



An exploratory research on co-creation in a festival's virtual community

Author: Szilvia Csiszár

Supervisor: Martin Trandberg Jensen

Aalborg University, Copenhagen

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Abstract

Topic and Purpose: This study aims to explore how the visitors co-create values and meanings of a music festival by the interaction of the online social community, and to investigate into how those co-created meanings might be used to influence the “official” messages of the festival.

Method: This study is exploratory and qualitative in nature. The author has carried out netnography research (an interpretive research methodology where the researcher has studied the online culture and community interactions through computer mediated communication) and used an inductive approach in order to answer the research question. To complete the netnographic research, a semi-structured interview was conducted to explore the online communication strategies by the management perspective.

Findings: The findings show that due to the service dominant logic and the nature of social media platforms, customers are no longer at the end of the value chain. They become empowered content and value creators. The findings show that co-creation should be seen in a multi-relational perspective, however the service-dominant logic completely ignored that. The festival is not an isolated music venue, rather a “networked gathering”, which relates to many external entities. The virtual community consumption has collective power to co-create new values and meanings through uncontrollable social interactions.

Implication: The co-created meanings may affect the organisation’s “intended values” and messages, therefore the festival should learn to cope with the challenges and its potential. Furthermore, the festival needs to take part more actively in moderating and facilitating the co-creating process in the online tribe.

Keywords: Music festival, Social media, Co-creation, Netnography, Online community

Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Problem identification	7
1.2	Research question.....	8
1.3	Research purpose.....	8
1.4	The research objective.....	8
1.5	Telekom-VOLT festival.....	9
1.6	The structure of the thesis	10
2	Methodology.....	11
2.1	Exploratory research	11
2.2	Interpretivism Research philosophy.....	12
2.3	Qualitative research.....	12
2.4	Inductive approach	13
2.5	Data collection method.....	13
2.5.1	Primary research	13
2.5.2	Netnography.....	14
2.5.3	Semi-structured interview	19
2.5.4	Secondary research	20
2.6	Quality criteria in qualitative research	20
2.7	Translation of the empirical data.....	21
2.8	Criticism and Limitation	22
2.8.1	Empirical limitation	22
3	Literature review.....	23
3.1	Festival and events literature in tourism	23
3.1.1	Event and festival’s literature evolution	23
3.1.2	Event and festival definitions/theories.....	24
3.1.3	Event and festival marketing approaches	26
3.2	Theories of co-creation.....	27
3.2.1	Value co-creation	28
3.2.2	Goods - dominant logic – Service- dominant logic - Customer -dominant logic...	29
3.2.3	The process of value co-creation	31

3.2.4	Value co-creation in event/festival tourism	34
3.2.5	Value co-creation in online community.....	35
3.3	Digital technologies and Social media.....	37
3.3.1	Social media in festival industry.....	39
3.3.2	Online community and culture.....	40
3.4	Reflection and summery on the literature review	42
4	Analysis & Discussion.....	44
4.1	Steve Jobs versus the Thirteen Martyrs of Arad	45
4.2	The open-minded community versus rejection of homosexuality	50
4.3	VOLT logo and Sponsor change.....	55
4.4	VOLT vs. Balaton Sound - Rock vs. Electronic music.....	57
4.5	Summary and Reflection on the empirical findings.....	60
4.6	Implications for the festival management	62
5	Conclusion.....	64
6	Bibliography	66
7	Appendices	71

List of figures:

Figure 1.DART-model.....	32
Figure 2. Steve Jobs’ memorial post.....	45
Figure 3. Rainbow festival logo.....	50
Figure 4. Logo design development between 2005-2012.....	55

List of abbreviations

Goods-dominant logic: G-D logic

Service-dominant logic: S-D logic

Customer-dominant logic: C-D logic

User - Generated Content: UGC

Integrated Marketing Communication: IMC

Computer-Mediated Communication: CMC

1 Introduction

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000, 2002, 2004) were the first defined the term of ‘value co-creation’. The value creation and co-creation have developed of Vargo and Lusch’s Service-Dominant Logic theories (2004, 2008, 2006). The new paradigm focuses on services rather than products, which places focus on the operant resources (knowledge, skills, and competences) compared to the product dominant logic which was simply interested in the operand resources (tangibles). Vargo & Lusch (2004) see the customer as the “co-creator of the values”, who is a key partner in the organisation’s development and innovation. As Zwass (2010) argues consumers are no longer inactive value receivers, but also value creators in both individual and collective activities. Consequently, the role of the customers in the service industry is shifting, they are now seen as active co-designers and content creators.

Several researchers explored the co-creation phenomenon, its process and benefits (e.g. Payne et.al, Grönroos et al.). However, the tourism marketing literature is extremely focused on the “features and benefits” dominant value co-creations with the customers. The marketers see the co-creation as a managerial tool to design and deliver values together with the consumers. The customers are seen exclusively as an “empowered asset” to create value for the company (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The issues arise from those “provider-customers” service dominant concepts, as they ignore the collaborations in multi-relational perspective which are not related to the economic transactions (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014).

The online environment becomes extremely recognised as a significant field for qualitative scientific research “*because of the richness and openness of their multifarious cultural sites*” (Kozinets, et al., 2013). Web 2.0. has enabled users to interact, collaborate with each other and with the service providers on social media dialogues as creators of UGC in a virtual community (Moens, et al., 2014). Social networks are a qualitatively different type of product than solely text, pictures, and videos; as Berthon highlights “*there is a shift from the individual to the collective, as social networks leverage the power of relationships and the collective wisdom of many*” (Berthon, et al., 2012). Tourism consumption often occurs in a social context, as the interaction and the collective experience with other consumers designs an essential element of the service experience (Rihova, etl.al.2014).

Web 2.0 is a naturally collective platform and it is not merely an informational medium, due to the technology that can foster, augment and modify social interactions and communications (Weinberg, 2009). The participatory web has enabled new kinds of interactions (electronic world of mouth) which complement and expand the leisure experiences and meanings in diverse ways (Munar, et al., 2013). Shih (2009) declares that social interactions on social media sites have the potential to alter power relations, as today customers have higher power than ever before. In recent times, companies have changed their strategy of social media from pure promotional activities to customer engagement. Moreover, “*customers and organizations now increasingly co-produce information, knowledge and experiences*” (Gyimóthy & Larson, 2015).

The festival is an extraordinary, non-routine social occasion to escape from every-day life (Getz, 2007). It includes a range of rituals, participation, where people share their mutual interest and gather into social structures and communities (Getz, 2007). Virtual communities have been created due to the emergence of social media platforms, “*which do not inevitably revolve around marketer-consumer value-creation interactions* “ (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The festivals are shared and collective experiences, which are more influenced by other customers, than the by the provider (Gyimóthy & Larson, 2015). The collective power of the community is perpetually conveying and altering meanings which is related for instance to a service provider, and they can even go beyond commercial value-creation contexts and intentions (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014).

The previous researchers have explored how the brand communities co-create personalized experience with a provider and with each other and to utilize their bond with the brand, strengthen their loyalty (e.g. Muniz & O’Guinn (2001), Arnould & Price 1993). There have been only some academic investigations, how virtual fan communities co-create meanings through social interactions with each other on social media platform. Academics have not established an analytical framework of co-creation of meanings and do not specify the roles and responsibilities of the providers and customers in the value co-creation (Grönroos & Voima, 2011)

Therefore, this project wants to explore the co-creation phenomenon in the festival tourism context within a virtual community between the members and the provider. The author aims to unfold the festival’s “intended” messages and meanings, what the customers interactions have co-created and conveyed on social media platforms. This study wants to investigate also how

those co-created meanings can influence the “original” marketing messages of the festival and what are the implications that the festival might take into consideration in terms of facilitating the virtual interactions in the online tribe.

1.1 Problem identification

Social media is a powerful communication channel both for the organisation and to their customers, as it is used to connect the two of them to each other; to create user generated content, proclaim feelings, opinion, experiences; interact, participate and recently recognized notion of co-creating or co-producing meanings/values. The social online communities have collective power of creating identities, meanings, practices, or material culture (Cova, Kozinets and Shankar, 2007:19). Social media is a great opportunity for organisation for instance to launch viral campaigns, crowd source, network with stakeholders or build customer engagement (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). However due the freedom of content generation and sharing it can have harmful impact an organization, as the managers might lose control over what have written about the company, and user-generated contents might affect their “projected messages”. Previous researches have dealt with festival brand value creation within brand- and online brand communities, or how the customers can co-innovate and co-create experience along the business the most effectively.

However, there are only few academic papers about how users’ interactions can co-create meanings in the festival’s virtual community and what “affect” the co-creation can generate. Consequently, it was required to collect and analyse existing theories and concepts within related fields of previous researches and trying to challenge or adjust them to the empirical findings to answer the research question of this study.

The research field is very recent what this thesis aims to explore, it has not published extensive volume of literature within the field of co-creation within online communities from the perspective as user-driven co-creation. This project wants to explore the co-created meanings by the tribe members and to see how festival’s promotional or corporate messages might get affected by them. Furthermore, what the festival should consider based on the co-created meanings “created” by the users in regards their marketing communication strategies.

1.2 Research question

As starting point of the process, the research question was needed to be defined, the nature and scope of the research. Generally, the research questions can be divided into three main types: “what”, “why” and “how” questions. Therefore, the purposes of those researches are different; it can be description, explanation/understanding and exploring type of the purposes (Blaikie, 2009). Thus, the research question will provide a better way of expressing what the research wants to achieve. McGivern (2006) describes three types of researches in terms of the purpose of the study: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (McGivern, 2006). This study aim to explore the phenomenon of the co-created meanings, thus the research is exploratory.

Based on the preliminary field research, the researcher’s knowledge of the festival and a review of existing literature of festival, social media, online community, and co-creation, the research question was developed. The goal of this thesis is thus to answer the following main research question:

How do Volt festival participants represent and co-create the festival messages on social media platform, and how may these co-created meaning(s) be used to influence the official festival message?

1.3 Research purpose

This paper aims to apply the interpretation of qualitative empirical data to explore how the meanings of VOLT festival are “co-created” and conveyed by the members on social media channel. Moreover, to investigate into how the co-created meanings may affect the festival original marketing communication strategies, and how the festival can utilize or moderate user-generated contents on social media platform.

1.4 The research objective

In order to answer the problem formulation, the research objectives are described as following:

- Analyse communication patterns and interactions on the official Facebook fan page

- Discover the co-created values and meanings by the festival visitors on social media platforms
- Understand and interpret the symbolic meanings beyond the co-created contents
- Discover the complexity of the user-generated co-creation
- Explore the misalignment between the actual communication flow and the intended content
- Provide suggestive feedback to the festival how to utilise and “control” content on social media

1.5 Telekom-VOLT festival

Sopron, the town hosting VOLT Festival is located at the Austrian-Hungarian border, 60 km from Vienna, 200 km from Budapest, 90 km from Bratislava. It is stated on the official homepage as characteristic of: “*Family atmosphere and a great line-up, right at the Austrian border*” (volt.hu/English/about). Today, VOLT festival is one of the most known and popular festivals among the countryside’s festival in Hungary, which is organised annually since 1993. The festival is known for its huge variety of national and international music performers representing approximately 150 artists. Last year it comprised of ten stages where several genres ranging from the mainstream rock, pop, jazz, electronic, metal concerts folk/world, jazz or electronic bands/concerts are represented. Besides music, the visitors can explore cultural and educational programs, workshops, presentations and enjoy products of historic wine yards of Sopron region along with tasting the Hungarian and national gastronomic delicacies. The main goal of the festival organisers since its start has been to provide programs and concerts which they find themselves as interesting, exciting and colourful, regardless of genre or type. That eclectic program offers attract open-minded, “cool” guests to the festival. (volt.hu/press) “*This is the right place to meet open-minded and friendly youngsters, all in love with music.*” (volt.hu/English/about)

The two main organisers of the festival were born in Sopron as well and developed the festival from a school’s sport stadium get-together event to a major festival of welcoming 120.000 visitors the last year, in 2015. The festival has rapidly grown, it takes place in the Lóvér camping site, in the centre of a forest in Sopron since 2001. The main organisers created the slogan for

the festival in 2003 which sounds very authentic, as they themselves locals: “Everywhere is good, but the best is in Sopron.” Businesses in Sopron are very enthusiastic to use this slogan for other promotional purposes than the festival, but people know Sopron equals to VOLT. (volt.hu/press) In 2011, the festival has given the nomination for the city, as “City of the Stars” due to the numerous international stars/performer have visited Sopron and left their signature to the city. In 2016, the festival won its biggest award ever in its history, the best medium size festival in Europe in 2015 at the European Festival Awards gala - Eurosonic festival, in Netherlands. The VOLT festival is part of an umbrella organisation, which is called Sziget Kulturális Menedzser Iroda Kft.(Sziget Cultural manager office Ltd.), which runs many other well-known festivals in Hungary. VOLT is sponsored by several businesses, media, food and beverage brands and communication and technology suppliers. T-Mobile, Hungarian Telekom is the main sponsor of the festival since 2015 and it can be seen in the festival official name as well. T-Com provides all technical support for the festival which can contribute to the experience. It supplies 4G network, WIFI to its customer, moreover on the festival area they established a T-com tent, where visitors can use safe lockable boxes to charge their phones or streaming the concerts who could not participate physically. www.telekom.hu/ Earlier on the festival was mainly sponsored by the local “Soproni” beer brewery.

1.6 The structure of the thesis

Methodology

The following chapter presents the methodological approach chosen and applied in this thesis. It gives the reader an overview regarding the methods and literature, such as how the data have collected and how the theory has interpreted. The chapter includes theories and practices of netnography and semi-structured interview data collection methods, and elaborate on the qualitative research and explorative in nature research.

Review of the Literature

The chapter covers a literature review of the main theoretical areas of this thesis, namely: festival and event management theories, social media platform, online virtual tribe, co-creation theories.

The author analyses the development of the academic literature, the nature, the complexity and her critics on the illustrated literature.

Analysis & Discussion

The empirical data will be presented, analysed and then linked to the theoretical chapter based on the author's interpretation. The data was collected from online fan community and followed a classification process of coding and identifying themes about co-created festival meanings. The netnography research will be completed with the perspective of the festival marketing manager on the co-created meanings and marketing communication strategies.

Conclusion and implication

The conclusion summarizes how the data have explored in correlation to the theory, and provides suggestive feedback what the festival should take into consideration in terms of the moderating and facilitating customers' discussions on social media.

2 Methodology

This chapter gives an overview of the research approaches used in the project. The aim is to provide the reader with a guideline of how the research is conducted, structured and present an overview of the methods used in the research process.

2.1 Exploratory research

The research question refers to the explorative type of research purpose, which is “attempt to develop and initial, or understanding some phenomenon” (Blaikie, 2009, p. 69). McGivern says the exploratory research type is suitable for the researcher who wants to identify and clarify problems, develop propositions (McGivern, 2006). The author wants to explore the co-creation phenomenon in virtual community and discuss how the festival can utilize its potential. According to Blaikie (2009) the exploratory research is about when the researcher knows a little bit about the topic, and wants to investigate it. This research is used to get a better idea of what is the current situation on the festival ‘social media in term of co-creating values and suggest an input for further research (Malhotra et al 1999). The exploratory research is usually conducted at

the beginning of the research, but the researcher needs to follow the process (Blaikie, 2009:70). This explorative research's aim is to gain insight into the user-driven co-created values within the virtual community. The author believes in that research will provide interesting findings, as the virtual co-creating meanings by the users is a quite unexplored topic yet.

2.2 Interpretivism Research philosophy

This philosophy relates to the study of social phenomenon in its natural environment. It focuses on carrying out research among people rather than among objects, adopting an empathetic attitude to understand their social world and the meanings they give from their point of view (Saunders et. al,2012:58). Interpretivists research avoids rigid structural frameworks such as the ones applied positivist research (Carson et al., 2001). It appears to be less formal, less structured, and this more flexible methodology enables the researcher to produce or adjust ideas from the collected data. The purpose of interpretivist study is to understand and interpret the meanings in social context rather than to generalize and forecast causes (Neuman, 2000; Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). As an interpretive researcher, the phenomenon is being studied in the research to achieve a better understanding of co-creation in a virtual community in the context of the problem statement. The data analysis aims to present a meaningful report of the study by understanding the content gathered through netnographic research and a semi-structured interview. The researcher observed the Facebook timeline of VOLT festival community and explained the empirical data on her own interpretation and understanding.

