of pictures during the festival. These posts share the festival atmosphere to consumers who were not attending the festivals. Image transfer is a goal of music festival sponsorship for some companies, by sharing pictures during the festival, the brand image could be affected from the viewpoint of the consumer who is not attending that festival.

Now that we have concluded the findings in terms of the first sub research question, we can move on to the second sub research question in this thesis. The second sub research question:

- What are the most critical actions to take before and after the event?

This sub research question relates to the antecedent and consequential factors of customer brand engagement from the model by Van Doorn et al. (2010). As we conclude that findings regarding this sub research question, from the antecedents we will focus on the firm-based and context-based factors and from the consequences we will focus on the firm and other factors.

According to the empirical findings, it is very important to set specific goals for the music festival sponsorship. All three case companies had planned and evaluated what would be the best goal for the festival sponsorship they had decided to carry out. Whether it was to reach a certain target audience or to increase overall brand awareness, setting a goal for the sponsorship is something companies should do. The case companies in this study had goals that included reaching a young consumer audience, increase brand awareness, target specific products to specific target groups and image transfer from the festival to the company brand.

Informing the consumers about the upcoming festival is also something that all the case companies did. The most common channel for communication in these situations is social media, which was discussed earlier. Addition to the various social media channels, communication was done utilising radio, the festival's own

channels and web pages. Vallila Interior was the only case company that mentioned radio as a communication channel for promoting the festival. This was possible since Basso Radio was also cooperating with the festival that Vallila Interior was sponsoring.

Obviously there needs to be a lot of planning and preparing before the festival happens. Each of the case companies in this study will have different preparations since their method of implementing sponsorship is also different. Vallila Interior has to develop the designs that will be used to decorate the festival area. Paulig needs to set up a pop-up coffee shop and decide if they want to push any certain product from their large selection. Kyrö Distillery Company needs to make sure they have sufficient inventory, and they need to prepare for working together with the local bar operating the alcohol serving at the festival.

As for the most critical actions that companies take after the sponsored festival has ended, there were not many at least for the case companies in this study. Both Paulig and Vallila Interior mentioned that they analyse reports that they receive from the festival. These reports will give the sponsoring companies some feedback on how consumers perceived their brand, how many of the festival attendees noticed the brand or did the festival attendees perceive that the sponsoring brand brought some added value to the festival. Based on these reports the companies can then improve their future marketing operations and possible sponsorships. One problem that was mentioned by Marianna Mänttäri from Paulig was that festivals do not use the same reporting systems, so the results are not directly comparable.

When it comes to monitoring the impact that music festival sponsorship has on brand engagement, online for example, it is very difficult to draw definite conclusions about its effectiveness. Henry Ahlavuo from Vallila Interior said in his interview that the results for this type of brand advertising are very difficult to show in terms of brand awareness or engagement. However, he also mentioned that they have received positive feedback from the festivals and that the coverage of their brand has been good. None of the case companies in this study could give any definite numbers for example on how music festival sponsorship affected their social media following or customer contacts.

Paulig was the only case company that had marketing operations after the festivals that were directly related to the summer festivals. The company had made a challenge to itself and to their customers that for every cup of coffee that was sold during the festivals Paulig would donate the same amount of coffee to charity. The organisation that received the donation was Hope Ry, which helps children in disadvantageous or needy situations. Paulig's Paula then made the donation, and it was shared on her social media channels where she also thanked all the customers who had bought coffee from Paulig during the festivals.

From these finding, we can conclude that actions that need to be taken after the festival season has ended are scarce. Apart from analysing the reports that the festivals give to their sponsors, it seems that most companies will move on to other endeavours and utilising the past sponsorship for customer brand engagement is difficult. Whatever effects the sponsorship had on engagement, will take place mostly before and during the festival.

Now that we have discussed the first and second sub research questions we can take a closer look at the final one, which is:

- How does event selection influence customer brand engagement?

Festival selection and choice is something that all of the case companies mentioned as being very important. It can have a huge impact on the success of the sponsorship. The target audience of the company and the demographics of the festival audience are things that all three case companies have considered when selecting festivals for sponsorship. For example, the average age of the audience at a festival is very important to consider. Mikko Koskinen from Kyrö Distillery Company mentioned that they could not sponsor Ruisrock, which is one of the biggest festivals in Finland, because the audience there is mostly too young. The young audience could perceive Kyrö Distillery Company's products as too expensive, and that could affect the brand image as being exclusive. The company's goal is to be inclusive so sponsoring Ruisrock would not be in line with the company's ethos. On the other hand Paulig and Vallila Interior wanted to target the younger audience with their sponsorship, so they made their festival choices accordingly.

