

More Than a Tent: A Case Study on Live Brand Experiences at Coachella Music Festival

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ABSTRACT

MORE THAN A TENT: A CASE STUDY ON LIVE BRAND

EXPERIENCES AT COACHELLA MUSIC FESTIVAL

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In recent years, society has seen a shift of marketing practices from traditional strategies to experiential marketing in order for brands to connect with individuals on an emotional level. Live brand experiences contribute to companies building relationships with consumers to create unique, memorable experiences that will be associated with the brand after the event. The purpose of this study was to examine the best practices of live brand experiences at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. The research for this study was conducted using a case study guide created by the researcher, which examined brands' past brand activations at Coachella. The results of this study indicate that there are many ways brands can connect with consumers emotionally while simultaneously building relationships. Heineken was recognized as a leading brand in live brand experiences at the festival. As competition is high among competitors, it is essential for brands to keep up with the current trends of experiential marketing and give consumers innovative, memorable experiences that they have never encountered.

Keywords: live brand experience, experiential marketing, marketing, brand activation, consumer experience, music festivals, Coachella

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of Study

Any company, if they aim to be profitable, must examine their practices to stay competitive. As the latest technologies, communication, and competition enter the marketplace, brands have initiated a shift of focus from traditional marketing practices to experiential marketing. Traditional marketing, which views consumers as rational decision-makers who care about functional features and benefits, is becoming less favored throughout the marketplace (Schmitt, 1999). Instead, marketing practitioners have been adapting to the wants and needs and consumers. Generation Y, or “millennials,” is the largest population in the United States with about \$733 billion of purchasing power (Qader, 2013). Millennials tend to value “experience” and authentic brands, so marketing practitioners have the opportunity to steer away from the norm of traditional marketing and meet customer expectations with positive brand experiences.

This new way of thinking is the future of marketing throughout society. Marketing practitioners have recognized that comprehending how consumers experience brands is crucial for the success of their goods and services. The ultimate goal of experiential marketing is to create a relationship and emotional attachment between the brand and the consumer (McCole, 2004). By providing the opportunity for a connection, the consumer can react to a product or service on both an emotional and rational response level. Music festivals have become a new outlet for brands to connect with consumers, with the ultimate hope of connecting the company to their specific target audience. Live

brand experiences at music festivals are the ideal way to market brands in a covert and memorable way. The purpose of this study was to examine the best practices of live brand experiences at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at Robert E. Kennedy Library on the campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In addition to books and other resources, the following online databases were utilized: ABI/INFORM, Academic Search Premiere, Hospitality and Tourism Complete, Proquest, and Google Scholar. The review of literature explains what experiential marketing is and the role of experiential marketing at music festivals.

According to Grundey (2008), the recent rapid growth in new technologies and communication is changing the way marketing is practiced today. While many businesses employed effective traditional marketing tactics in the past, the world is evolving and marketing practitioners are attempting to broaden the scope of marketing to reach consumers. Iglesias, Singh, and Batista-Foguet (2011) state, “Marketing has traditionally focused on the physical aspects of products and services, such as functionality, price, availability or quality” however “research has shown that consumers no longer simply buy products or services,” (p. 571). Instead, consumers value relationship management and value creation. Schmitt (1999) states that traditional marketing is only concerned with the features and benefits of products. Schmitt adds that traditional marketing focuses on the rational and logical elements of the purchase decision, while completely disregarding the emotional and irrational aspects involved in the purchase process. In

order for brands to more effectively reach their target audiences, they must understand how to make a connection beyond the physical attributes of the product or service.

Our society is evolving and beginning to appreciate experiences, relationships, engagement, and trust between the consumer and the brand. As competition high among marketers, companies have come to realize that understanding how consumers experience brands is a critical step for an effective marketing strategy. Many brands see experiences as “the new currency of the modern marketing landscape, because experiences are life, and people talk about experiences every day” (Smilansky, 2009, p. 10). McCole (2004) believes that experiential marketing is set to turn most of traditional marketing on its head.

The notion of experience entered the field of marketing and consumption in 1982 by Holbrook and Hirschman (Grundey, 2008). Over the past twenty years, their ideals have been developed and have gained recognition as an essential part of the marketing practice. Bernd Schmitt is considered to be the great initiator of experiential marketing (Qader, 2013). Schmitt was the first individual to view consumers as rational and emotional human beings who are interested in embracing positive, memorable experiences. Schmitt (1999) identified five dimensions of experiential marketing: sense, feel, think, act, and relate (p. 93). As a result of Schmitt’s work, the notion of experience is considered to be a pillar of the experience economy and experiential marketing (Qader).

Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) define brand experience as “sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environment” (p.

52). Similarly, Smilansky (2009) believes the experiential approach is “focused on a two-way interaction in real-time, a live brand experience and thereby significantly deeper consumer bonding process” (p. 3). Experiential marketing and live brand experiences, terms that are used interchangeably, focus on experiences as the core of a marketing campaign. These experiences are typically demonstrated as live events and enable the consumer to “live, breathe, and feel the brand through interactive sensory connections and activities” (Smilansky, p. 3). An experience with two-way communication and interactive engagement between the consumer and the brand is an effective strategy to remain in the minds of consumers. When brands allow the consumer to engage all five senses, it can help create a positive memory of the experience.

McCole (2004) asserts that emotional attachment between the consumer and the brand is key in the experiential marketing paradigm. Because consumers are no longer simply buying products, creating a form of connection with the consumer is fundamental in the purchasing process. For example, the energy drink company, Red Bull, has a functional element of being an energy drink, while promoting an emotional image that the energy-boosting beverage is supposed to “give you wings” (McCole, p. 536). Marketing practitioners want customers to feel a certain way, eliciting an emotional response when recalling the product. Creating an emotional attachment with the target customer can directly affect profitability of the brand. Smilansky (2009) states, “by creating a brand experience, which makes an emotional connection with consumers, those consumers are likely to develop brand loyalty to that product, allowing the company to stabilize market share and avoid relying on sales” (p. 16). Resonating the

value of the brand to a consumer makes it far more likely for the consumer to become a loyal customer.

Experiential marketing differs from other forms of marketing given that it recognizes the long-term value of customer relationships and interaction as a part of the marketing process (Roy & Duvvuru, 2011). Live brand experiences aid in extending the communication beyond just advertisements and promotional sales messages. Roy and Duvvuru (2011) state that experiential marketing practices focus mainly on its customers, relationships, and interaction over time, rather than markets and products. Smilansky (2009) reveals, “two-way communication and interactive engagement is the key to creating memorable experiences that drive word-of-mouth, and transform consumers into brand advocates and brand evangelists” (p.13). The face-to-face interaction allows for the consumer to interact with the brand in real-time, something that other brands cannot offer if they are not utilizing experiential marketing tactics. Live brand experiences and connecting with customers puts brands at a competitive advantage, as they are able to bring their brand personality to life and communicate complex messages face-to-face with their target audience. The interaction and relationships formed at live brand experiences create positive, memorable moments associated with the brand.

Live brand experiences at music festivals have become a new outlet to market products and services to a specific target audience. When brands choose to sponsor a music festival, it is a subtle yet effective way for them to become a memorable part of the festival experience. Rowley and Williams (2008) express that brands recognize music festivals to be an effective channel to reach the younger, somewhat homogeneous target audience of millennials. As a result, the amount of money being spent on sponsorships

and live brand experiences at music festivals has grown rapidly in an attempt to form bonds with the attendees (McIntyre, 2015). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) point out that sponsorship of arts, music, and leisure events is a way of embedding brands in cultures and the processes associated with experiential consumption.

According to Rowley and Williams (2008), “brand exposure in popular entertainment confers ‘coolness’ on the brand” and simultaneously “enhances the realism of the entertainment setting” (p. 783). Live brand experiences at music festivals come in many forms – it can be brands giving out free samples of products, hosting celebrity guests, holding contests and activities, offering air conditioned tents for festival-goers to cool down in, and much more. A study conducted by AEG and Momentum Worldwide, popular live promoting companies, found that music festivals are the place to be when it comes to marketing to millennials (McIntyre, 2015). The study found that 81% of attendees said the coolest brand experiences they have ever seen somehow involved music in a live setting. In addition, 80% of attendees acknowledged that the best and most effective way for brands to connect with them is through a branded experience at a music event (McIntyre).

When brands utilize experiential marketing techniques at a music festival, it gives them the opportunity to promote their brand in a covert way. Hackley and Tiwsakul (2006) suggest that weaving brands into the consumers’ experience of mediated entertainment is a major thrust of innovation. Consumers attend these brand activations at festivals without expecting to find a promotional motive within the experience (Hackley & Tiwsakul). Hosting live brand experiences at music festivals is a great way for brands to reach attendees as thousands of festivalgoers have time to kill between their next

favorite musical artists. Most consumers are interested in the entertainment experience of these brand activations, without expecting a promotional motive from the brand (Hackley & Tiwsakul). Live brand experiences at music festivals are the ideal way insert brand references into the consumer's experience in an unobtrusive, memorable, and authentic way.