2.3 Qualitative research

As the purpose of this thesis is to explore how VOLT festival's visitors are co-creating values and meanings on social media, thus the qualitative research approach is the most appropriate to apply. According to Bryman (2012) the qualitative research deals with interpreting and understanding meanings. Data collected through qualitative methods is often unstructured and unwieldy. It is mainly text based research, consisting of verbatim transcriptions of interviews or discussions, field notes or other written documents (Bryman & Burgess, 2002). The data can be observed and the researcher is a key instrument to gather information from a virtual community. As this method exclusively concentrates on words, the aim is to gain a fuller comprehension of

the phenomenon of co-creation, and examine the complexity of user-generated content by the online members. Qualitative research is a mean to understanding human emotions like anger, acceptance, rejection, powerlessness that can be strongly interrelated with the festival values and meanings. By applying the qualitative netnography research, the author is able to examine contents in the social platform. The criticism on qualitative research is that it difficult to show complete objectivity and neutrality, as the researcher can become an integral part of the research (Smith, 1983), and the research is context-bound, therefore the researcher needs to be context sensitive. The qualitative research occurs in the organic setting in the virtual community, where the social interactions occur. The data can generate new theoretical ideas and they can modify existing theories or uncover the essence of the particular phenomenon (Holloway, 2002). This project has used multiple sources of qualitative data (online social media content, semi-structure interview) to understand the topic from a detailed perspective and taking into consideration both the provider and consumers dimensions.

2.4 Inductive approach

Inductive approach starts with the observations and theories that are formulated towards the end of the research and as a result of the observations (Goddard & Melville, 2004). Meaning the research has constantly adopted or modified new theories based on the empirical findings. The research is explorative in nature, which is associated with open-ended questions in the end of the research. The purpose of preliminary literature review was to review the most relevant and significant researches on the topic and afterwards the data got explored and theories were developed according to it (Strauss & Corbin 1998). New findings emerged and new theoretical developments were proposed through the analytical process.

2.5 Data collection method

2.5.1 Primary research

Primary research is conducted in order to gather data on a particular topic which has not yet been explored by others. Primary research can be applied to explore a phenomenon and support to propose further theoretical developments. Customer conversations/interactions are meaningful source of primary data which were primarily used to analyse by the researcher. This study

explored the contents from the festival' social media platform (Facebook) as primary data source. Conversations were gathered, filtered and interpreted by the author as one of the main purpose to explore the co-created values by the online fan community in their natural and authentic environment. Additionally, the researcher conducted a semi-structure interview with the festival marketing manager representative to gain a detailed view of the festival's current online media strategies.

2.5.2 Netnography

The netnography was chosen for this study as the main data collection method, the researcher has observed the virtual community consumption to provide an answer to the problem formulation. The study focuses on investigating the online social communication to explore co-created meanings and values within a particular festival brand community. Netnography is a relatively new way of conducting and analysing data, the method is strongly related to Kozinets' name, who defines the method (2010, p. 60) as: “...*a participant-observational research based in online fieldwork. It uses computer mediated communications as a source of data to arrive at the ethnographic understanding and representation of a cultural or communal phenomenon.*” The netnography applies similar features as the ethnography, but it conducted from an online environment.

Netnography has developed into in the field of marketing and consumer research, it is open to rapid development and to adopt new techniques. It is qualitative research method in its nature, Kozinets (2002:61) states “*netnography is ethnography adapted to study of online communities and cultures*”. It is an interpretive method to investigate to consumer behaviour of cultures and communities present online especially (ibid,1998). The use of Netnography is “consumer centric”, and able to support businesses to constantly enhance their consumer and marketplace knowledge (Dhiraj, 2011). The production of the netnography can be descriptive and analytical as the method able to generate rich description through interpretation providing a detailed representation of the lived online experience of the cultural members (Kozinets, et al., 2013). The netnography turns the researcher into an “instrument” (Guba & Lincoln, 1991) and this case the researcher immerse herself into the computer mediated perspective of study. The data can be collected and explored through the researcher's observation and participation how the festival members socialize and create contents in the online spaces and activities (Kozinets, et al., 2013).

As Puri (2007) explains, as the researcher must ‘live’ in the virtual place, as an ethnographer. In contrary, Lee and Broderick (2007) argue that netnographic researchers utilize ‘static words’ used by online customers but do not act together with them (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). Netnography upholds the principles of traditional ethnography through providing a Geertzian sense of "thick description" through the “immersion” of the researcher in the life of the online culture or community (Kozinets, 2009). As Mkono (2012, p. 554.) explained, common networking platforms like Facebook and Twitter *provide means for members to form and join topic-specific groups and discussions*. This study uses netnography in order to observe and gather information directly from the official social media account (Facebook page) of VOLT music festival to deconstruct social interaction, expressions. By monitoring the online community of the festival it enables gathering posts and comments which help to determine co-created values and meanings of the festival spread in the virtual space through consumer experiences, perceptions, dilemmas, arguments in relation to the festival. There are some topics which generate massive replies and debate from the general public, netnography can be an effective method when the researcher wants to investigate into sensitive topics. (Mkono, 2013). The netnography provides the researcher with an organic, high-technological research environment to explore the context of words in social interactions and provide an analytical explanation of the co-created meanings. The author has observed the discussions, but did not interact with the members of the community.

2.5.2.1 Stages of the netnography research

Netnography follows six steps of ethnography: research planning, entrée, data collection, interpretation, ensuring ethical standards, and research representation (Kozinets, 2010). Additionally, Kozinets defines two essential areas prior to following the six steps of ethnography. Firstly, the researcher needs to understand how to combine ethnography what are those researches which could be gathered by face-to-face research and those what could be collected through online interactions. Secondly, the researcher is required to understand the differences of the online social environment to be able to follow the implementation of the ethnographic techniques (Bowler Jr., 2010). According to Kozinets the six steps of netnography are the following.

Entrée: This is represented by the formulation of research questions and identification of the appropriate online community for a study regarding the problem formulation. The researcher has explored the social media channels where the VOLT festival visitors are gathered. According to Füller et. al. (2006) the most relevant online communities should be chosen based on an evaluation of the exchanged content, traffic and number of participants interacting with each other. The festival has multiple social platforms in use (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter), however the most popular and active traffic site is Facebook with over 144.000 followers (April, 2016) and operated by the festival for the longest time period, thus it was chosen for the research field for these reasons. Regarding some social media platform, the users must create an account to e.g. Facebook before be able to access the entire content. The official VOLT festival Facebook page is an open, public brand page, which is accessible for anyone, no additional request or permission was needed to “join”. The writer has been a follower of the VOLT Facebook page as a fan for years, and was immersed herself in the culture of the online community through long-term engagement. During this research process, the author switched from being a fan of the community into an academic researcher. She examined the discussions/topics on Facebook theoretically and critical and analytical manner.

Data collection: It was a direct copy from the computer-mediated communications (CMC) of online community members’ interactions and discussions. Kozinets (2010) categorized three different types of data collection that can be involved in netnographic research: archival data, elicited data, and fieldnote data. Archival data is data copied verbatim from pre-existing posts of community members. Elicited data is new data created through interaction with the researcher and fieldnote data is made up of observations of the researcher. This study contains both archival data and fieldnote data.

The author was encountered with a large volume of raw data and gathered relevant discussions, conversation and comments from the Facebook page (festival official page – namely official VOLT fesztivál) shared from the launching period 2009 up to May 2016 on the Facebook timeline. In this project, direct copy from the computer-mediated communications of online community members will be adopted then translated into English for common understanding. The comments and posts have been chosen and categorized into themes based on the following considering aspects: as how visitors are perceived the festival’s message (finding descriptive,

critical, experience disputes by the users), how those values have been co-produced, co-created. All discussions were examined at the timeline and irrelevant messages have been discarded.

Analysis and interpretation: coding analysis and contextualization of communicative acts. Qualitative data analysis in netnographic analysis can include coding, noting, abstracting, comparing, checking, refining, generalizing and theorizing. The study was using qualitative content analysis focussing on the features of language as communication with special attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967; Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990). The researcher abstracted the co-created meanings from discussions of the Facebook community. The topics were identified by the selected co-created discussion. The co-created meanings of the themes were presented by multiple dimensions in the analysis. For example the findings show both sides of the online community those who reject homosexuals at VOLT festival as it does not fit to the values of a rock festival and people how do not mind having them there. The author has refined the massive amount of decoded data and picked those parts which give the most relevant information and notion in regards of the problem formulation. The method has been adapted in order to understand the in-depth meaning of community activity through dialogues, expressions and meanings beyond them. Lastly, the author has interpreted the selected themes based on her objective understanding and in connection with the preliminary and emerging theories.

Research ethics: All discussions are available to be accessed by any individual because all post were shared publicly by the festival, no further permission was needed by admin to join, simply push the “like” at the Facebook page. On the other hand, the research followed a strict ethics of handling the personal information. The author has received the permission from the VOLT festival Facebook admin to conduct this study exclusively for academic reason. Consequently, the data will be presented confidentially and anonymously. The researcher considered the privacy of community members, therefore the person’s name, date or time are not cited in the text. Only the monogram of the person will be shown in the analysis beside the quote, as it was also required by the festival marketing manager. The appendix will include the original quotes of the netnography research in Hungarian.

Strength and weaknesses of Netnography

Netnography is less intrusive compared to the ethnography, as the raw data in most of the cases is available for the public and due to the nature of online community forums, the written conversations is already naturally transcribed (O'Reilly et al, 2007). Another advantage is that consumers reveal information, also sensitive details, unasked and voluntarily way (Langer & Beckman, 2005). The aim of applying the netnographic research was to hear how *vox populi*, the VOLT community users co-create the original festival meanings. Mkono (2012, p.554) states that in online interactions participants might open up more due to the absence of an inquisitive researcher, compare to the “traditional” face-to-face research. The author claims, that in terms of the homosexuality topic, the Hungarian attitude is not as direct face-to-face as online to express their harsh opinion about the “otherness”.

Due to the nature of netnography, the focus is exclusively on online communities and ignores the offline communities of a fan group. A critical aspect need to be noted regarding to the researcher interpretive ability, as it depends on the author how she understands, categorizes and then conveys the data from netnographic research. Moreover, the enormous set of data was challenging to process and analysed in regards to the problem formulation. The author organised the data in systematic way, and the nature of the digital platform enables that the researcher can go back in time to discover co-created meanings and she was also able to follow-up on current patterns of conversations. The author believes it is appropriate methodological research, as the study was able to assess and explore seven years period of conversation in few months on Facebook. As Kozinets (1998, p. 8) highlighted, “*The use of netnographic techniques allows a researcher to comprehensively cover the entire social context of “life on the screen.”*” People discussed topics and commented more naturally due to the nature of social media than if they would discuss the topic for example through an interview or focus group. The researcher acted as an instrument during the research, but her role was not intrusive for the members, so the interaction flow of the community stayed spontaneous and “organic”. The netnography research provided the author not only the possibility to explore “one to one type of research” (such as a personal interview), but it was able to observe massive interactions between users to users and between the festival and users discussions, both type was required and crucial to answer to the problem formulation.

2.5.3 Semi-structured interview

In a qualitative research the typical data collection method is the interviewing. Within this study, it was chosen a semi-structured one which requires an interview guide; a list of questions at hand which are covering the main issues on the topic. However, the questions can be flexibly adjusted through the interview according to the responses of the interviewee. It allows the researcher to ask further questions which are not prepared beforehand to clarify additional relevant fields of the study. The interview guide included digital marketing theories like how the festival manages the social media site, or what are the challenges and advantages of the online discussions. Smith & Osborn (2003, p. 58) summarizes the advantages of the semi-structured interview as “*it facilitates rapport/empathy, allows a greater flexibility of coverage and allows the interview to go into novel areas, and it tends to produce richer data*”. The disadvantage is lack of control in the outcome, and could also be difficult to analyse it. The flexibility of the semi-structured interview and the goal that the outcome will be detailed and include thorough deep answers is what directed the researcher to apply this type of data collection to support and more deeply elaborate on the netnographic approach to data collection. The interview was conducted with Krisztina Kutas, the media and production manager at Sziget Cultural Management Ltd, the organisation which organises the VOLT festival, in Sopron. The interview occurred via Skype; the Internet application was an appropriate channel both for the interviewee and for the researcher due to its advantage of using it to avoid the distance of barrier between the two parties. The interviewer recorded the conversation by the approval of the interviewee and made a translated transcript of it in English. Mostly open-ended questions were designed within digital marketing and social media activities. *e.g. To what purpose do you use Facebook? How is the monitoring policy of the festival on Facebook? Have you ever experienced to delete/block the users' content on Facebook?* These questions are related to Prahalad and Ramaswamy's (2004) DART model to the element of transparency.

Additionally, the researcher wanted to use the interview also to gain a complex understanding by getting managerial answers and explanation on the decoded disputes, which were found relevant during the netnographic research. The author asked questions like: *When is the moment when you get involved in a debate? What consequences do you notice after a virtual debate? Do you consider that those altered meanings can modify the “intended” message about the VOT*

festival? These questions addressed how the festival is facilitating or moderating the social media platform and whether they have any influence on their marketing communication strategies.

2.5.4 Secondary research

Secondary data is the information, which already exists in some form, which has already collected it (McGivern, 2006, p. 149). The festival official website was reviewed and particularly the press/media coverage and 20th year's jubilee book was examined. Lastly, an online interview with Norbert Lobenwein (main organiser) was discovered and used from Sopron's online blog.

2.6 Quality criteria in qualitative research

As this research is explorative and qualitative in its nature, therefore it will be evaluated based on trustworthiness quality criteria. It is more appropriate to assure the quality of this interpretive qualitative research, although it also shows similar components as the validity and reliability (Bryman, 2012, p. 390). The terms refer in the qualitative literature that address validity, such as trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Trustworthiness is a complex criteria that needs to be insured by credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility The qualitative research can establish the credibility with the technique like triangulation, which involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce detailed explanation and it helps facilitate a richer understanding. Additionally, a prolonged engagement technique was suitable, the author spent three months in the field to learn or understand the culture, social interactions, and phenomenon of co-creation on the social platform. The author applied the persistent observation during the research process is to identify characteristics and elements in the virtual community that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focused on them in detail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304).

Transferability is concerned with the question of whether the results of the research can be generalized beyond a specific research context (Bryman, 2012). That questions whether the given findings may be equally applicable to other research settings, like other organisations. The

research problem is concerned with one specific organisation and the results present particularly this festival' social interactions. Thus the findings from online social networks cannot be generalized because of their uniqueness and complexity, which is also the correlated of the interpretative thinking.

Dependability is assured if the study is consistent and accurate. The study has covered a certain timeframe of the Facebook timeline of the festival. If the research would be repeated by another researcher even in the same research period from Facebook (from 2009-2016), the results might differ from how the author analysed the findings in her own individual interpretation at the current time frame. However, if the scale of time would be extended it would definitely provide additional findings of co-created meanings, due the active interaction of VOLT community. Furthermore, if the interview would be conducted another representative from the management t could present different vision about the social media communications and interactions and about the decoded disputes in virtual fan community.

Confirmability is concerned with that the findings are clearly derived from the data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). The research developed the audit trail technique, for instance the author combined field and archival notes to the raw data in netnographic research. It was crucial to develop a transparent research development about how the investigations have been done (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The main goal was to ensuring that the data have been interpreted from an objective view (Wallendorf & Russell, 1989).

2.7 Translation of the empirical data

VOLT festival's official Facebook page run in Hungarian by the Sziget Cultural Ltd' s marketing department. All its content posts are nearly a hundred percent in Hungarian, even though it is the official site for VOLT fans. Despite the fact that, the festival could have high potential to attract international attendees as well, there can be seen only few non-Hungarian comments by the visitors (in German or in English). Since this thesis requires English context for common understanding of the topic, the posts and comments which are used in the analysis were translated to English. When the author applies the translation of the texts, there is the risk that the original meaning might be lost, or does not convey the exact meaning in the English context.

For instance, some of the rumour, joke, slang and sarcasm simply cannot express the original meaning due to the translation. Furthermore, to capture the richness of experience in language, people usually use narratives and metaphors (Polkinghorne 2005). These narratives, metaphors or expression are language-specific and could vary from culture to culture. Qualitative research is considered valid when the distance between the meanings as experienced by the participants and the meanings as interpreted by the author in the findings is as close as possible (Polkinghorne 2007). The author aimed to present a truthful and accurate translation of the texts to guarantee that the meanings of the posts and comments have been preserved and conveyed to the readers. The author has been immersed into the language of the community, she used her analytical, communication, interpersonal, research skills to achieve accurate meanings in English. Additionally, academic researchers recommend checking the quality with an external translating support (e.g. official translation company, or other academics) to avoid misinterpretation of the collected data (Smith, et al., 2008). Therefore, the writer has also consulted with a Hungarian - English bilingual speaker- who works as social media manager - to assure highest level of validity of the translated data.