Another aspect that was mentioned by Paulig and Vallila Interior was the cooperation with the festival organisers. That is something that obviously needs to work well in order for the sponsorship to be successful. During the selection process, companies will look for festivals with good reputation and image in terms of cooperation with sponsors and other organisations. Smooth cooperation is also important since it can foster future opportunities as well. This has happened for Kyrö Distillery Company, they have made long lasting customer relationships with the bars that have been responsible for the alcohol serving at a festival. Later on, these bars have become distributors of Kyrö Distillery Company's products.

The brand and products of the sponsoring company need to suitable for the festival they are going to sponsor. This event-sponsor congruency was discussed earlier in the theoretical chapters of this thesis. As Henry Ahlavuo from Vallila Interior said, the festival's characteristics need to fit the brand characteristics of the sponsoring company. In the case of Vallila Interior, this means that they look for festivals that are more artful and cultural. The products or services that the sponsoring company offers also play a factor in festival selection. If we take Kyrö Distillery Company, for example, they produce alcoholic drinks, which mean that it would not be beneficial for them to sponsor a festival where the audience is mostly underaged because they are too young to buy the company's products. Paulig looks for festivals that have a reputation for being forerunners and for festivals that want to continually renew themselves and develop new things. These same values are attached to the brand of Paulig, so they look for festivals that share the same values and goals.

Overall we can conclude that festival selection is very important in terms of the success possibilities of sponsorship. According to the results of this study, there are multiple factors that need to fit and be in line in order to get the best benefits from music festival sponsorship. These factors include the audience demographics, cooperation between the festival organisers and the sponsoring company, festival reputation, brand congruence between sponsor and festival, festival characteristics and the festival audience's purchasing power.

7.2. Conclusions for the main research question

The main research question of this study is:

- How is music festival sponsorship used in increasing customer brand engagement?

As we have learned, the push for customer brand engagement starts well before the music festival takes place. The companies who are sponsors of music festivals will often start sending out marketing messages to consumers about the upcoming festival. They will try to get the consumer to engage with the brand already before the festival happens. The extent of these communication actions can vary greatly depending on the company and its goals. From the case companies in this study, Kyrö Distillery Company does not have extensive marketing communications about the festival before it happens. Of course in the case of Kyrö Distillery Company, there are limiting factors in the laws and legislation in terms of what kind of marketing they are allowed to do.

Social media seems to be the most commonly utilised channel for reaching and activating consumers before the festival happens. This is probably because of its cost-effectiveness and ease of use. So many people, especially from the younger generations, are using social media that it has become almost an obvious choice for many marketing operations in the business-to-consumer industries. In terms of how exactly social media is used for engaging consumer before the festival, according to the findings of this study, it seems that ticket raffles are among the most commonly used. These raffles may require the consumer to like or follow the brand's social media page, share a post by the brand or to share a post of their own with specific guidelines. These actions have relatively low thresholds, and many consumers will participate in the raffles in hopes of winning tickets to a music festival. All of the consumers who partake in the ticket raffles are essentially engaging with the brand that is organising the raffle. If the raffle requires the consumer to share a post on their own page, the post will be seen by a much larger crowd, and therefore there is the possibility of more brand engagement.

According to the findings of this study, another common method of using social media is to post pictures from the festival when it is going on. These posts are not necessarily meant to increase customer brand engagement at that moment like the ticket raffles are, but to shape the brand image and to show consumers that the company is willing to interact with consumers by participating to a music festival. Addition to pictures, posting short videos from the festival is also something that the sponsoring companies can do. From the case companies, it was Paulig that utilized this method. They shared for example interviews with the festival organisers and also videos that showcased the general atmosphere at the festival.

If we now take a look at the antecedent factors from the theoretical framework of this study, we can conclude how the empirical findings compare to the theory by Van Doorn et al. (2011). According to the findings the most important antecedent customer-based factors for customer brand engagement at a music festival, are consumption goals. Since the most common form of brand engagement at a festival is the purchase and consumption of goods, the consumption goals of a festival audience member are vital. From the firm-based factors, we can conclude that brand characteristics and industry are the most important elements that can enable brand engagement at a music festival. This is because the all case companies mentioned that there need to be a good fit between the event and the brand. If the brand characteristics or industry do not have anything in common with the festival's brand or the audience, customer brand engagement is less likely to happen. The most important context-based factor is difficult to identify since the case companies did not talk about these factors.