When creating brand activations in the music space, marketing practitioners need to be creative and define the purpose or goals of the experience before introducing it to attendees. For example, the cider company, Strongbow, hosted an experience at a music festival where the aim was to increase loyalty and promote product attributes ("Experiential marketing," 2008). The company did this by creating Strongbow Cider House, which provided a fun and comfortable environment to enjoy refreshing beverages on a hot day. In addition, Trident Gum hosted an experience with entertainment from a range of DJs in a designated area of a festival. Trident's objective was to provide a positive and different experience associated with the brand ("Experiential marketing"). If companies define their goals and objectives prior to the live brand experience, it allows for the brand to communicate the right message to the attendees.

According to the recent study conducted by AEG and Momentum Worldwide, companies that sponsored music festivals positively impacted attendees' perception of the brand (McIntyre, 2015). The study indicated that brand's experiences at music festivals impact the customers' love for the brand, with 93% of respondents stating they like brands that sponsor live events. Respondents of the survey also expressed the live brand experience made the brand more authentic and easier to trust, compared to brands who chose not to attend. Lastly, it positively affected the purchase intent of the consumer - the

ultimate intent of any live brand experience. Eighty percent of respondents stated they would buy products from brands that sponsor a live experience, versus 55% of non-attendees (McIntyre). Based off the results of the study, it is evident that consumers will welcome brands into their music experience. Glenn Minerley, the Vice President of Momentum Worldwide, believes, “When it comes to connecting with consumers, especially millennials, music is one of the most effective ways. For brands, the opportunity exists within music to create value for their customers and build a lasting relationship unlike any other” (Momentum Worldwide, 2015, para 4). Minerley concludes with the statement, “There’s never been a better time to align brands and music” (Momentum Worldwide, para 4).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the best practices of live brand experience at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What brands utilize experiential marketing practices at Coachella?
2. What types of live brand experiences are currently being utilized at Coachella?
3. How effective were companies in creating an emotional connection between the attendee and the brand at the festival?

4. How effective were companies in building relationships with attendees at the festival?
5. Who is the leading company/sponsor that utilizes experiential marketing tactics at Coachella?

Chapter 2

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the best practices of live brand experiences at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. This chapter includes the following sections: description of organization/s, description of instrument, and description of procedures.

Description of Organization/s

For this case study, the best practices in experiential marketing were examined at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, commonly shortened to “Coachella,” is an annual three-day festival held at the 78-acre Empire Polo Club in Indio, California (Goldenvoice, 2017). This two-weekend festival with virtually identical lineups has broken records in the music festival industry, earning over \$84 million with almost 200,000 tickets sold (Waddell, 2015). The event began in 2001 and features the most groundbreaking artists from all types of genres including: rock, indie, hip-hop, and electronic dance music (Goldenvoice). In addition, Coachella exhibits a substantial selection of art installations from all over the world. Voted eleven times by Pollstar as the “Festival of the Year,” Coachella is one of the most critically acclaimed festivals in the world.

AEG Live LLC partners with the subdivision of Goldenvoice to produce Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival (AEG Live, 2017). AEG Live is a subsidiary of Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), a world-leading provider of live entertainment

and sports. AEG Live was founded in 2001 and devotes itself to all facets of live entertainment and multi-media production, including festivals, touring, broadcast, sponsorship, special events, venues, and much more. The company is headquartered in Los Angeles, California and has a large company reach, with locations in Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Las Vegas, London, Nashville, New York, Seattle, and St. Louis (Bloomberg, 2017).

Description of Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a best practices case study guide developed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The guide was formatted to include three columns titled “organization/sponsor,” “type of experience,” and “details.” The “organization/sponsor” column includes the name of the brand being studied. Within the “type of experience” column, the researcher was able to distinguish what type of experiential marketing effort the brand put on. The “details” column allowed the researcher to further analyze the live brand experience and put more in depth descriptions about what was included at each experience.

During the pilot study, the researcher analyzed Outside Lands Music Festival, a popular festival in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park. For the pilot study, the researcher chose four major sponsors that hosted live brand experiences at Outside Lands. While conducting the pilot study, the researcher found the “type of experience” section in the initial guide needed to be more specific. In the initial try, most of the live brand experiences were categorized as “tents” or “pop –ups,” but the researcher realized mostly all of the brand experiences at the music festival would be a temporary pop-up structure.