2.8 Criticism and Limitation

2.8.1 Empirical limitation

The examination of online fan co-creating values involved only one fan group, operated by the festival itself. The netnography research includes data solely gathered from one social platform, namely from Facebook, where only textual conversations have been examined and presented in this research. The netnographic research would have provided enormous amount of raw data, which could not have been feasible to analyse within the frame of this thesis. The thematic findings were based upon a solely author's online observation and interpretation.

Moreover, the research is exclusively using contents from the official Facebook page of the festival. It does not explore other user-generated contents of the fans on their private social platforms, as the purpose of the study was to examine the collective power of co-creation in a virtual community. Other VOLT festival fan pages or groups have not been discovered by the author.

The author has followed a strict ethical requirement to not violate the data, therefore the research do not contain the names, exact date and the pictures of the Facebook community members. The relevant comments of the certain discussions have translated, and the rests remain in the original language context, due to the time limitation.

3 Literature review

3.1 Festival and events literature in tourism

3.1.1 Event and festival's literature evolution

Tourism as an industry or cultural activity is very strongly related to a place, culture, heritage, or events, and those players are inter-connected with destination, attraction or establish an interaction between their staff and visitors (Hannam & Knox, 2010). It has been for few decades that the event management has become a vital part of the tourism industry.

At the early age of the event tourism research field, researchers have focused mainly on the economic impacts of an event, like the profit maximization studied by Gartner and Holecek (1983), then J.R.B. Ritchie (1984) conducted a research into natural impacts of hallmark events. Later in the 1990s, Festival Management and Event Tourism was the first to publish from Uysal, Gahan, and Martin (1993) who analyzed the tourist motivation of attending events, followed by Crompton and McKay's (1994) and Crompton's (1999) economic values on *Measuring the Economic Impact of Visitors to Sport Tournaments and Special Events*. With the turn of the century, the social and cultural impacts of events finally gained higher awareness than before. Although anthropological researchers like Greenwood (1972) go back to the previous century, the authors received the deserved attention only in the 2000s. The previous years' literature has focused exclusively on the economic values of an event, which has changed at the turn of century. Academics have opened up their research focus to explore more comprehensive and complex ways of looking the event impacts and analyse them from several angles, not only based on economic outcome. Consequently, many of the anthropological or social studies become acknowledged from previous years among these is Greenwood's. Events' literature has grown and with it, a number of distinct specializations emerged and gained recognition, including the event tourism (Getz, 2008). Additionally, the emerging sub-areas of event tourism have come to

contain range of divisions of events-related impacts - such as environmental, economic, social/cultural- policy and planning, or business and management related fields (Getz, 2008). However, only few researchers dealt with the nature of the festival experience itself. The 21st century can be said to be the maturity stage of event industry literature where the researchers have shifted from profit utilization to consumer related practices. At the same time, businesses have realized that their customers are essential stakeholders of their success and attractiveness (Getz, 2008).

3.1.2 Event and festival definitions/theories

Events become an important motivator for tourists to travel thus significantly shapes the development and marketing plans of most of the destinations (Getz, 2008). The roles and impacts of events are increasingly important for a destination's competitiveness and attractiveness. Getz formalized the relation between tourism and events; and it was defined as a "*systematic planning, development and marketing of the festivals and special events as tourist attraction catalyst and image builders*" (Getz & Wicks, 1993:2). As they highlight it, events are a complex procedure of conscious, strategic planning and development efforts from businesses' perspective, but tourists are part of the image creation of it. Festivals are an expanding sector of the cultural industry across the world (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007) as a result of the fact that they offer consumers leisure and social gathering opportunities beyond their everyday experiences (Jago and Shaw, 1998). The cultural and social aims of organizing events and festivals is to focus on encouraging the local participation, to increase awareness for venue, practice and maintain tradition or socio-cultural value, satisfy the needs of special interest groups or conserve local heritage (Hannam & Knox, 2010). According to Backman et. al. 1995 event tourism is considered to be one of the fastest growing elements of the tourism industry, as it is able to accommodate, cater, entertain and recreate, travel or transfer in the same period. Accordingly, festival marketers will offer a complex tourist package for participants who can chose how they want to encounter with the festival itself and its amenities. As events can be one of major attractions of a destination, which attract massive amounts of visitors, they can create massive economic, social/cultural, environmental impact.

Falassi acknowledged that the definitions and meanings of festivals have been defined in several ways in academic literature. The explanation made by Falassi (1995:37) says: the celebrations

based on holy and cultural traditions and customs; celebrations of an important people or an event and cultivation of an important crop; or public fairs and feasts. A festival can be defined as periodic cultural manifestations, such as a film festival, music festival or theatre festival. Getz (2005) defines the festivals as public themed celebrations that are organized for different purposes and within the scope of different genres or themes. Festivals are meant to be fun and joyous (Waterman, 1998). An event can attract local, regional, national and even international spectators, depending on its uniqueness, status and promotion. It offers opportunity for social gatherings, leisure, and experiencing cultural activities beyond the everyday life. Often they are associated with the metaphor of escape like “getting away from all” which also addresses the recreative and rejuvenating aspect of tourism (Enzensberger, 1996). This feeling implies the festival experience also, as participants find themselves in a different time and space (Picard & Robinson, 2006) and they might gather to meet with like-minded people who are there for the same reason.

Similarly, Quinn (2006) notes that festivals appeared as a socially sustaining device through which humans express their identities and connect (Ekman, 1999; Farber, 1983; Geertz, 1993). Community events offer a place in which individuals with commonalities bind together in turn to experience a sense of belonging (Booth, 2014, p. 226). Kelly determines (1955) that event experiences and meanings attached to them, are both ‘*personal and social constructs*’. Festival goers are seeking a place where they perceive extraordinary experiences, which have symbolic and emotional significance, which they will then associated with the place itself (Morgan, 2007).

Festivals can be categorized in several ways, for instance in frame of their size, form or content. Based on their size and scale, it can be mentioned major events (British Formula One Grand Prix), mega events (Olympic Games), hallmark events (Carnival in Rio), and local community events. As this project is focusing on a hallmark event, the other types of event definitions stay untouched. Bowdin et. al (2008) describe the term of “hallmark events” as those events that “*become so identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city or region, that may become synonymous with the name of the place and gain widespread recognition and awareness*” (Bowdin, et al., 2008, p. 20). Ritchie (1984:2) refers to it as “*such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.*” Hallmark events are strongly identified the essence of places, and their citizens, generate huge tourist

revenue and powerful sense of pride and international recognition. Another way of classifying events is by their form or content. There are cultural events like festivals, sport events, business events (often called as MICE). In this study, only music festival events will be explored. Music festivals are marked in the tourism literature, usually as a division of music tourism (Gibson and Connell, 2005), cultural tourism (Nurse, 2004) or event tourism (Getz, 1991; 2008). Campbell, (2011) states that music tourism can be defined by individuals travelling to a place where they might not reside to either listen to live performances or to experience history related to the creation of or performance of music. This definition is very narrow as festivals are much more complex events than simply listening to music, as Campbell claims. Music festivals are the ultimate music experience which has developed from hippy gatherings to mega events in recent years (Koranteng, 2004). Music festival visitors are seeking for full package of experience during the events. Consequently, by increasingly satisfying leisure offers and programmes, the amount of attendees is annually growing in many festivals. They might want to acquire cultural goods, including entertaining programmes, literature about an artist or performance, or perhaps an artwork, like a musical instrument or CD purchased at the event, as a tangible evidence of their cultural capital (Wilks, 2009:43). However, there is more to what customers demand to have from a festival than just tangible products. The following aspects can also be very crucial to take into consideration when managers want to organise successful events and memorable festival experience for participants: such as accessible venue, performers/artist (line-up) , big variety of catering services, atmosphere, audio-visual and sound effects, hospitality, security, hygiene etc. (Oakes, 2003; Shuker, 2001).

3.1.3 Event and festival marketing approaches

Wagen (2007) said that the approach of event marketing should vary from product marketing as the concept of events is purely intangible, such as performances, festivals, or shows. In the traditional goods dominant view, the marketing approach has seen the customer to getting segmented, targeted, promoted to, distributed to, captured, and then attracted (4Ps) to make the purchase by the influence of heavy promotional activities. When festival managers have applied this approach (4P) they were exclusively focusing on manager perspective impacts, for instance how to market the festival image, how to manage volunteers, how to produce social coherence or increase the visitor number to generate higher profit. Managers were interested only in that

capitalist world-view to make the most out of the festival economically. As Uysal and Gitleson's (1994) also have defined festivals as '*traditional events staged to increase the tourism appeal to potential visitors*'. These aspects have ignored what visitors want to gain or experience from the festival. Earlier understandings seem to have little concern of the fact that festival meanings always extend '*beyond both economics and beyond tourism*' (Quinn, 2006). As Quinn suggests, a festival is more what earlier researchers have explored. Naturally, a festival leaves impacts on the tourism of the particular destination and consequently contributes economically as well. However, it goes much beyond those aspects; it is a social gathering including several social, political and cultural entities.

In contrast with the goods dominant, the service dominant (S- D) logic sees "*the customer as an operant resource – a resource that is capable of acting on other resources, a collaborative partner who co-creates value with the firm*" (Lusch, et al., 2007, p. 6). The changes can arise when the traditional approach shifts to the S-D logic where interactions with the customers set up the main perspective of the business. The festival industry is challenging fields as many service related industries, the goal being not simply identify consumers' needs, or continuously satisfy their expectations, but more importantly to interactively co-creating experiences and values with the consumers (Vargo & Lush, 2006). According to Getz (2012), in the tourism, service and event sector, consumers are more demanding to perceive, unique, personalized, and memorable experiences. They want to have customized experiences, participating themselves in experience creation. Event producers therefore must become experience designers and co-creators (Getz, 2012). Customers with more experiences are demanding even higher standards and quality of service, furthermore to gain more unique experiences and active involvement with the happenings, as Getz (2012) highlights being the most important expectation. As Andersson and Getz (2008) determined that festival's visitors are the most important stakeholders (Andersson, et al., 2014). Therefore, festival organizers should actively cooperate with them in the value creation process to become or remain a successful event in the long term.

3.2 Theories of co-creation

3.2.1 Value co-creation

Value creation has become the central aspect in marketing. In the traditional view of creating value for a product or brand, the companies have decided what that certain value to the consumer. It is those products and services the company wishes to produce and they will purchase them. In that perspective, the customers have a slight chance or no role at all in value creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy,2004). That was in the traditional value-exchange process, where the products or services were traded with monetary values. These values gave higher interest to companies (their acquisition of wealth) but the role of the customers was underestimated. The traditional approach of value creation has challenged by the emerging idea, the customer as ‘co-producer of value’ (Prahalad & Ramaswamy,2000), followed by the development of the customer involvement approach (Prahalad 2004; Vargo & Lusch 2004). Furthermore, the meaning and nature of values was analyzed by Gummesson et. al. (2008, 2009), Cova and Dallı (2009), Grönroos (2011) and Ng et. al. (2010). By the emerging new idea of co-producing values by customers, they become active, connected, have great power on designing and creating and are part of the processes. Vargo and Lusch (2004) introduced service dominant logic, as a new paradigm in marketing, which focuses on consumers’ role in co-creating value and valuable experiences with the service organization. Vargo and Lusch (2004) addressed the role of customers as value co-creators, while the firm creates ‘value propositions’ (potential for value). Ramaswamy (2011) also stated that the value is a function of human experiences, and those experiences originates from interactions (Getz, 2012). The organization and the consumer should also work together (as they use the same resources) but they are also competing to make best use of the value for themselves (Ertimur and Venkatesh, 2010). Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) explained also that, due to the Internet and online social platforms, it allows customers to get actively involved with a value creation and have dialogue conversation with companies and service providers. Customers are not ignored by companies as “*they have moved out of the audience and on to the stage*” (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000). The role of customers has changed by development of the new marketing concepts, which will be illustrated the next chapter.

3.2.2 Goods - dominant logic – Service- dominant logic - Customer -dominant logic

In the traditional view of the process of value creation, consumers were “outside the firm” (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The concept of “value chain” portrays the single role of the firm in value creation (Porter, 1980). Customers had no role in it, they were only a “target” for the firm’s offerings (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The interactions between companies and customers were not seen as a potential source of value creation (Normann & Ramirez, 1994; Wikstrom, 1996).

In the goods dominant logic, the focus was traditionally based on the exchange of the output, where the main goal was to create tangible commodities to gain higher economic wealth, the marketers were interested only in monetary impacts of the production (Lusch, et al., 2007). The aim of businesses proposed exclusively to maximize the corporate, financial impacts while ignoring the consumer side of value creation. The traditional value creation was interested in the “value-in-exchange”, as value was created by the firm and exchanged for goods or money. Therefore, the monetary value is transactional, objective and non-interactive (Echeverri & Skålen, 2011) and equals the price that the consumer is willing to pay for (Grönroos, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The communication with the customers occurred at the end of the value chain, as the company produced exclusively the value. That was solely a one-way communication from the company side (Varey & Ballantyne, 2006).

The early literature on co-creation was mainly focusing on consumer participation to enhance service and product innovation (co-innovation) (Herstatt & von Hippel, 1992; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Later, reports were also exploring the how the companies seek to engage their customers by using social platforms and social technologies (Payne et al, 2008, Zwick et al, 2008).

Traditionally, the outcome- oriented perspective was the principle what marketers have followed, in order to measure and utilize for example the economic impacts on the festival. In contrast of the goods dominant view, *“the service dominant logic is based on the understanding of bringing together networks, societies, specializing in and exchanging the application of their competences for the applied competences they need for their own well being”* (Lusch, et al., 2007, p. 6). Consequently, the development from “product orientation” to a “consumer orientation” reshaped the function of marketing. The S-D logic focuses on ‘value-in-use’ and ‘value-in’. The change

created intangible products (services) which have value-adding enhancements compared to tangible goods (Lusch, et al., 2007). The main shift resulted also that several authors shifted their research focus on intangible assets such as relationships, interactivity and mutual creation within a broad range of business areas (Skaržauskaitė, 2013). The move from the Goods dominant logic (G-D logic) to the Service dominant logic (S-D logic) established a new marketing paradigm which focuses on relationship marketing and customers as co-producers of value (Grönroos, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). It emphasizes the progress of relations between consumers and organizations throughout dialogue and ongoing interactions. (Skaržauskaitė, 2013) The S-D logic acknowledged the customer as an operand resource, the resource which is capable of acting with others, a mutual partner who co-creates value with the firm, not merely generates ideas for improvements passively. As Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004) described the informed, networked, empowered, and active consumers are increasingly co-creating value with the firm (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). In S-D logic, customers have active, goal-oriented role in value co-creation through the resource-based view, in which consumers are seen to integrate their resources to co-create value (Edvardsson et al. 2011; Gummesson 2006; Vargo 2008). However, this paradigm shows also several critics, as it sees the customers merely as a “resource”, who generate values with the company, but takes no notice of the interactions between the customers.

The recently emerged Customer-Dominant (C-D) logic (Heinonen et al. 2013; Heinonen et al. 2010) originates from the fundamental principles of S-D logic, where the service organizations are viewed as providing value propositions. Vargo and Lush (2004) conceptualizes value co-creation in terms of interactive processes between the customer and the service provider, in the service dominant logic. However, there has been only little literature that deals with how customer can co-create values with other customers. People socialize, interact and share their consumption experiences with each other for example on leisure activities, guided tours, festivals, thus it can also provide an important enhancement. Customers become individual creators and/or producers of value for themselves as well as others. (Rihova, 2013) Consumers are viewed as value co-creators, using their skills and knowledge to produce or to create the objects of their own consumption as *prosumer* (Bagozzi and Warshaw, 1990). Rihova et.al. (2014), proposed that the C2C co-creation involves the inherent social structures in many tourism consumption contexts. However, the significance of the “*empowered prosumer*” have

not broadly explored yet through the academic literature. As Heinonen et al. (2010, p. 533) declare, marketing researchers would benefit from a more “*holistic understanding of customers’ lives, practices and experiences, in which service is naturally and inevitably embedded*”. This also directs to the viewpoint what Grönroos and Voima,(2011) suggest that rather seeing the customer as a resource in the co-creation process, the organisations should endeavour to figure out of what customers actually do with the service to accomplish their own goals. The Customer dominant logic includes the benefits of both the G-D and S-D logic, as it highlights: “*tourists co-create value by integrating their personal skills (operant resources) with the challenges (operand resources) posed by the service setting, including the social aspects of that setting in the sense of C2C interactions*” (Rihova et.al, 2014, p.9.) Moreover, C-D logic suggests that the organisation should be a supporter/facilitator in the value creation, and the customer should be the only value creator (Grönroos, 2008, Heinonen et.al.2010). Heinonen et.al. (2010) argues that the marketers will benefit from C-D logic to find out what the customers do with the service to achieve their goals. The S- D logic focused primarily on the process of the co-creation between the two parts, the provider-consumer perspective. Heinonen et.al.2013 proposed the inter-subjective value, which involves number of social actors to the value creation process.