Now we can conclude the findings on how customer brand engagement is being formed at the festival when it is happening. If we look at the three types of customer brand engagements theorised by Patterson et al. (2006), the most prevalent type at a festival environment seems to be physical engagement. From the findings in this study, we can see that two of the three case companies offered their products at the festival and this happened through physical human interactions. Both Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company sold their products at the festivals they sponsored. This means that festival attendees were physically engaging with the brand by consuming the product. In a festival setting where consumers do not have as many

options of different goods to buy, selling your products will most likely lead to physical brand engagement by people who purchase products from the sponsor. Paulig and Kyrö Distillery Company also offered other types of human interactions between the brand and the consumer, Paulig with the product giveaways and Kyrö Distillery Company with the "Kyrö queuers". These actions made brand engagement possible even though a consumer was not purchasing products from Paulig or Kyrö Distillery Company.

Cognitive and emotional customer brand engagements are both possible for all three case companies. For example, since all the companies had their brand visible at the festival area consumer could have experienced engagement on these cognitive and emotional levels. This was the goal for Vallila Interior that had their brand and designs in sight at the festival. This way they could reach the festival audience and increase brand awareness among that demographic. The ultimate goal being that physical engagement would happen in the future after the festival as a consequence. The emotional and cognitive levels of engagement are related to image transfer that has been discussed earlier. Image transfer was one of Kyrö Distillery Company's main goals, and it had a significant impact on festival selection. By attaching different advantageous attributes from different festivals to their brand image, the company hopes to achieve emotional and cognitive engagement.

7.3. Theoretical and practical contributions

The theoretical contributions of this study are not significant. Since this study follows deductive reasoning, the purpose was to examine empirical data from a particular context and then compare the findings to already existing theory. The goal of this study was not to form new theory. That being said, there are some results that can be seen as confirming or certifying some theories which are included in this thesis.

The importance of sponsor-event congruency is something that was confirmed with the findings in this study. As was discussed previously, Hutabarat and Gayatri (2014) and Gwinner and Eaton (1999) had both presented results that suggest that

stronger congruency between the sponsor brand and event will lead to better attitudes towards the sponsoring brand by the festival attendees.

Other aspects from the theory of sponsorship that was found to be at least partly correct according to the findings are the biggest reasons for using sponsorship. From the list of reasons for sponsorship done by Rowley and Williams (2008, p. 782) the empirical findings can confirm increasing brand awareness and creating brand image. However, the most prevalent reason for event sponsorship was identified as targeting a particular market, demography or lifestyle. This was also the first reason for event sponsorship listed by Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 592)

7.4. Practical implications

The practical implications of this thesis are something that marketing managers can utilise when considering music festival sponsorship. The first implication that marketing managers can take from this thesis is the importance of event selection. Companies need to consider who their target demographics are and which festival would be the best one for reaching them.

The next implication would be that companies should try to capitalise the full potential of music festival sponsorship. This means that marketing actions should be taken already before the festival happens. Social media seems to be the best tool for these functions. During the festival, it would be beneficial for the company to pursue customer brand engagement on multiple levels, which are physical, emotional and cognitive. So the practical functions at the festival should be versatile if possible. For example, they could include interactions on a person to person level as well as having the company brand well in sight.

The third aspect marketing managers should consider is image transfer. They should try and put themselves in the role of the festival attendee and see how their brand image looks from that perspective. They need to consider which image aspects they want to attach from the festival to their own brand image. Different festivals can be used for attaching different image aspects.

7.5. Limitations and future research

This study was limited to music festivals in Finland, and it was implemented as a qualitative research from the perspective of the company. There are many directions that future researchers could take this topic. The first one could be doing a similar study, but instead of having music festivals as the empirical environment it could be for example sports sponsorship. Sports sponsorship is one the most common types sponsorships, and there are many sporting events that could be a part of this type of study.

In my opinion, the most interesting direction from this study would be to research this from the perspective of the consumer. It could be a quantitative research where festival attendees could answer a questionnaire about music festival sponsors and how they experienced their brand and whether engagement formed as a result. This type of research could give useful theoretical and practical contributions.

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