The researcher fixed each experience to be more specific in the “type of experience” section.

Description of Procedures

For this case study, best practices in experiential marketing were examined at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. The instrument utilized in this study was a best practices guide developed by the researcher. During the two-week research phase, the researcher used the developed guide to analyze the context of the study.

The experiential marketing practices of the selected sponsors at Coachella Music Festival were analyzed through accessing company websites, third-party websites, interviews, and personal experience. The following company websites were analyzed: Heineken, H&M, Sephora, Absolut, Uber, and Tag Heuer. The researcher took into account any information on the website regarding their experiential presence at Coachella music festival. In addition the company website, third party websites including Event Magazine, The Wrap, Event Marketer, Media Kix and Vibe were visited to further examine the live brand experiences hosted at Coachella in the past two years. These websites allowed the researcher to gather evidence to include in the “details” section of the guide. Several festival attendees were interviewed to determine further details related to the brand experience. The researchers personal experience at the live brand experiences were also taken into account for the “details” section.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the best practices of live brand experiences at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. A case study approach was utilized for the study. This chapter includes the following sections: pop up stores, lounges, houses, and bars.

Pop Up Stores

H&M, a multinational clothing company, is best known for its fast-fashion clothing for women, men, and children. In 2015, Coachella partnered with the retail company to create a live brand experience through a 40-foot by 80-foot pop up store on the grounds of the festival. The pop up store was located directly next to Coachella's electric dance music (EDM) tent, a stage visited by much of H&M's target audience. The pop up store was open to all attendees, which was a change of direction from their usual private experiences for celebrities. It provided an area for attendees to browse the exclusive festival collection merchandise produced by the brand called "H&M Loves Coachella." In addition to the festival collection merchandise, attendees were exposed to a 360-degree mirrored "selfie station" with professional lighting and visual effects so attendees could snap some pictures with their close friends. The H&M experience featured the new, innovative Oculus Rift virtual reality headsets that attendees could use for the first time. Lastly, the pop up store included air conditioning, recharging stations, Wi-Fi, and water refill stations – all things that appeal to the typical festivalgoer.

Lounges

Uber, a popular mode of transportation among the millennial generation, is an app that allows consumers to request rides to and from destinations. The “Uber Lounge” area created at Coachella is a place many festival attendees visit in order request rides to enter and leave the festival. The Uber lounge provided an area where festival attendees could meet up with friends and hang out on beanbags while waiting for an uber. Company representatives were available to answer any questions the festivalgoers had about the company or services. Within the lounge, attendees were able to charge cell phones, which was a very popular attraction since many festivalgoers visit this area at the end of each day. In the afternoon, the tent was very upbeat with loud music playing as individuals exited their ubers to walk into the festival. Towards the end of the night, the atmosphere was very laid back, as people would most likely visit the area at the end of a long day.

In 2016, TAG Heuer was the official watch for Coachella music festival. The company is known in the United States as a luxury sports brand, but they chose to enter the music festival industry to reach new audiences. For the festival, TAG Heuer planned to target attendees who purchased a VIP festival wristband and desired a more exclusive experience. The watch brand created a VIP lounge area that featured various amenities, including an interactive photo booth that produced GIFs for attendees, as well as recharging stations with Wi-Fi for attendees that needed a pick-me-up midway through the festival. The activation was also a way for attendees to have a “connected experience” with the brand. TAG Heuer included a Connected Watch display that allowed guests to interact with the brand’s latest innovation. While attendees spent time in the air-

conditioned lounge, they were exposed to the company's Special Edition Carrera, which was exclusive to Connected Watch owners.

Houses

Heineken has been one of the official sponsors for Coachella for the past 15 years. The Dutch brewing company is best known for its signature green beer bottle with a red star. The beer company is widely recognized for creating the "Heineken Experience" for their consumers. At the festival, they created a lively house party experience via the Heineken House to celebrate their 15th anniversary as a sponsor at Coachella. This green structure aimed to recreate a house party experience with multiple indoor rooms and an outdoor patio area. Within the house, attendees were able to see live performances by top DJs such as Doctor P, Warren G, and Diplo & Friends. The pop-up house also featured a "living room" with a sustainable dance floor, which converted kinetic movement into energy and light beams that lit up the party and ultimately powered the Heineken House. The patterned hallways lined with Heineken ingredients included pictures focusing on the brand's history and their past experiences sponsoring Coachella. The outdoor patio featured two bars serving Heinekens, serving nearly 80,000 festivalgoers. The patio also consisted of high-top table charging stations, couches, corn hole, and misters to cool off. This area allowed for the festivalgoers to sit down, relax, and socialize with those around them. The company also built a graffiti wall, which allowed consumers to produce custom art that could be printed or emailed to them after it was finished. In addition, the company offered complimentary cold storage lockers for individuals who were camping at the festival and wanted to keep their Heinekens cold. Lastly, Heineken offered a

service where attendees could text a request to have their beer delivered right to their campsite by a brand ambassador on a bike.