3.2.3 The process of value co-creation

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) identify four essential conditions of co-creation of value; Dialogue, Access, Risk assessment and Transparency (DART Model) which gives a framework to how the organization can maximize the value of co-creation with the customers. In addition, they (2004) argue that the purpose of the DART model is to demonstrate the need to create co-creation experiences, a model in which the key building blocks are also elements that the managers must take into consideration. The DART model is used as managerial tool, mainly focusing on the interaction aspects of the co-creation processes like how to manage co-creation the most effective way. However, the model is ignoring the socio-cultural dimensions of value co-creation and the co-created sharing of meanings which can suddenly generate quite powerful value chains.

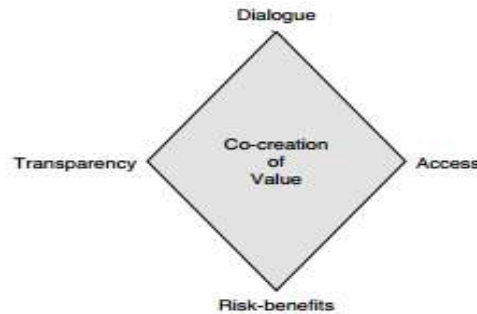


Figure 1.DART-model

(Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 9)

Dialogue is an important part in the co-creation as it implies interactivity and deep engagement from both sides (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Markets can be seen as a set of conversations between the customers and the firm (Levine, Locke, Searls, & Weinberger, 2001). Dialogue means more than just listening to the customers, it enables shared learning and communication between two equal problem solver partners. It attains and retains a loyal community. However, Prahalad & Ramaswamy's view does not mention the communication between customer and customer, which can result crucial affect within value creation. Today, customers expect transparency. "Don't hold back, tell me the truth," is often the approach (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Companies have to show a transparent communication policy with the customer. Furthermore, they explained the risk is the probability of harm to the consumers. Consumers require knowing more information about potential risks of goods and services offered to them. The last building block - the access - criticises the idea that ownership is the only way for the consumer to experience value. Customers do not have to own something to be able to experience it. The DART model discovers essential capabilities that the organisation requires to develop to successfully engage in co-creation. According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004b) both management and customers will have to make adjustments in order to achieve successful co-creation value process, as they stated "*Consumers will have to learn that co-creation is a two-way street*" (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b, p. 14). However, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) ignored the fact that companies should learn the complexity of co-creation as well, as it could turn out as uncontrollable "multiple streets" and result in unexpected exchanges of values

and meanings, which are not covered and explained by the DART model. Heinonen et al. (2010) point out that instead of focusing how the consumers can be engaged and co-creating process with the company, the service providers should concentrate on how they can be involved in their customers' lives.

Grönroos (2008) examined also the value co-creation process and provided three elements that lead to the outcome: customer's sphere, supplier's sphere and joint sphere. Co-creation is about a joint creation of value by the company and customers. At the same time, Payne et al. (2008) claim that customers are a central element of the co-creation process: "*The customer is always a co-creation of value, there is no value until an offering is used, experience and perception are essential to value determination*" (Payne et al, 2008, p.84). The framework is similar to the approach that Grönroos (2008) used. Payne et. al. established that framework with three sections as well: customer value creating process, supplier value creating process and encounter process (Payne et al, 2008, p.85).

- *Customer value-creating process* – the processes, resources and practices which customers use to manage their activities
- *Supplier value-creating process* – the processes, resources and practices which the supplier uses to manage its business and its relationships with customers and other relevant stakeholders
- *Encounter processes* – the processes and practices of interaction and exchange that occur within customer and supplier relationships, which need to be managed to develop successful co-creation opportunities

Both of the authors have seen the main significance of creation, as jointly value exchange between the provider and the consumer. Value creation processes are based on "personalized consumer experiences" (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004), the co-creativity between consumer and firm (Holt, 2002).

Ramaswamy explained the process of co-creation as following: "co-creation is, by its very nature, not about "*build it and they will come*", but "*build it with them, and they are already there*", and "*co-creation is both the means and the end, as in a continuous cycle*" (Ramaswamy, 2009: 14). The co-creation process is object to perpetual interactions/discussions, and the role of

the provider should focus on how to maintain the community value creation process, rather than deeming the tribe members whose role is to create value to the firm (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014).

Lanier and Hampton (2008) claimed that the consumer participation can be divided into three main categories: co-optation, co-production, and co-creation. They say *co-optation* is the process in which consumers assume duties once performed by producers, e.g. self-service technologies (Meuter et al. 2000). *Co-production* is the process in which customers are taking part to design and be involved, to varying degrees, in the production of a new product or service-development process. The third, *Co-creation* is a process in which consumers actively extend or alter the product beyond its original or intended form, use or meaning. Lanier and Hampton (2008) suggest also that customer participation and involvement might vary depending on the level of control over the resources associated with the offering (Gyimóthy & Larson, 2015).

3.2.4 Value co-creation in event/festival tourism

It is common to say that tourism and hospitality are the key elements in experience economy, developed by (Pine&Gilmore, 1999). Pine & Gilmore were pioneers in reshaping the traditional marketing as they stated, “*goods and services are no longer enough*”, but postmodern consumers are in pursuit for excitement and engagement (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). However, the Pine & Gilmore’s philosophy has shown also several critical aspects as it is very sender oriented. The brands/companies have created experiences and customers have received experiences only as observers, at the end of the value chain process. This has been transformed also by the development of social media, the one way communication fades away, and as the result of the two-way communication, customers can interact with providers and with each other, and they are able to actively shape their experience together with the businesses.

Festivals apply Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) term of the ‘experience economy’, constructing a temporary ‘creative space’ which can attract visitors (Richards and Wilson, 2006). The festival experience literature is made up two crucial parts: the one is from the management/organization angle, where “*the experience management can be seen as a way of creating competitive advantage in price-led markets*“ (Morgan, 2007). The other is the consumers’ viewpoint, Holbrook and Hirschmann (1982) explained “*consumption experience as a subjective state of*

consciousness shaped by hedonic responses, symbolic meanings and aesthetic criteria; fantasies, feelings and fun.

Buhalis et. al. (2013, p. 551) claimed that the co-creation in tourism experiences can be referred to as experiences that are not merely passively staged but rather actively shaped and created by the tourist consumer in conjunction with the company. Getz (2012) describes the co-creation in the event industry when “*a company (event) and customer (or potential audience) shares in the creation of value by allowing customers to shape experiences to suit their needs and desires*” (Getz, 2012, p. 27). This statement suggests the experience personalization for the customers, which might make them satisfied and in exchange generate value to the company. This is directed also to the Vargo & Lusch’ service-dominant logic.

3.2.5 Value co-creation in online community

Many of the co-creation models and theories are setting their main focal point on exclusively the relationship between the customers and service providers. However, events and festivals are shared collective experiences, which are as much influenced by the community of consumers as it is by the service provider (Gyimóthy & Larson, 2015). Co-creation processes occur at virtual co-creation environments within virtual consumption communities (Rowley et al., 2007). The co-consuming group is a collective consumer community where consumers shape by ‘linking value’ with the purpose of co-constructing their consumption, resistance, or empowerment (e.g. Cova and Cova, 2002). These are evident in a variety of different virtual contexts such as online gaming and role-playing sites, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace), content-sharing sites (e.g. YouTube and Flickr), interest-based exchange fora (e.g. blogs, micro-blogs, and discussion sites) and ‘crowdsourcing’ processes (e.g. wikis and open-source software) (Anderson, 2006; Howe, 2009; Jenkins, 2008; Leadbetter, 2009; Li & Bernoff, 2008).

As tourism is a form of colonization (Bender 2001), the same way festival communities create their own tribe community as well. Edward Said’s notion of Orientalism (1979) defined the “othering”, as a difference between “us” and “them”, the Orient and Western world’ people. Completing Said’s thoughts Volf (1996) added they do not only portray “themselves” as different, but also implicate who “they are not”. Said (1979) explored the othering phenomenon in anthropological perspective, but the in marketing communication like in global campaigns can

be also found the exclusion, othering and stereotyping. Van Leeuwen (2000) researched the terms in relation of visual racism, between the viewer and depictions of people, people as “others” or persons not like “us,” that can produce unethical imagery. Borgerson & Schroeder (2004, p.6.) define the exclusion, how certain groups or individuals “*traditionally been left out of the marketing communication pantheon.*” The tourism is an example in terms of the host and the guest relationship, which do not always generate beneficial impact on the two parties.

From the consumer perspective, the individual is seeking to find those kinds of virtual environments where intense ‘community of emotion or passion’ can be perceived, as ‘a network of heterogeneous persons linked by a shared passion or emotion’ (Cova& Cova, p. 602). Additionally, Cova, Pace, & Park, (2007) and Godin, (2008) explained that web-based technologies have enabled such communities or ‘tribes’ to surface, and which can be defined through the ‘*use and interest rather than proximity*’, thus leading to a ‘*collapse of geographic space*’ and a ‘*de-territorialisation*’ of a consumption experience. (Harwood & Garry, 2010, p. 292) Moreover, they state from a company perspective, such virtual communities offer a suitable context for the co-creation of a consumption experience environment with customers (ibid:2010, p. 292). By the emergence of new technologies that facilitate multimedia and immersive exchange (e.g. virtual worlds, role-playing, content sharing, collective intelligence, and social-networking websites), as well as support the ongoing relationships among geographically dispersed consumers that would otherwise be difficult to sustain. (Harwood & Garry, 2010)

Users can convey their own interpretation of user-generated content in virtual communities which might go beyond the commercial value-creation context and aims (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The collective consumer consumption has been seen to create opportunities for the company but due to power change their co-created messages can become even harmful or challenging to control for the company (Pongsakornrunsilp & Schroeder, 2011). Original values and promotional messages of the organisation can be altered, redefined by the collective community consumption. The collective consumer consumptions can often generate “disputes” or “controversies “, which are formed “*from critical debates, of opposing views, of weighing reasons, and deliberating*” (Regner, 2013, p. 30). Furthermore, controversies involve deep deviation concerning standpoints related to ideas, attitudes, preferences, rules and methods, or

about how they should be interpreted (Regner, 2013). That brings us to the concept – “*the comprehension of meaning of facts*” (ibid, 2013) - what the author wants to explore in this study.

The next chapter will explore the emergence of social media, digital technologies and the culture of the virtual community, as the author claims they have created promising new platforms for co-creation.

3.3 Digital technologies and Social media

Binkhorst and Den Dekker (2009) claimed that technological developments as the Internet, the virtual communities or the immersive virtual worlds have changed how tourism offerings are consumed. The integrated marketing communication (IMC) concept has extended the focal point of the businesses from purely promotion activities, which was until then the major communication element. Consequently, the relationship began to transform from promoting to the customer, to building an interactive nature of relation with the customer (Bowdin et al., 2006). By the implementation of IMC, it becomes more differentiated how the tourist experiences delivered and perceived (Sundbo & Hagedorn-Rasmussen, 2008). Technology and the Internet have fundamentally changed the way the world interacts and communicates. (Hudson & Hudson, 2013) Traditional way of branding emphasizing on mass media practices are less and less effective in a marketplace where customers have access to massive amounts of information about brands, products and companies or brand networks (Keller, 2009). “*Context-based marketing dynamically engages the physical environment of users by co-creating their experiences based on the optimization of external and internal conditions.*” (Buhalis & Foerste, 2015, p. 152) Context-based marketing is derived from social media and customer personalization uses mobile devices as a new concept. It enables vendors to boost value for all stakeholders at the destination by revolutionizing the market offering and co-creating products and services actively with clients (ibid:2015:152).

Social media are referred to as Web 2.0, consumer-generated media, citizen media and new media (Strokes, 2013). The key difference between in Web 2.0 is that here the customers are content creators, as in Web 1.0 they consume it; the change shifted from monologue to creating active discussion and engagement throughout a variety of platforms. Kaplan and Haenlein

(2010, p. 61) explained as Social media as “*a group of Internet -based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user- generated content*”. As Shao (2009) summarized how previous authors defined social media and identified three ways of using user-generated media as “*consuming, participating, and producing*”. Both academics agree that the social media is an interactive-participatory content producing and sharing platform. The social media and Internet applications enable users to encounter with several online activities based on their interest and preference. It gives enormous freedom to the users in what extent, when and to which site they want to belong to and to interact with.

Social media and virtual communities are becoming important features of tourism related consumption, and usage of those platforms possibly will change the way people select and consume tourism offerings, services (Gyimóthy, 2013). Scholars have notified marketers and managers that they cannot conceptualize or manipulate social media communication processes nowadays, as meanings emerge from the collaborative interaction between providers and consumers (Munar, et al., 2013). The major shift has been raised with 2.0. social media platforms by the change of power from the marketers to the consumers. Users are active co-producers and meanings can be changed by passing it to another user(s) (Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010). With the emergence of social networking sites, customers have become powerful, they have a voice, and they do not shy away from speaking their mind, and are no longer considered as being merely passive (Fournier & Avery, 2011). Due to these social and technological developments, consumers are active creators, socially connected with the mass to spread their opinions, experiences. (Laroche et. al., 2012)

High- exposure social media platforms are inexpensive and effective to launch viral campaigns or crowdsource innovative ideas, although organizations/ companies have weak control over the content, in contrast of the traditional marketing tools as here anyone can share, comment or create; those challenges have been recognized by public and private sectors as well (Gyimóthy & Larson, 2015). Negative experiences with services or treatments can more rapidly spread through social media than positive experiences and thus affect a certain company in an unfavourable way. To avoid negative impact several organizations erase inappropriate comments of users to stay attractive but that causes credibility issues and manipulate how the information is

represented on the social platform (Munar, et al., 2013). Instead of that, marketing managers should recognize the power and critical nature of the discussions (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Due to the vast of online communication between users, the companies are unable to control all the discussion what their customers are talking about. The social media leaders should learn how to talk with the customers together, moreover *“influence and shape these discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s mission and performance goals”* (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). By doing so, organisations can reduce the negative or unexpected user-generated contents, which may influence their objectives and communicational strategies.

Online interactions are complex, they can happen publicly or privately, over different time periods, and numerous contributors, from various sources (such as corporate owned or privately managed social platforms), and diverse formats (textual, visual, audio). Conversations are often linked to each other, they are ongoing between multiple sites and between multiple members, and due to the current technological advantages, it is possible to share the content on several platforms in the same time (Kozinets, et al., 2013).

3.3.1 Social media in festival industry

The literature on the use of social media by festival organizers is relatively incomplete yet, although researcher/experts agree for destination marketing organizations (DMOs), the most influential social media tools are Facebook (64 percent), Twitter (26 percent), TripAdvisor (4 percent), YouTube (3 percent) and Foursquare (1 percent) (SparkloftMedia, 2011). The two most common objectives for social media efforts for destinations are to increase awareness of the destination and to build engagement with consumers. (Hudson & Hudson, 2013) The realm of social media is concerned with collaboration, creating content, sharing and connecting (Strokes, 2013, p. 367). Events like music festivals and parades are likely endorse such a high volume of interaction among users as the event-based communication becomes typically “alive” (Martensen et al., 2007). Morey et. al. (2014) explained social media is an interactive space for festivals; through it the festival experience is anticipated, produced and (re)-consumed (McKay, 2015). In the event-marketing domain, social media acts as a significant instrument to enhance customer communications (Lee, et al., 2012). Festival managers desire to encourage people in online communities to contribute on social media. *“Statistics on social media involvement are an indicator of demand for festival experiences.”* (UNESCO, 2015) Eventbrite (2014) observed the

details of about 20 million online conversations circa 181 music festivals in the United States on Twitter, Facebook and other channels in 2013-2014. 75% of the people involved were aged 17 to 34 years. One-quarter of conversations concerned a music festival in which they were taking part through live streaming over the Internet. One-half of the dialogues took place prior to the concert happening, and almost one-third took place after the event had ended (Eventbrite, 2014).

As suggested by Ranshuysen and Jansen (2006) there is a lot of potential for festival organizations to apply social media to communicate with their target audience: a social festival platform. Festival visitors could contact each other prior to going to the festival and share anticipatory pleasure. Or festival goers can share their pictures and videos on a festival platform to show and share their own festival experience with others, as “empowered content co-creators”.

3.3.2 Online community and culture

People are social human beings who constantly look for a sense of belonging. Social media can also work as an online community, where users are socially connected by interacting with others or with a brand or activity based on their common interests (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013). Customers, who are strongly tied up with the brand, will more regularly contribute, create and join communities in order to strengthen the bond and get a sense of belonging (Laroche et al., 2012). Our social world is digital, it might be hundreds of thousands people are interacting through online communities which are associated as cyber cultures (Kozinets, 2009). Social networking sites and virtual worlds carry the complex markers of many cultures to build new connections and communities. Rheingold (1993) defined the virtual community, a place people “*exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and loose them, play games, flirt, create a little art and lot of idle talk*” (Rheingold, 1993:3). Muniz & O’Guinn (2001: 412) explains brand community as “*a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand*”. Komito describes the definition of the community more complexly by emphasizing the variety and dynamics of the formation. Komito (1998:104) defines the community “*as not fixed in its form or function, it is mixed bag of possible options whose meaning and concreteness are always being negotiated by individuals, in the context of changing external constraints.* “

Komito's definition illustrated a broader way of looking at a community where functions and the context of the discussions can be modified by external affects, as the communities are more comprehensive as previous academics explained.

Kozinets argues that these online connections have growing influence on our social behaviour, as citizens, family members, social beings or consumers. Online communities shape or mark culture through the "*learned beliefs, values or customs, that serve to order, guide, and direct the behaviour of a particular society or group*" (Arnould & Wallendorf 1994:485). Online communities also become "the place" where people can belong to. Online or virtual spaces, similarly as in the physical world, the communities are a group of people who share common interest, shared identity and gathering together for the same purpose. Bowler (2010) explains that shared interest or intent can create a significant forum for members of the community to establish relationships and connection out of which they can learn from one another and make an impact on the society or culture around them. (Bowler Jr., 2010, p. 1271)

Muniz & O'Guinn (2001) identified three components of a brand community: consciousness of kind, which refers to the connection to each other through the brand. Members should feel a "we-ness" and essential connection to the brand. The second is the shared rituals and traditions, it is about the shared knowledge, history, and culture of the community. Lastly, the sense of moral responsibility which means members have the obligation towards each other and to the community. Gyimóthy (2013:58) argues that customers do not exclusively use new digital platforms to exchange information but also to build a group of social connection with like-minded peers across geographic or temporal divides. Moreover, Gyimóthy (2013) adds, today customers are sharing (sub)cultural characteristics and gathering in virtual communities, in addition she explained the emergence of these "tribes" is often erected from brand fandom or other consumption interests (Cova, Kozinets, & Shankar, 2007). Events and festivals are typical example for tribal gathering where the sense of community and the presented artists are both crucial. "Marketers have recognized the collective power of the community in creating, appropriating, and sustaining unique meanings connected with a festival brand" (Gyimóthy, 2013, p. 65). That would happen in ideal world, however as Komito (1998) referred to that the community is not a fixed form and it influenced by external constraints, which can suddenly integrate unforeseen negotiation of meanings.

Kozinets (1999:261) claims that online consumers are “*more active, participative, resistant, activist, loquacious, social and communitarian than they have previously been thought to be.*” Moreover, Gyimóthy (2013) argues that the type of the digital platform is being used for the interaction between community members frequently has a social, ludic, and symbolic character. The shift from the provider-based perspective to co-creation towards tribal perspective implies how much of a crucial role the provider has in maintaining and creating value for a tribe, rather than regarding members of the tribe as creators of value to a provider (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). For events and music festivals, the tribal gathering online and offline are particularly relevant, as the participants are connected to each other based on their common interest. The members are part of the co-creation to a different extent, and visitors engage in the experience through various stages (Lanier & Hampton 2008).

3.4 Reflection and summery on the literature review

The above mentioned theories, frameworks aimed to explore the phenomenon of co-creation. The strategic attention has moved beyond the market orientation’s emphasis on consumers over products (shift from G-D to S-D logic) (e.g. Vargo and Lusch, 2004), to emphasize how consumers create symbolic meaning and value via consumption (e.g. Firat & Dholakia, 2006). The paradigm focuses on how producers can create value *with the customers, not how to create value for the consumers, highlighting the shift from provider- consumer perspective to the co-creation perspective* (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). However, marketers see co-creation as a marketing tool, the main drivers for involving customers in value creation is to understand better their needs for new products and services and to increase competitive advantage for the company. Several articles explored “features and benefits” of co-creation as a powerful managerial tool. They researched what is the most effective method/process to manage co-created value exchanges and how to involve customers actively to the production, innovation and to the experience. Previous studies focused limitedly on co-creation between the (provider) organisation and the customers (tourists), and they have not acknowledged the ability of tourists who can actively co-create value with each other. Therefore, the co-creation should be looked at deeper, in a multilevel perspective, as it can be more compound than merely bringing value to the company. The collective power of the community can “*produce a range of identities,*

practices, rituals, meanings, and even material culture itself” (Cova, Kozinets and Shankar, 2007:19). The service dominant logic disregards all these crucial multi-relational interactions, which are not related directly to the economic transaction (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). Customers are no longer the end of the value chain, but rather take an important and central place of process of value creation. The emerging and very recent paradigm about the customer dominant perspective is revealed, but there is still little known about the complexity of co-creation between users. It acknowledges though the social-cultural units, which is especially involved to tourism related consumption contexts (Rihova et.al, 2014). Gabriel & Lang (2008, p. 334) argue that *‘consumers have proven that in spite of the best efforts to constrain, control and manipulate them, they can act in ways that are unpredictable, inconsistent and contrary’*. This development shows a profound change in provider and consumers (Firat et al., 1995; Pettinger, 2004). The new major change and challenge that customer can vary the meanings, co-create values of the organisation what the firm cannot forecast how it may influence their “intended” corporate or promotional messages or values. The “early times’ consumers” were easily manipulated, dependent, passive and foolish, opposite of today when they are at the centre of numerous policy debates (Gabriel & Lang, 2008). The consumers can not be controlled how to communicate, they are dynamic “subjects”, who constantly shape the content of communication.

Based on the theoretical background, the project sets out to explore the VOLT festival by understanding the co-created and digitally shared experience. This study aims to investigate into what are the co-created contents on the official Facebook page among community members. The author aims to examine what are the consequences of the crucial power shift from the organisation to the user in virtual community and the author does so by particularly addressing how discussion may turn to be uncontrolled dialogues and result in unforeseen outcome. This information can be used to enrich the current marketing strategies of the festival still overtly locked into managerial thinking and strategic communication. The project illustrates the misalignment between the actual communication flows and the intended content. The festival can understand the complexity of the co-creation meanings by gaining insight from customers’ discussion, and acknowledge what are the current, actual values co-created by the community, and might take the initiative to actualize their “message” in correlation with them. Furthermore,

the author aims to discuss how festival can utilise this complex potential and to provide suggestion how festival can organise and “control” the communicated content on social platform.

4 Analysis & Discussion

This chapter presents the data collected from netnographic research; the investigation was based on the official Facebook page of the VOLT festival. The study aims to detect online social practices and user-generated contents which are co-creating value with the festival and other members. The netnographic research will be used to study language, meanings, dialogues, content and symbols of the consumption-oriented online community.

“VOLT Fesztivál official”- the online Facebook fan community

The official VOLT festival Facebook account was created in November 2009. By the time of observation (April 9, 2016) the page has:

- Over 144.400 Facebook page users/followers
- 55.700 users have checked-in
- 7950 reviews: 4,6. of 5 stars
- 3800 people are talking about it

These numbers are just presented purely as indication to the readers about the volume of the online festival community; its content complexity will be explored and presented in the following. The research has explored the Facebook timeline discussions of VOLT Festival, revealing debates regarding this hallmark event. The research explored rhetorical conflicts behind the VOLT festival’s core values (open-minded, friendly, tolerant, and loyal audience, family atmosphere...), which were stated by marketing manager in the interview. The online community generated mostly auto-communicative, emotional posts, but there were a couple of topics which have triggered massive reflections from the users. Hence the author’s goal is to present those the co-created meanings that the collective power of the virtual community has transformed. The interaction processes between more parties that influence the meanings will be analysed. As Vargo & Lusch (2004) mentioned, that the customer is always a co-producer of the value, they can influence the firm’s production process and co-create the meanings. Grönroos

(2006; 2011) argues that the service-dominant logic's principle where the customer is always a co-creator of value, guides to the conclusion that both the company and the customer are involved in an unspecified, all-encompassing process of co-creation (Gamble & Gilmore, 2013).

In this study, the co-created meanings were monitored through the interaction of customer to customer and company (festival) and the customers (online members), the researcher was acting as non-participant in the observation of the virtual community platform. Moreover, it was observed how the VOLT members participate, share information, argue, and converse with other members of the online tribe to be able to discover the co-creation processes. Virtual communities can be highly productive generators of social capital. As Putnam defined the social capital, it *“refers to connections among individuals— social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them”* (2000, p. 19). The coming findings will also show how people actively interacted with other members and co-created social, cultural, political meanings, values or managerial decisions in the social media platform.

By applying the netnographic research, the following “controversies” were selected and decoded from the Facebook fan page.

4.1 Steve Jobs versus the Thirteen Martyrs of Arad

The commemorating post of Steve Jobs posted on the Hungarian National Day.



Figure 2. Steve Jobs' memorial post

VOLT festival, 6th of October ,2011

As Komito (1998) explained, an online community is not fixed in its form and function and it is a group of diverse opinions, where meanings and values are constantly negotiated based on an individual's own values or by external forces or influences. The following example of co-created meanings refers to an external event, which is not related to the festival experience itself. However, it becomes strongly associated to the festival during the discussions as people clearly voiced their strong and personal opinions about their beliefs and values regarding the topic in the online festival community.

The post was added by the festival on the 6th of October to commemorate Steve Jobs, who passed away at 5th of October 2011. The message of the post created mixed feelings among the festival fans, as on the same day Hungary celebrates the memory of The Thirteen Martyrs of Arad, who were executed by the Austrian Empire on 6th of October 1849. Hungarians remember the thirteen rebel generals every year since then as martyrs for defending the cause of freedom and independence for their nation. After the picture of Steve Jobs and message that says “Rest in Peace”, Hungarian fans have divided into two groups and unexpectedly start arguing about the relevance of this festival post and the meanings beyond.

The first comment was the following post, which made the whole discussion begin:

“Should a Hungarian festival not commemorate the Martyrs of Arad? It's 6th of October...”

(D.H)

Some people expressed their sorrow and then the festival reacted rapidly to the first comment:

“Thanks D..., of course it is important. Thank you for the warning! (VOLT festival)”

In the following discussions it can be seen that some of the posts are missing, people were arguing with B., whose posts are not there anymore. They were probably deleted by the user, as Krisztina Kutas claimed in the interview the admin only erases comments after warning the person to rephrase the post or it will be deleted as it is vulgar or harmful for the community (Kutas, 2016). However, she mentioned also that they do not have such broad resources to monitor the social media discussion every minute, thus unexpected posts might occur.

“I would not say that it’s more important to commemorate the Martyrs of Arad, but I just quietly notice firstly, that The Martyrs of Arad have been commemorated much more time; secondly they have not died now. Partly I agree with D.H., but it is my opinion.” (F.B)

After these comments, the debate rolled into an avalanche, people criticised the post and argued with each other and with the festival admin.

“Dear F.B! I can only say that it doesn’t matter that we have honoured them many more times... I think those 13 people who had given their life that we can be here today, that Hungary exists still, they deserve it...I believe as Hungarians, it’s our obligation even after 150 years to commemorate them because they have given and sacrificed much more than Apple has with its prices. I think a Hungarian person should not refer to the fact that we commemorated them plenty of times and they haven’t died now. I don’t say people should not commemorate Steve Jobs, I feel sad about what happened too, but if this post can be published, they can also do one of the Martyrs...and this is not only valid for VOLT festival, but for example for my own friends as well...” (D.H)

In the interview Krisztina Kutas, the marketing manager in 2016, explained the purpose of the official Facebook page is to establish a direct, open relationship with the audience. The VOLT Facebook page conveys a friendly, straight relation with the customers and a personal way to converse with the festival management, as the page is run by several admins including the main organisers, too. According to Kutas, the page works just like their personal Facebook page, they manage the VOLT page as their favourite, compared to their other festivals’ social platforms. That is also the reason as to why there are several non-festival related topics. She mentioned in the interview, if there is a case or a topic which is personally important for the crew or they think there is an issue to talk about, they will share it in the community with educational or “eyes-opening” purposes. It can result in sympathy in the customers’ mind, when the festival supports a good cause they are also emotionally connected to (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). The sharing of information is public, however *“the production and interpretation of the meaning remain personal and context specific to a particular sociocultural setting”* (Munar, et al., 2013). The management is sharing what they think is right, their ideologies. However, the community

members expressed their personal and subjective views or reflection in the given historical-political context of this debate.

The festival admin steps into the debate as they do not think it is appropriate to argue about people's death, they recommend rather having a talk about it rather during the event. But they still believe it is right to have a memorial of him. They try to moderate the discussion by expressing how the whole the world is commemorating him (as they also do), and the silence is the best what they can do now. The Facebook admin tries to "calm down" the anger among the members.

"Girls and boys! We are not going to argue about grief, right? Steve Jobs has innovated in several fields which is also relates to music and technology in our everyday life. His death is leading news around the world, even his biggest competitors bow their head in front of him. In this case, silence is the most proper thing to do." (VOLT festival)

"Oh my God!!! I am reading the comments here and I can't believe my eyes how many inhumane, insensitive and stupid people there are here!!! Why do you have to generate debate about someone's death? If we would take away from these malicious people all that that Steve created, I would be curious how many would shut their mouths and think twice. I think it would be many..."(K.SZ)

„Typical Hungarian attitude. My deepest sorrow" (Z.F)

I wonder whether the Sziget Ltd/VOLT festival have posted a picture about "Hofi Géza or Cseh Tamás" when they died. (yes, Facebook existed that time already)...I am not saying this out of spite, but just think about it"(G.P.)

The debate opens up several interesting aspects of the virtual community, such as an unforeseen political-historical argument of an online tribe where members gather together based on their "shared passion or emotion" (Cova& Cova, 2002), for a music festival. However, the debate symbolizes morals and values like nationalism, history, respect, sacrifice, gratitude, condolence, anger, and "the typical Hungarian attitude". The dispute opens up deeper community values which relate to the society as a whole, not merely to this fan community.

The author's view is that the features of social media are strongly interrelated with co-creation, as these examples illustrate, too. Prahalad and Ramaswamy(2004) said also by the emergence of the social media platform, the customers become more actively involved to the values creation, and the company could establish dialogue with them. People tend to be more honest but critical on social media platforms when declaring their beliefs and opinions (Fournier & Avery, 2011). It can happen because people cannot see each other, thus race, gender, age, national origin and physical appearance are not apparent in this case, users are unable to form prejudices about others before reading what they have written. (Munar, et al., 2013) This manner refers to computer-mediated communication (CMC) as Rheingold stated "*CMC change us, and change our culture, by altering the way we perceive and communicate*" (Rheingold, 1988). Through social media channels, people co-create meanings intensely, they construct polemic arguments, as they might not have expressed at a face to face interview, for instance.

The coming posts are examples how the admin tries to avoid harmful or vulgar messages by the community user.

*„Ian, please post on your own page if something hurts you, but please stop this here!
Thanks!”(VOLT festival)*

This post was a polite warning to Ian to change his attitude, as it is not appropriate in this forum. Then the next post came out from the festival:

„Ian, usually you can write here whatever you like, but regarding to a „silent memorial” we do not want stroppy comments! Sorry. (VOLT festival)”

This was the last post regarding Ian, the festival has probably deleted his comments, as they are not visible anymore for the public. It shows how the admin gets involved in the conversation and how they practice their “power of control”. The owner of the Facebook page has incentive to exercise moral responsibility to “brand” (festival values) and community (McAlexander, et al., 2002).

The illustrated discussions of Steve Jobs and the Martyrs of Arad are not associated with the VOLT festival itself, it relates more to an externality. The debate leads to political - historical discourses, and a part of the community become empowered critical citizens (Gyimóthy &

Jensen, 2014), and show pride towards their country and their national heroes. The illustrated theories (Payne et.al 2008, Grönroos 2008, Vargo & Lusch) include in their frameworks the dialogical communications/interactions only between the provider and the consumers. Moreover, they do not take into account of the value processes, which are not related to financial interactions. This empirical finding shows member' interactions concerning the festival's post, which narrates socio-political contexts. Moreover, these co-created meanings do not provide any innovative product or service development values for the festival (e.g. Payne et.a.2008), as how the above illustrated researchers defined, the co-creation value process should bring value to the firm. The debate negotiated shared social norms (rights and rules) and illustrates the ideological beliefs which have been co-created or co-produced by the members' perception in regards to the commemorating post.