Bars

Sephora is a well-known sponsor of Coachella and a company that is sought-after by many individuals in the millennial generation. The cosmetics company offers beauty products including makeup, skincare, body, fragrance, nail color, and haircare. At the festival, Sephora created a live brand experience that featured a do-it-yourself (DIY) beauty bar. The beauty bar allowed attendees to touch up their own makeup or try a completely new look in front of the large mirrors provided at the bar. The festivalgoers also had the option to interact with the Sephora's team of makeup artists that were available to offer any on hand assistance or advice. If an attendee had a special festival-inspired look in mind, such as ombré lipstick, the Sephora team was able to help recreate it for the consumer. As many of the Coachella attendees camp and do not have much access to a beauty parlor, this brand activation was a very popular site to visit. The beauty bar also incorporated a photo booth into the experience, where attendees who took a picture of their new look and shared it on social media were entered into a drawing to win a number of different prizes. Lastly, the beauty bar contained air conditioning and free Wi-Fi for festivalgoers to enjoy while they pampered themselves.

Different than Sephora's beauty bar, Absolut offered an experience with an actual bar that served alcoholic beverages. Absolut Vodka, another official sponsor of Coachella Music Festival, is the third largest brand of alcoholic spirits in the world. Absolut's live brand experience at Coachella featured an interactive activation called the "Absolut

Spark Bar.” The activation included an open-air bar that served a large variety of Absolut-based cocktails in honor of the company unveiling the new limited edition bottle. In order to make the brand activation livelier for the music-loving audience, the company created a versatile bar that was able to transform into a music space where a DJ could perform a live set. The light up dance floor allowed for attendees to dance with friends to a live DJ set provided by Absolut. A discussion of the results will take place in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The best practices of live brand experiences were examined at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. This concluding chapter will include the following: a discussion of the findings, limitations, conclusions based on research questions, implications of the findings, and recommendations for future research.

Discussion

Extensive research and examination of multiple brands present at Coachella Music and Arts Festival provided evidence of three major findings: the importance of creating an emotional connection, the importance of building relationships, and why Heineken is the leading live brand experience company.

The six selected brands that hosted live brand experiences at Coachella Music and Arts Festival did an effective job at creating an emotional connection between the attendee and the brand. The researcher found the top three companies to create a memorable experience that connected with customers at Coachella was Heineken, H&M, and Sephora. Heineken's intense and vibrant house party experience, which included multiple engaging activities, provided attendees with an entertainment value that would capture the audience and would likely make a lasting impression once the festival concluded. H&M tapped into emotional connections with its exclusive festival collection only offered at Coachella, allowing attendees to feel like they were special and a part of an exclusive experience not offered elsewhere. The creation of Sephora's beauty bar and

makeover station positively impacted their festival experience by giving them confidence in their Coachella look. As McCole (2004) proclaimed, emotional attachment is key between the consumer and the brand in the experiential marketing paradigm. As the marketing industry transforms, it is important for brands to keep up with trends and continue utilizing experiential marketing practices. Companies utilizing brand activations at Coachella should continue creating experiences that elicit an emotional connection between the attendee and the brand. In order to facilitate an attachment with the consumer, brands should continue to convey a common message or theme that will likely stick with the consumer upon leaving the festival. Examples of common themes include adventure, community, friendship, and peace of mind.

Multiple brands present at Coachella Music and Valley Arts Festival were effective in building relationships with attendees. The researcher found that the companies Sephora, Heineken, and Uber were the most successful at recognizing the long-term value of customer relationships and interaction at brand experiences. Sephora's Beauty Team encouraged two-way interaction between attendees and the brand, as they provided memorable conversations and makeup tutorials that would be retained in the mind of attendees. The special beer delivery service provided by Heineken brand ambassadors connected with attendees on a one-on-one level, allowing the consumer to have a personalized moment that will be positively associated with the brand. Uber's brand ambassadors acted as a way for consumers to put a face to the well-known application and interact with them in real time, something that most other applications do not have the opportunity to do. As noted by Smilanksy (2009), engaging with consumers through two-way communication is the key to creating memorable experiences and

ultimately loyal customers. In order to further continue building relationships with consumers, brands must continue to bring their company to life through events. Companies hosting live brand experiences at Coachella should continue bringing in employees or brand ambassadors to facilitate interaction and ultimately build relationships. In order to continue promoting the brand to attendees, companies should hire more employees so the brand can have a larger reach across the target audience.