4.2 The open-minded community versus rejection of homosexuality

This “dispute” opens up the question whether the VOLT audience is really as tolerant and open-minded as the management believes and explains it.

VOLT festival has changed the official profile picture on the Facebook page to a modified logo in rainbow design to express their opinion and support for the cause of homosexuality. It generated a very intense debate as many VOLT visitors reject and want to exclude the homosexuals from the festival.



Figure 3. Rainbow festival logo

VOLT Fesztivál Official, 28 June 2015

“Oh my God...I hope the place will not be full of kissing boys. Disgusting! (I.B)

“I think that will happen...so just stay at home” (B.N)

‘I.B’ nobody force you to come to VOLT (personally I would be fucking happy if you will not come)’ (M.M)

This debate rolls further and further, as festival fans have very strong opinion on the topic, they become empowered co-creators of the festival’s values. According to some of the commenter the gays should not be part of the festival. Digital platforms can be emancipatory but also conflictive and negotiated spaces, full of disputes, exclusions or maligning. (Munar, et al., 2013) These conflicts can create unresolved policy or moral hazard for the festival management, because of what happens here during these conversations.

“Are you serious? I will burn my festival ticket now” (M.Gy)

“Go for it. But make a video about it” (K.G)

“Wow, there goes a big nationalist. I wouldn't be that proud of this, but you know best. But since some outspoken people have already brought it up, then me and the rest of the normal thinking people have the right to not have to watch the gay flocks parading up and down at a rock festival - especially since we already bought the not too cheap ticket.” (M.Gy)

The debate is going into serious topics like “referring to lack of human rights of homosexuals”, “normal thinking people versus the homosexuals”, “ideals of a rock festival”, “total rejection of others”.

The VOLT festival is not a simple music festival venue. As Kutas mentioned in the interview, they (as the management) want to share their own feelings, meanings of the life, educate people and create awareness towards crucial issues, happenings in our daily life. The VOLT festival is more than an isolated event. Festivals are organised by actors in an inter-organisational network (Larson, 2009), it is “networked gathering” that relates to many other societal, cultural, political externalities. That is why they brought up the homosexuality topic and changed their profile to the rainbow picture. However, some from the community highlighted that the focus of festival should only be on the organising part.

„The festival should deal with the festival...they rainbows belongs to the sky, not anywhere else.”

(N.G)

“My deepest sadness is that we, as local Soproner are proud of VOLT, it started as a Rock festival.” (M.Gy)

Some members have a strong opinion about the fact that rock festivals cannot host gay people, it is completely against the Rock'n'Roll feeling, what VOLT used to represent in the early age of its history. They co-create the symbolic meanings of their interactions in order to construct a strong rock identity regarding who they are, what they value, and how they socialized before. Those values are absolutely against homosexuals at the festival.

The other part of the community believes that the festival remains just as great as always even having the homosexual people there or not. However the total refusal and stormy attitude of some people what could potentially destroy the festival atmosphere, according to the next post.

„Despite the fact that the organisers support this big cause, the festival will be the same as previous years... I hope it will be „full of kissing boys” You know, if someone has a different sexual identity, they still have the right to be anywhere. I also think many of you would do better if you would sell your tickets, as you will destroy the festival atmosphere, not the gays! (V.T)

The festival admins remain quiet for long a time in this debate, as they could not handle the intolerance from their community members, which made them very sad and powerless. They thought people at VOLT are open “for the world”. They rather push the debate away to the actual event of the festival to discuss it face-to-face with the audience. The author claims that it could be a some solution to “solve problems” by listening to the arguments from both sides and discuss them, but might also be a less effective debate as not everyone likes to state the opinions publicly and openly, as they do it via social media channels. Moreover, the festival’s aim was rather to postpone the debate to when the emotions and angers calm down. It could also show a managerial decision to avoid and minimize negative, unwanted discussions on the official community page of the festival.

“It is very saddening to read many of your comments...We are at the supporting side of acceptance of these people. What We always love the most in you is that you are open...But we

can argue about all of this at the VOLT, too. ..Looking forward to having you there! (VOLT festival)

The design of the logo has been changed back to the “normal” official logo after few days, which made people even more disappointed that the festival cannot stand up for what they believe in. Kutas, 2016 said in the interview that they could not cope with the negativity of the festival fans so they saw it better to change back the normal picture as soon as possible. As she mentioned, the audience still knows what VOLT represents and what they support even without the rainbow picture. However, some of the fans got angry because of this festival’s decision, as they do not think VOLT is consistent regarding their attitude and communication.

“So how is this now Dear VOLT? Sometimes colourful, then black and white...So do we have acceptance or not? Yeah, you do not know it yourself either? Pathetic. “(P.S.)

“Oh does the truth hurt? VOLT festival? You support homosexuality and show us how to accept it! But do you delete the cons (argument)? (G.Sz)

These comments are questioning the overall strategies of the festival, judging the festival because they are inconsistent and unclear about their own values.

If you write arguments in a civilized manner, we do not delete them...unfortunately there are only few in that style. (VOLT festival)

“It was a civilized manner. It just hurts you, as you reconsidered it. All in all, that was great, guys.” (G.Sz)

The festival had erased some of the comments as they were against the liberal human rights and were written in inappropriate manner, as Kutas said in the interview, 2016. “As we always say, the VOLT fan community is a bunch of cool people, but the Hungarian attitude is usually very extremist for any sensitive topic” Usage of social media sites can be very effective for a company/organisation, but it can affect negatively as well. When the company erases or modifies posts on social media platforms, it can destroy the meaning of transparency, which is a fundamental element in co-creation in the management perspective shown by Prahalad and Ramaswamy’s DART model.

But some users thought it was a very weak managerial solution. They said VOLT lost its credibility and people felt it was just a provocative post from VOLT. Furthermore, users say the festival is only concerned with sustaining their commercial - corporate goal.

“Changing back the profile picture was really amiss. They were worried that they sell 60 tickets less...After this, I feel the festival is not credible, they cannot stand for what they want to support.” (Zs.K)

„ this is very bad, as it destroys the festival too, because it seems, based on the comments, that only insane people attend the festival” (Zs.K)

ZS. K points out a very remarkable question, whether potential festival visitors would identify or associate the festival based on these comments and rather not attend the festival, as there are only insane people there. Do these comments have any influence on the festival’s intended messages? Will the festival have the image it wishes to have after these actions?

Kutas in the interview, 2016 responded to these questions as *“I believe people know that VOLT is the festival where people welcome you with a warm smile regardless nationality, identity, skin colour or gender preference...it cannot be a barrier for anyone...”* in the interview, 2016. The festival does not want anyone to get excluded, but the audience reacts differently in terms of acceptance of homosexuals at the festival. Furthermore, she explained that the atmosphere of the festival gives the *“values in general such as acceptance, youthfulness and cheerfulness,” dancing- together” feeling, it cannot fit with values that to exclude anyone for any reason.”* Opposite what Kutas explained, the ideological aspects or aims of managing a festival turned out to be totally different how the fan community have co-created. The values of VOLT transformed through this rhetorical debate into “co-debated” meanings like the “rejection of otherness”, “intolerance”, “homophobia“, “untrustworthy”, “profit oriented- festival”. This conversation addresses the current social issue of non-acceptance of homosexuality, in general in Hungary. Thus, the community of VOLT festival is the representation of the Hungarian mind-set in term of homosexuals. Furthermore, the findings show the lack of ability of the festival to cope with unpredictable discussions, the admin was not able to moderate the ethical debate. When they changed back their picture to normal, they also created credibility issues in the eyes of their community.

4.3 VOLT logo and Sponsor change

In 2011, the festival launched a new logo and a new main sponsor. This transformation should be primarily about the design of the logo and the introduction of a new financial supporter of the event, although the festival fans had much deeper emotional attachment to these developments. The festival went through a rejuvenating, modernising process both visually and strategically. The previous years' revenue was economically unprofitable, barely covering the costs, which made the management to modify their overall business strategies, Kutas mentioned in the interview. They are positioning the festival as a young, trendy festival where any genre of popular music can be found, which will mainly attract their new target group; teenagers and young college students (age of 16-24). Furthermore, they introduced the new main sponsor of the festival, TELEKOM, the technical provider. These strategic decisions have resulted in transforming the appearance of the logo and design to a younger style, where the main new sponsor can get their name in it as well.

The festival has changed their logo design/colour several times since their existence, but thanks to the emergence of social media platforms, during this innovative stage, the visitors were able to leave their opinion about the logo in the virtual world and their personal or collective meanings attached to the new logo.



Figure 4. Logo design development between 2005-2012

www.sziget.hu/voltalbum

Many people were mainly against of the colour of it, the magenta, which is also the colour of the T-COM. They associated the pink colour with the “Balaton Sound”, “Barbie doll”, “Bitch

festival”, “Gay festival”, symbols which are totally against what VOLT is or used to be in their eyes.

“I do not like the new logo... I get a “Sound” feeling from it....the “Sound” is shit.(Á.L)

“The previous was better, we do not need pink” (Á.B)

“Seriously...what is this...pink...or magenta..or whatever colour...? It is Ok at a bitchy festival, but this is the VOLT festival..!” (H.M)

These discussions led to the co-created meanings of a colour/design, which are mainly highlighting what the VOLT is not or it should not be. The stereotyped meanings used by the community direct to the “othering” technique, where VOLT fans do not want to be identified as “Balaton Sound” as they are “Other” than the VOLT community. Balaton Sound is a “premium festival”, where mostly electro music is played. They see themselves different than to belong to or being “pink”. We become “we” by denying others, they suggest.

“Why didn’t you do it so that we could have chosen which one is cooler? This is so not VOLT! Previous one was more creative and stylish...This reminds me more of a gay parade...” (M.N)

“I would be happy if you would not convert VOLT into a teenager festival. THIS IS A ROCK FESTIVAL AND WE ARE HOPING to see 5 BIG ROCKLEGENDS!!!(G.A)

Moreover, many fans felt the festival lost its authentic Rock’n’Roll house party feeling by “selling the festival” to a corporate technical provider, as Kutas, 2016 also stated in the interview, it is a “big break in the old loyal fans’ mind.” Loyal fans know how the festival started, they do not want to adopt new designs or styles. It can be seen from the findings those interactions between consumers contribute to co-created meanings in terms of the cultural- social perspective through history, norms, and traditions in the collective community. Loyal (senior) fans - who once formed the idealized values as open-minded and tolerant- take up a strong role in protecting the festival by expressing their disassociation in terms of the new developments. This discussion flow can be considered to be more of co-destruction nature than of co-creation (Lanier & Hampton 2008).

Accordingly, Kutas explained that the reason for modernisation was to develop the festival, to stay profitable and make it grow. Regarding the “Soproni” beer brewery, it could not offer the same high sponsor fee to pay that T-com could afford, therefore “the Soproni” could not be the main sponsor any longer. It was more or less an economic strategic decision from the management. Norbert Lobenwein (2011), one of the main organisers of VOLT festival explained that 2011 was a major divide in the festival’s history, as they want the “new generation” to fall in love with VOLT, as they have already succeeded with “1-2 generations”. He adds that, since the festival offers a very eclectic programme each year, the visitors will have the best time at the festival if they are flexible for any genre and can simply enjoy the unique atmosphere that the festival provides. (sopron.e-cafe.hu, 2011)

“Why is everyone crying, who gives a shit about the logo... What matters is the festival, the atmosphere and “Soproni” (V.P)

The data has shown that the values of the VOLT festival were co-created by the online community. The fans brought emotional, social co-created meanings into a purely commercial corporate decision. The audience contested against the new modernizing concept which would destroy the rock feeling as it was before, furthermore they claim the festival become purely a commercialized event. As Zwass (2010, p.16) explained, *“the virtual communities are the primary space of collective contribution to co-creation”*. Kutas (2016) defined the VOLT community as a “big family”, where people are cool, open-minded and fun, accept and tolerate others, just like festivals are meant to be in general. However, as it has been seen the fans’ involvement and engagement in the online community can modify, co-create “the core or intended” values and messages of the festival. According to Lee, Vogel, and Limayem (2003), the virtual communities are *member interactions on-line, production of content by members, and building of relationships among members*. From their definition, the project was particularly focusing on how the festival contents on Facebook were co-produced by the fans. The online community expanded the debate by criticising managerial decisions, and by doing so, deconstructed the “original” open and tolerant values they once were created.

4.4 VOLT vs. Balaton Sound - Rock vs. Electronic music

When the new target group was introduced after VOLT went through a strategic re-positioning process, it resulted in a major break in the loyal audience's mind. Not simply because of accepting new designs, new logo, or sponsor, but because the music offers were also affected by the development. The online community continuously argues about what is the right music genre at VOLT festival and what can absolutely not fit there. The loyal audience wants to keep it as a rock & roll feeling, but the festival's goal is to favour the teenager generation with the currently popular, trendy music bands. Many of them claim VOLT has turned out to be the "second Balaton Sound" festival, however the management believes they can offer several genres of music and variety of bands so visitors can find their favourites. This makeover has generated a powerful debate on Facebook again.

The history of VOLT festival goes back two and half decades, when it all started as a "house party", "family atmosphere", "mostly rock genre" festival. With this knowledge, the loyal or "senior" festival visitors become very loud to express their disappointment in the festival, and they simply reject the openness to accept the new genre and innovations. As Muniz & O'Guinn (2001) identified the core elements of virtual community, as people connected together through the brand. Members establish the "we-ness" feeling through the shared history, knowledge and culture of the community. The VOLT users are completely distinct themselves and the VOLT festival from Balaton Sound, similarly to the other discussions above.

"Will there be no rock genre? What is this shit techno?" (Á.M)

"It's garbage! Not even one normal rock band anywhere? Only DJ, and electronic artists? What has VOLT become, Balaton Sound?...And it is so fucking expensive"(T.T)

"...For few years now VOLT has turned into a big disco festival...so ridiculous!!!"(T.S)

The following comment gets even harsher expressing what direction VOLT is heading towards. As Turner (1979, p.55) stated, *meanings in a social context often has emotional and volitional dimensions*. The coming post claims the festival became a capitalist, corporate brand only, and nothing unique about it anymore, same as the other brand festival.

"It is just a pity, they make/made the festival into a playground of rich jerks. An average festival visitor gets excluded both economically and due to the low level quality. The festival goes even lower thanks to the capitalist view, where there will be no quality and only the quantity will be

dominant. The VOLT lost its uniqueness, after the “Sziget Ltd” bought it up. It will be a brand, a logo, nothing more will make it different from other festivals’ products than the name.”(T.M)

This post clearly refers to the managerial re-positioning of the festival. Since 1993, the festival went through several improvements. For instance, due to the massive growth of the audience, they have changed the venue within Sopron two times already. Moreover, numerous technical and communicational innovations, new strategic decisions were implemented to remain an economically sustainable and constantly attractive festival to the audience, said Kutas, 2016. Due to the social, generational changes, festivals had to modify their offerings to match the certain target group’s needs in the given time.

In following, members keep arguing about what they think about what VOLT-ish is, what does not belong to the „VOLT feeling”. Similar research was conducted by Gyimóthy & Jensen, (2014), who have explored the „Orange Feeling” of Roskilde festival. They concluded that the several “Orange feelings” are co-created by the virtual community, not a single one, as the manager earlier believed. The ideological heritage of Roskilde festival also triggered various rhetorical conflicts by the online tribe members (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014), similarly as illustrated through the VOLT festival. The “feelings” are complex and numerous because the festival and its online community is itself a multifaceted entity.

The Facebook admins react to the comment, as they believe in their concept to make the festival as diversified, multicolour as they can. That is what makes the festival great and unique. Some are against that, while others see it as attractive.

“Dear festival organizer! This music does not fit with the festival. I know I do not have a say and I cannot change it, but I can share my opinion. This artist is horribly depressing to me. Instead of this, we could have Apocaliptyca for example. “(M.P)

“Yes, we think it fits...not to any festival, but it fits to VOLT. It is a very big success we could bring him to VOLT, many people will be happy to see him, and of course many others will search something else...That is why the festival is great. We believe.” (VOLT festival)

“I personally would love to listen him, and I think many feel the same way, even if he does not make crazy parties. The best about VOLT is that it is becoming more and more colourful. So many people are there....and everyone can find his/her favourites.”(T.G)

The last three examples of the findings are mainly related to the commercialized strategy of the festival, what they were “forced” to set into action to satisfy the current trends and needs, and not lastly keep profitable. To focus on teenagers, employing new sponsors, and emphasizing on rather electro music than rock made the loyal, “older” festival fans criticize the managerial decisions. The rock festival became “mainstream” by the corporate and social agendas, and thus “as a rock festival community often defines itself as rebellious, refusing to comply with the rules” (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The rock music legacy has not vanished away from the VOLT festival’s offerings, simply the management adopted the new trends, which satisfy larger audience, like the pop-electro genres, as Kutas said in the interview. The festival’s established values got challenged and tailored by the online community in the co-creation process.

4.5 Summary and Reflection on the empirical findings

As Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2003, p.14) stated “*The personal meaning derived from the co-creation experience is what determines the value to the individual*”. Berger and Luckmann, (1967) declared that knowledge and meanings are created co-created produces in an inter-subjective manner. The meanings are co-created by the interactions of the visitor’s own cultural background and shaped by their own memories, norms, concerns or interest regarding the festival.

As Lanier & Hampton (2008) explained, the consumer participation can be categorized into three groups, depending on the participation and involvement of the customers. The process often starts with the co-optations, then goes to co-production and may end with co-creation. During the netnographic data collection, the researcher observed similarly the process as Lanier and Hampton described. For example, there are several co-production stages, when customers design their music preferences with the festival. However, not all of these processes turned into co-creation, as they explained as well. The above mentioned findings represent the controversial

aspects of the meanings, what the customers are co-created based on their own interpretation in compare what the festival aim to “achieve or maintain”.

Several authors argued that a brand community is a group of consumers which shares the same cult of the brand. (Cova, Kozinets, & Shankar, 2007). However, as it was illustrated the members have often diverse opinions about the festival and their conveyed messages in the community on Facebook. The users often agree, disagree, rebel, accept, or reject the messages that the festival admin or the other members convey.

The online community has had several debates about what VOLT festival means for them (or as individual fan) and how it should work properly or what it should be. The more loyal fans have a strong view based on how they experienced the festival feeling in the early years and now. Consequently, they are the ones who are less flexible in terms of adopting the new direction for the festival and the ones who state their dislike clearly and loudly. Discussions and arguments were not merely about the music genre preferences, or requests for certain service providers. Fan critics and conflicts arise by opening up dialogues about the change of the festival’s main sponsor, the appearance and design of the logo and even non-festival related topics popped up like homosexuality or national heroes’ debates. The arguments illustrate the views of the users which present both pro and opposing side in a certain rhetorical debate. In the Steve Jobs debate, the interpretation concluded nationalism, national pride against a corporate brand, or an American idol. Or when the argument referred to the historical rock atmosphere, the loyal audience felt disappointed to adopt the commercial developments of the festival, while others were enthusiastic to have such a big variety of genre. These discussions with symbolic, co-created meanings have modified the ones which were identified and described by the festival management (as open-minded, tolerant, “big family”, “togetherness”). The findings also direct to the idea that the festival is not simply a “well-managed” and isolated space and event created by the organisers. It is a complex social “networked gathering”, used to serve several social, cultural, political purposes and ideologies within the community, which also reflects the whole (Hungarian) society, history, culture, taste and attitude. It becomes an “ideological symbol” for various personal beliefs. The online community is a platform to share the customer’s values and also the festival’s values. However, as it has shown those do not always overlap with each other.

The illustrated examples reveals, the users take over the control from the management, the crowd has higher power than ever before due to the social media platforms. (Mangold &

Faulds, 2009) Social media platform provides the users the sense of freedom (Laroche et.al, 2012). The festival cannot manipulate or control the way the community members can communicate, they can erase comments, but then they lose their credibility among their audience (Pralhad and Ramaswamy, 2004). The discussions often turn turned to be uncontrollable and generate an unpredictable debate flow, like the rainbow profile picture has resulted.

As Andersson and Getz (2008) have highlighted, the customers are the most important resources of the festival. That implies that the company deems the audience as a resource, who will create value for them, being part of the innovation and production processes. Those research-based models see the customers are as only an “empowered asset” to create value to the firm (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014), as Korkman (2006) said it should not be a mechanistic process.

Additionally, the service-dominant logic does not clearly acknowledge the complexities inherent in the customer to customer interaction in rich social contexts. The results reveal the dynamic roles of individuals in the value creation process at the online community when consumers co-create value through social interactions with other consumers as well, not merely with the firms. The customer dominant logic elaborates on consumer to consumer value creation that also suggests multiple layers of co-creation apart from exclusively economic interactions. It takes into consideration the social context of the value creation between customers, and it reflects the shared, socially created nature of reality in which tourists’ practices are surrounded (Rihova et. al., 2014). Nordin and Kowalkowski (2010) pointed out that the customers focus on not only functional and economic benefits, but also emotional, social, ethical, and environmental dimension.

4.6 Implications for the festival management

A number of academics have discussed how marketers should utilize co-creation processes in order to create a joint value with the customers (e.g. Payne, Grönross, 2008). The fan page gives a platform to the management to crowdsource, such as soliciting contributions from the members, for instance to see their preferences and perception about certain music bands. The festival takes into consideration ideas, feedbacks and requests from the online community, as it essentially shapes what the demands of the festival audience are. In consequence, the community members are not only just passive value takers, but have emerged as value makers in both

individual and collective actions (Zwass, 2010). However, the “wisdom of the crowd” can also create challenges to the festival like how to manage the contributors to have a satisfactory effect. It is crucial to acknowledge that values are co-created and perpetually negotiated constructs by the users.

Several tourism organisations are confronted with the challenges of communicating with customers via social platforms, and how to manage conversations at social media, as they have little or no control over user-generated content (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). The balance between digital marketing control and ownership of the communication content is now generally inclined more towards consumers (Akar & Topcu, 2011; Nutley, 2007). The negative or unreal user-generated content by the customers can create threat for the company. The negative user-generated content commonly erects from “dissatisfaction and perceived unfairness” (Gebauer, Fuller & Pezzeri 2013, p. 1517). However, as it has been illustrated through the “disputes”, the co-created content of the meanings may also represent the organisation values undesirably or in a different way, in contrast to what the festival aims to be. If the co-creation processes are used wrongly or ineffectively by the company, those interactions may lead to value destruction (Grönroos & Voima, 2012). The VOLT festival does not even acknowledge the power of collective community, which is able to shape or transform their promotional offerings or the meanings (based on the interview with Kutas).

The user-generated content or peer to peer reviews are considered to be independent from commercial agendas, giving them the new dimension of credibility and legitimacy (Munar, et al., 2013). Rihova et.al. (2014) suggest that the marketers would benefit from a holistic value perspective that recognizes the active role of the customers as co-creators of values. Voima et.al. (2011) claimed that the customer’s value creation process is affected by a broader customer network or ecosystem, which includes other customer related actors beyond the firm’s control, who influence the customer’s value creation process. Therefore, the organisation may take more of an active role in moderating or facilitating the co-creating process in the online tribe. Kellett and Hede (2011) states, new digital platforms create major organisational challenges and long-term social media presence requires organisational capabilities that many firms lack. In order that the festival can avoid unwanted effects, it needs to invest resources into community management, including financially and personnel-wise. Korkman (2006) suggests that

organisations can enhance customers' value through positive interventions. The festival can facilitate and support the existing co-creation practices, and reducing those which do not carry out as attractive effect, or create new practices by transferring them from other, similar contexts (Rihova et.al.,2014). The festival can engage their customers' value creating process in direct interactions, thus they have opportunity to co-create jointly values (Grönroos & Voima, 2012). Moreover, the festival should not only facilitate the online tribe gatherings, but also moderate conflicts among the members. The festival admins have the responsibility to “turn down” the debate, in case it is harmful for other members (morally, ethically). Besides these, the festival may consider actualizing and integrating to their values with the ones, which were co-created by the users (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The current picture of VOLT festival is still “the rock festival in Sopron” in several visitors' mind. However, as the festival shifted their target group to teenagers, they have also shifted towards more popular, trendy bands, which could satisfy larger audience. Additionally, the customers have repositioning common meanings and managerial decisions. Therefore, they might consider putting more emphasis on what people should expect from the festival in the coming years, to make is clear what VOLT is all about.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the VOLT festival's virtual community interactions, how the festival “intended” messages, meanings and values were co-created by the members, and how these co-created meanings are used to influence the official festival message. Co-creation has been defined and discussed by with several authors. In the early age, in the goods-dominant logic (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004), the providers' aim was simply to exchange goods for monetary values with customers (value-exchange). The customers were seen passive and manipulated and “managed” by the marketing mix (4Ps).

The service dominant logic recognized the potential to design and co-create value together with the customers. They become an active and “empowered asset” in development for the company. Vargo & Lusch (2004) deemed the customers, as “active co-creator of values” for the company. The concept was exclusively involved the provider and the customers in the value creation process, goal-oriented role in value co-creation through the resource-based view, where customer

have used their intangible resources to develop. The service-dominant logic has completely disregarded the multi-relational interactions, which are not related to the economic transactions (Gyimóthy & Jensen, 2014). The tourism consumption usually takes place in a social context between customers and tourists who often also gather in communities based on their shared passion, or to meet like-minded people (Kozinets and Shankar, 2007).

The author explored how the festival provider and tribe members enact on a digital media platform. The emergence of social media and through the increasing power of the customers, the way the members consume and communicate the event offerings in the virtual community has changed. The consumers become active, informed, networked value takers, who cannot be controlled or manipulated how to communicate (Binkhorst and Den Dekker 2009). The members take active role in debates to express their viewpoint in the given topic. The festival has weak role in controlling the discussions, due to the freedom of the content sharing.

The newly emerging and not yet fully explored customer-dominated logic sees the interactions between customers in social contexts, where the shared values are dominating. Rihova et.al (2014) suggested the C2C co-creation in a multi-level perspective and are embedded in tourists social's practices. Voima et.al.(2011) stated that the customer's co-creation process is influenced by a broader network, in a multi-relational perspective.

The findings based on the VOLT festival research have shown that the customers are actively interacting in the online community and co-producing and co-creating values and meanings. The results reveal the dynamic role of the community in the value creation process, as the members co-created values through social interactions. The collective power of the community is shaping the “intended” (marketing) messages and values of the VOLT festival by co-creating them based on their interpretation and collective values (Grönroos & Voima, 2012). The VOLT fans represented themselves intolerant and refusing in several discussions. They co-created meanings between Steve Jobs' memorial and Hungarian national pride. Moreover, the members showed a strong desire for distinction based on who they are not and do not want to be associated with. The music preference is an ongoing fight with the organisers, but the festival still emphasizes on their goal that every visitor can find their favourite genre and band. The senior VOLT fans still expect the festival to be a Rock'n'Roll as it was at the start. The festival might use the co-created

values of the community members to actualize their promotional message in regards of them in the future.

Additionally, the festival takes educational responsibility to share even non-festival related topics and causes that they support or aim to educate their community by sharing it. That led to the crucial conclusion that a festival is not simply a music venue or an isolated event. It includes several social, cultural, political entities into their offerings; it is a “networked gathering”. Tourism itself is a complex notion, which embraces a large number of entities. Consequently, the festival involves and relates to several social, cultural, historical, political externalities, as it also has been shown. It implies that there are many layers can influence to the co-creation process, should not solely focus the economic transactions.

The VOLT festival should learn to see the complexity of co-created meanings in broader contexts and consider integrating the community knowledge of social practices. That could allow the festival to grow and enhance the customers’ co-creation capabilities (Rihova et.al.2014). The festival is the value facilitator who creates potential value for the customers so they can transform them into co-created values (Grönroos & Voima, 2012). The author points out that the festival should acknowledge the importance of customer driven value co-creation and utilize them into their marketing strategies.

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7 Appendices

Interview with Krisztina Kutas- media and production manager- 25th of April

1. Could you please introduce yourself and present your position, working area?
 - My name is Krisztina Kutas, my job is very complex. It has been 15 years that I am working for Sziget Cultural Manager Ltd. I am managing all the festival campaigns and since the social media appeared we started to use them about 7-8years. My job is very broad, we do not only promote via social media platforms, but also public places, press, TV. I am doing both offline and the online marketing communication for the festival. Responsible from the content management to the posting until the monitoring.
2. Can you describe what VOLT festival is all about? What the management believes what makes the festival popular?
 - It celebrates this year the 23th birthday this year. It went to through lots of changes since. I was participated at VOLT even before I started to work there. It has been a huge success how it developed from a small sport arena music festival to a now internationally recognized and well-known festival. You probably know it won the best medium size award. We take it as huge success as nobody ever

thought in the beginning, none of the organizers thought that it will go that far. The company has a very broad portfolio including the Sziget, Balaton Sound, ByMyLake. We call VOLT, as „small Sziget”, but it is the most Hungarian festival. Mostly national visitors arrive about 90% of the total, but the venue cannot expand anymore, since its limited area. But demand would be to grow as our ticket statistics are showing increasing numbers the last few years. This year it will be more people than ever as it currently shows, but we still hope it remains as a friendly, „big family feeling” festival as always was.

3. So would you say that are the main characteristic (values) of the festival? The Big Family atmosphere feeling?
 - Yes, we think it is the most loveable festival, our official “working box” says also this is the most loveable festival in Hungary. But we really do effort for this, none of our festivals- excluding the Sziget- gets that much attention from us as the VOLT. For instance, we are integrating Sopron’s locals, and take care of the smallest details to plan the daytime programmes. We really listen to the visitors’ demand, as we don’t focus at our other festivals in those deep details.
4. How do you see what are demands? How do you evaluate them what to implement to your actual strategies?
 - Yes, we follow social media posts and all event communications, we really take them into consideration. At the venue the visitors go often to our info points at the venue to give feedbacks (positive, negative), and we get several suggestions and ideas to our mail address. We get cold and warm, and trying to learn from that. But if you are at the festival for longer time, you are kind of live with them there, so you can see their needs, habits, whether they go to the city centre, or stay at the venue, when they wake up, should we entertain them at the venue or organize event in Sopron. We try to satisfy all needs as we can.
5. Who is the main target group of the festival?
 - It has been changing over the last years; it is very obvious now the teenager, high school and young university students who are mainly coming. Our aim to book bands which are mostly interesting now for teenagers. It is a conscious strategy, We are targeting 16-24 years old visitors mainly to VOLT.
6. What made you change to focus to this specific target group?
 - It was a strategic decision, as few years ago the VOLT was not really profitable, the visitor number was falling down, we had to re-consider our concepts. Since that the VOLT is beneficial, the change of positioning brought the good outcome. We created a more youthful style, portfolio, program, to become more young and fresh....but keep it educational, we don’t give up quality....
7. I can see you are running several social media platforms, my questions what are the purposes of these social sites for the festival?
 - To get in contact with the visitors, in a very direct manner. We are communicating differently as it would be a brand community for example, It is very direct how to talk with the fans...friendly and sometimes even too honest. I have to say that often Norbi (one of the main organizers) is posting to the Facebook or react on comments, what maybe many of the visitors don’t even know how active is the main organizer and aims to be connected to the fans.
8. How do you see how members get engaged on Facebook page?

- We have a very friendly relation we want to establish with them. So if someone has a problem or feedback they can post it on Facebook, then it goes directly to the organizer.
9. How do you react when there is something negative happening on the page?
We go into debates, and we normally don't delete posts, we warn people if we might do. We delete only those posts if they are harmful for the community not for us. But generally, it can be said the VOLT community is cool, nice people, we like them. It is only rarely happen when something goes wrong.
10. How is your monitoring policy on Facebook?
➤ We try to monitor it continuously, but we do not have enough resources.
11. When is the moment when you get involved to a debate?
➤ When we feel something is unfair or vulgar, then we definitely take part of the discussions. We like to talk with people, some of them can even recognize if it is me or Norbi. It helps a lot to see how people think about VOLT. It also great if they can see they can turn to us openly with their questions or opinions, even if we do not always agree, they can see we are taking care of their problems. I think it could not have any better marketing.
12. I would like to ask you now about some specific post of yours: You had a post about Steve Jobs when he died (Post was RIP: Steve Jobs) It was the same date when the Hungarian The Thirteen Martyrs of Arad had their memorial anniversary. It turned out to be a big debate from this and you only get involved at the end...when you said only „guys..do not argue about the death... What was the purpose of this post? Have you controlled this conversation?
➤ Yes, our Facebook page runs very emotionally, also because Norbi is posting and he is not focusing corporate related contents. But, yeah if there is an influencing person like Steve Jobs dies, we definitely want to commemorate him in a post, even though there was Martyrs anniversary. There is memorial every year of them... and if such a big person dies the same day who give so much to the humanity, we can't miss to share our commemoration. We do that also if there are artists or musicians die. We do not open debate about this if we feel this important for us...we do not do anything if people disagree. Do not want to argue about whose death is more important than the others. We think that cannot happen...
13. There are several comments what people think about the music style. They claim it is getting similar to Balaton Sound. How do you react on these comments?
➤ Yes, it a music trend. There are in many people' mind still that VOLT is a rock festival, and yes at the start mainly rock bands were dominant. There is some sort of strategy in to have more electronic artist, because it is trend. If we compare how many is going to rock concerts and how many is going to e.g. David Guetta..it is incomparable. Yes, in that case we go to match the higher needs, but we do not think they are less great artists...
 - Then it can be true as you create almost two similar styles of festivals, as they say.
- No, we try at have all kind of music at VOLT to satisfy all...we want that everyone find his/her own favourite here, to have broad variety, we try to present all genres.