With competition high among brands in creating unique and memorable experiences, it can often be difficult to stand out from other companies when trying to produce the best brand activation. The researcher found that Heineken, a repeating sponsor of the festival, successfully hosted the ultimate live brand experience at Coachella. The Heineken House was the largest structure created by a sponsor at the festival, therefore grabbing the attention of many consumers. The company successfully incorporated an entertainment value into the experience with its use of the dance floor and outdoor games, ultimately helping capture the mind of consumers to leave a lasting impression. In addition, the brand incorporated multiple senses throughout the experience, including hear, sight, and taste, which can help prompt specific memories following the festival. As Smilansky (2009) stated, a valuable live brand experience allows the consumer to identify with the brand through interactive sensory connections and activities. Lastly, the brand effectively elicited an emotional connection with consumers by providing the personalized beer drop off service to festivalgoers' campsites. To continue being a leading brand in the marketing industry, companies must continue employing experiential marketing practices instead of traditional marketing practices. Although Heineken was recognized for delivering the leading live brand

experience at Coachella, the company should continue to explore new ideas to maintain this position. As Heineken is a continuous sponsor of Coachella, it is important for the brand to be innovative and creative when it comes to building experiences, allowing attendees to encounter something they have not experienced at the festival.

There are several limitations present in this study that may have impacted the results. First, as a Coachella attendee that took part in multiple live brand experiences talked about in the study, the researcher may have unintentionally impacted the findings through subjective bias for the particular experience. Next, because only one music festival with sponsors was analyzed, it cannot be assumed that all music festivals have sponsors that host live brand experiences. An additional limitation was that the study was only performed on six sponsors of the music festival due to time constraints. Lastly, the majority of the research for this subject was restricted to online means; therefore the quality and quantity of information may have been impacted. Despite these limitations, the study does provide a significant insight about live brand experiences that will aid in the progression of the experiential marketing industry.

The results from this study provide evidence of the most effective experiential marketing practices at music festivals. With society constantly evolving, the most successful strategies for live brand experiences will continuously shift due to endless new, unique ideas and concepts being presented daily. However, the topics covered in this study provide an effective baseline for future research and may be useful and instrumental in future examinations. The contributions this study has examined for live brand experiences at music festivals are valuable, and may be utilized in future studies. However, because the world of marketing is ever-changing, effective live brand

experiences should be continuously explored in order for brands to successfully market to consumers at music festivals.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Absolut, Heineken, H&M, Sephora, Tag Heuer, and Uber utilized live brand experiences at Coachella.
2. Pop-up stores, lounges, houses, and bars are types of live brand experiences being utilized at Coachella.
3. Heineken, H&M, and Sephora most effectively created an emotional connection between the attendee and the brand at Coachella.
4. Heineken, Sephora, and Uber most effectively built relationships with attendees at Coachella.
5. Heineken is the leading company/sponsor that utilized experiential marketing tactics at Coachella.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Brands should continue hosting live brand experiences at music festivals, as it is an effective way to reach the millennial target market.
2. Companies present at music festivals should continue utilizing emotional connection as a strategy in live brand experiences.

3. To advance the emotional connection with consumers, brands should keep a message or theme in mind upon creating the experience that consumers will associate with the brand.
4. Companies should continue to utilize face-to-face interaction between brand ambassadors/employees and attendees as a strategy in live brand experiences.
5. To further interaction between brands and attendees, companies should hire more employees to work at the activations, allowing the brand to create more personal relationships and have potential to reach more consumers.
6. Heineken, with the leading live brand experience at Coachella, should continue to be innovative and create experiences that attendees have never seen at the festival.
7. In future studies, a more diverse sample of brand activations would result in a more complete and detailed study.
8. Future research should continuously explore the most effective live brand experiences in order for companies to make further improvements.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Instrument

Case Study Guide

Organization/Sponsor	Type of Experience	Details
H&M		
Heineken		
Sephora		
Absolut Vodka		
Uber		
Tag Heuer		