14. The next what made me interested to talk about was the logo and sponsor change. People did not like to have the pink T-Com colour in the VOLT festival logo.... people claimed by having the colour change lose their VOLT feeling towards the festival, which become more closer to Balaton Sound style... How did audience react on your logo change?
- Yes, we have seen that process at our all festivals. Long-term fans who are following us they accept hardy the changes, we make, it is a big break in the old loyal fans' mind. They can feel we sell the festival to that sponsor, but everybody has to accept that the festival changing, developing... To be able to grow and we can create something powerful for that we need this steps forward. We think we always try to find sponsor which can be advantageous for the festival and its visitors. We agree with all our sponsors in our activities, and we think the T-Com is very great co-operative partner. They also try to adjust their facilities according to VOLT.
15. Why do not have the local beer brewery “Soproni” sponsor the festival?
- The “Soproni” is still our sponsor, but not a main sponsor anymore.
16. What was the reason to change it from being as main sponsor?
- To be a main sponsor for a festival, there is a sponsor fee what companies need to offer, and if they cannot give the highest then they cannot win to be main sponsor...We talked about this with Soproni, as it has been a long co-operation with them and they understood the T-com offered more than they did.
17. It was last year another post, you changed your logo to rainbow, symbolizing your acceptance toward to gay people. It also become a big debate, when you stay quiet for long time then few days after you changed back your profile picture. How was the outcome of that post? What have you learned from the discussion?
- Yeah that was big one... you know from your network or our other campaigns we are supporting everybody changes back its profile picture after a while, it is just to show how we feel. In spite of we change our logo back to the original, we still have these opinions, feeling for the mentioned topic. But if I speak honestly, this case we tried to change it back as soon as possible, because it became not very easy to handle these comments. As we always say The VOLT fan community is a bunch of cool people, but the Hungarian attitude is usually very extremist for any topic. The opinions usually very harsh, and if the less-liberal opinions are getting more laud, that we cannot really cope with it that is why we changed back to the original logo. But our opinions are the same...our fans still knows what we think about what...
 - Your only comment was in this post: that you are waiting people at festival to discuss more that topic. Do you think that could solve that negativity which was coming from the members?
 - And we did talk about this, also planning more live discussion...but maybe it won't be actual that time this topic anymore, as we had some other discussion since that too...
18. Could you mention what were those debates about?
- It was a very unprofessional post and we deleted it, we also humans who make mistakes and we declare that. (you cannot see it, it is not the on the page anymore)
 - There was another debate about Prodigy: Smack my bitch up song, what we posted at Official Women day, after we apologized from people who took it

negatively that and change the song for another one. We thought it was cool, many did not, but also got like 6000 likes...but if course we cannot measure the popularity by only the likes... We also experienced many times, when people are criticising a post about a band and we think that day will be very low-visitor number and turns out all positive at the end of the festival. It happens sometimes we generalize statistics on social media, but the reality shows many times completely different. After all that experience, we had to learn we should not generalize e.g. how a certain day will look like based on Facebook comments.

19. After you have won last year the “best medium size” award have you changed something in your communication strategy?
 - No, not really. We are very proud of it, we communicate our pride, but we have not done any changes. Not even in international perspective, as we do not even think it is necessary. Our ticket sale is very great.
20. Why the official Facebook page is running only in Hungarian?
 - The most of the visitors like 90% are coming from the country. We have also one Facebook page for Austria in German, but its working separately. We target also the close neighbour countries like, Slovakia, we also operated a Slovakian page but not for long time, did not really work. But we have not succeeded to attract a lot of Austrians, it could be maybe because there a lot of great concerts in Austria the whole year around....
21. Do you think visitors’ post might influence, alter your message, or the reputation about VOLT differently as you wish to have it?
 - At the moment we do not experience it, if happens good way of changes we are looking forward for it. But cannot see anything on the way, but it do not mean it will not come. We have seen some of this at other festivals, like at Balaton Sound...
22. If we go back to the gay topic debate, and you say VOLT is the community of cool, friendly, liberal people. But if the online presence about this topic shows completely different thing. Can you imagine it would influence the image of the festival?
 - I don’t know so. We always think it will, and then when the festival is going on people are cool and calm. And people knows the negative comments are always more intense, and the positives are less interesting. I believe people know that VOLT is the festival where people take you with warm smile regardless nationality, identity, or gender preference...it cannot be a barrier for anyone... The atmosphere of festival gives the values such as acceptance, youthfulness and cheerfulness, dancing feeling for these cannot fit to exclude someone for any reason. Especially not for the VOLT, it is a very friendly festival. We are trying to care about people, about the world, that is why there is place for post like Steve Jobs. The VOLT likes to take the role of community education, as we have such a big community, we like to show our own values.
23. Do you think that teenager generation is best for these educational posts as you try to do so?
 - Yes, they are the most receptive for that. They need it the most, we don’t want to guide them just make them think about certain topics...
24. Do you use online brand ambassadors at social media platform?

- No, we do not have... We don't have resource for that, but it is more natural if we have both sides of the opinions. That is the reason also we do not delete negative critics, we can also learn from that.
 - Now we are using Spotify playlist, and we have twitter too, but among the Hungarians it is not so popular for some reason. The VOLT Facebook page is the most active regarding conversations and comment compare to our other festival...it also because we do much more corporate way of social media at the others, the VOLT is very direct communication between us the users, its more complex and it is almost treated as one us personal Facebook page, not like as a brand page, it is not made in professional manner.
25. So why do not want your other festival' social media platform to be like VOLT?
- No Because, is not the goal there that is why we say it is the friendliest festival.
26. Can you explain the ownership of the VOLT?
- It is umbrella organisation, Sziget Cultural Ltd, who runs the VOLT, Sziget, Balaton Sound festivals.

Discussion from VOLT festival official Facebook timeline

The netnographic research was approved by the marketing manager of the festival, however they requested not to publish the posts with the full names, pictures and date to not violate the ethical rights of the community members. Therefore, the conversation stated only the initials of the members.

1. Steve Jobs

D.H Magyar fesztiválnak nem lenne fontosabb megemlékeznie az Aradi Vértanúkról? Október 6.-a van... Like · 84

R. F egy korszak véget ért! ·

G. S. R.I.P.

VOLT Fesztivál Official **D.**, természetesen fontos. Köszí a figyelmeztetést!

D. D Rest in peace dear Steve Jobs! frown emoticon

D. D. @F. B. itt maximum, te vagy a gyökér.. attól, hogy 1 SENKI vagy, és SEMMIT nem fogsz elérni az életedben! Paraszt...

C. R Futó Béla, remélem ennyi tiszteletet kapsz Te is, ha meghalsz.

K. S. sok ember köszönhet neki sok mindent ! nyugodj békében Steve frown emoticon

S. P. frown emoticon When I learned it. I feel worst.

He was a man who knows IT.

We need people as a Steve....

M.. RIP. De igazabol nem halt meg, mert amit letett az asztalra, az nem más, mint saját maga...
Amíg az Apple él, addig Steve "bácsi" is élni fog. In memoriam: Steve Jobs. frown emoticon

F. B. Nem mondom, hogy nem lenne fontosabb megemlékezni a magyar vértanúk haláláról, csak csöndesen jegyezném meg, hogy a magyar vértanúkról kicsit többször emlékeztek meg, másrészt pedig ők nem most haltak meg. Ennek függvényében is persze igazat adok Dánielnek, ez csak egy megjegyzés.

F.D. nobody says more: ONE MORE THING...cry

S. L. figyelmeztetni kell h meghaltak a vértanúk...??????

P.O. Ugyan, van párhuzamos részvét is. Ez nem verseny.

D. H. Kedves Flachner Balázs, erre csak annyit tudok mondani, hogy szerintem nagy hülyeség ez hogy többször emlékeztek meg.. Szerintem az a 13 ember, aki az életét adta azért hogy ma mi itt lehessünk, hogy legyen Magyarország, megérdemli, megérdemli, sőt úgy érzem hogy nekünk magyaroknak KÖTELESSÉGÜNK, még 150 év múlva is megemlékeznünk róluk mert számunkra leírhatatlanul többet adtak és áldoztak, mint az Apple cég az áraival együtt. Szóval szerintem magyar ember erre ne hivatkozzon hogy róluk már többször emlékeztünk meg és tudom hogy nem most haltak meg, nem is azt mondtam hogy senki ne emlékezzen meg Steve Jobs-ról, én is sajnálom hogy ez történt, de ha egy ilyen képet/postot ki lehetett rakni, akkor egy Vértanúsat is ki lehet.. és ez nem csak a Volt Fesztiválra igaz, hanem például a saját ismerőseimre is.. · [Like](#) · [10](#)

VOLT Fesztivál Official Fiúk-lányok! Ugye nem kezdtek el gyászról vitatkozni? Steve Jobs rengeteg olyan területet újított meg, amelynek köze van a zenéhez, a technikához, a mindennapjainkhoz. A halála szerte a világon vezető hír, még a legnagyobb versenytársai is megrendülten hajtottak fejet előtte. Ilyenkor csendben maradni illendő a leginkább... · [Like](#) · [20](#)

V. S. borzasztó és rosszindulatú emberek vagytok!!!!!!

VOLT Fesztivál Official Ian, ezentúl posztold ki az oldaladra, ha bánt valami, de itt ezt lécci hagyd abba! Kösz!

G.V. A világ minden nap kevesebb sok-sok emberrel... de csak ritkán lehet több, néhány ember miatt.

VOLT Fesztivál Official Ian, általában azt írsz ide, amit akarsz, de egy "csendes emlékezés" kapcsán tényleg nem kérünk a kekeckedésből. Bocs.

Sz.A. Ian, Steve Jobs egy olyan cég vezetője és alapítója (volt), amelyik már a '90-es években bőven forgalmazta az egybegépet és a lapos képernyőt. A Mac OS a mai napig az egyik legstabilabb operációs rendszer, és pont ezért költenek rá többet, mint int egy Microsoft gépre, hiszen sokan inkább fizetnek többet és nem kell a számítógéppel foglalkozni, minthogy esetleg órákig küzdjenek a rendszerrel. Elárulom olyan céget hozott létre, ami többet ér mint a Microsoft, pedig Bill Gates Microsoftos vagyona se semmi. 351 milliárd dollárosra becsülik az Applet. Azt kár fessegetni, hogy ha ő nem találja fel ezeket, akkor más. Ő találta fel és nem más, és pont ezért egy infotechnikai zseni. Ennyi erővel bármire mondhatjuk, hogy ha ő nem akkor

majd más. Steve Jobs egy óriási elme, akiről a riválisok is ugyanezt gondolták, mert attól függetlenül hogy Pink Floyd a The Wall-al nagyon ismertté vált, Steve Jobs cége folyamatosan olyat szolgáltatott, ami folyamatosan megújuló. Pink Floydtól én csak a The Wall című számot ismerem, és nem hiszem, hogy ezzel egyedül vagyok, míg gondolom Te is és több millióan rajtunk kívül, fel tudnak sorolni legalább 5 Apple terméket. Na, ezért emlékezik meg Róla több ember, mint Wrightról. (Nem vagyok Apple rajongó, ennek ellenére akaratlanul is ismerem az iPodot, az iPadet, az iPhone-t, az iMac-et, a Mac OS X-et, és Steve Jobsot, hiszen ezekről beszél szinte mindenki. A technika éli a hőskorát és nem a zene, ez most egy ilyen világ. 20 év múlva lehet ismét felbukkannak majd Pink Floydok és Beatricék, addig maradnak a Microsoft és az Apple).

Cz. R. Ian, akkor Te valahol nagyon el vagy tévedve. Ha valaki értelmesen választ, akkor egy átlagember is tud Apple cuccot venni magának, igen, itt Magyarországon is. Én sem keresem hülyére magam, mégis meg tudtam venni azt, amit szerettem volna. Hol is van itt az új, nem hogy a gazdag?

K. Sz. Te jó ég !! olvasgatom itt a kommenteket és nem hiszek a szememnek, hogy ennyi érzéketlen, ostoba ember van!! miért kell egy ember halálából vitatémát generálni ?? ha most ebben a pillanatban elvinnénk azokat a dolgokat ezektől a rosszindulatú emberektől amit Steve alkotott és létre hozott, kíváncsi lennék hány embernek olvadna le a gúnyos mosoly a képéről. szerintem nagyon soknak.

Z. F. Tipikus magyar mentalitás. Őszinte részvétem.

P. K.I. Nagy veszteség...

A. K. rest in peace

A. K. nélküle már nem lesz az igazi az apple sem és termékbemutatók sem!

H. béke neked

G. P. Kíváncsi vagyok, hogy a Sziget kft./VOLT kirakta-e valahová is annak idején Hofi Géza, vagy Cseh Tamás képét. (igen akkor már volt fészbuk)... és ezt nem rosszindulatból mondom, de mégis gondolkodjatok el.

2. “Gay debate” from Facebook (28 June 2015)

I. B. atyaúristen...remélem tele lesz majd a terület tangás smároló fiúkkal! hányinger frown emoticon

B.N. szerintem ez lesz, maradj is otthon grin emoticon

I. B. Kormosseggű, állj be a tömegbe! wink emoticon

M. M. Imi senki nem kötelez arra hogy gyere Voltra smile emoticon (sőt én kurvára örülnék neki ha nem jönnél)

I. B. Jaja, a te velemenyed a legfontosabb. Biztos en vagyok a hulye, nem ti grin emoticon sot, hany 100 szerintetek hulye van meg itt, nem semmi smile emoticon

Á. K. Légyszi ne

M. Gy. Ugye ezt nem gondoljátok komolyan? Most fogom elégetni a bérletemet...

K. G. Hajrá, de vedd is videóra, úgy az igazi!!!!44!négy

T. J. J. sok sikert, valszeg te jársz rosszabbul és nem ők smile emoticon

M. Gy. Huha megszólalt egy nagy „hazafi” is. Én erre nem lennék azért ilyen büszke, de hát ti tudjátok smile emoticon Mindenesetre ha már a megmondóemberek egy része szóba hozta az emberi jogokat, akkor nekem és a többi normál gondolkodású embernek joga van ahhoz hogy ha már megvette a nem túl olcsó bérletet ne kelljen azt néznie ahogy esetleg buzik tömkelege járkál fel alá egy ROCK FESZTIVÁLON.

B. L. Szerinted azért, mert a VOLT is kiáll a szabadságjogok mellett, tele lesz a fesztivál melegekkel? grin emoticon melleleg, azt gondolod, hogy eddig csak heterok tették be a lábukat a fesztiválra? Mert akkor el kell hogy szomorítsalak. smile emoticon

M. M. Kedves Martin! Maradj otthon. De tényleg. Te nem szeretnél melegekkel találkozni, én meg nem szeretnék agyhalott homofób gyökerekkel találkozni, akik akik a saját hülyeségük miatt elcseszett életüket mások hibáztatásával próbálják meg javítani.

M. M. Ha ilyen jól elvagy, akkor ne gyere a fesztiválra. Egyébként már a kommentjeidből látszik hogy segghülye vagy, azt mondd több nő marad neked, miközben nők ugyanúgy lehetnek melegek mint férfiak grin emoticon ha meg ilyen hülye érvekkel jössz, hogy a természet alaptörvénye: ennyi erővel ne legyenek oltások, haljanak meg százmilliók járványokban, haljon meg az összes cukorbeteg mert nem kapnak inzulint, és még sorolhatnám... mert az a "természetes" ... ha meg az a bajod, hogy nem lesz gyerek, akkor utáld az összes meddő embert, sőt mindenkit, akinek lehetne gyereke, de ő nem akar gyereket, mert ők sem „természetesen” élnek. egyébként meg Facebookról is nyugodtan takarodhatsz, mert ez a vállalat is támogatja a melegeket

M. Gy. Szerintem mindenki jobban jár ha erre már nem reagálok, van az a szint ami alá már nem megyek. Úgy sem fogjuk megváltoztatni egymás véleményét és álláspontját, itt és most fejezzük be az lesz a legjobb. smile emoticon Mindenkinek jó fesztiválózást kívánok!

F. Z. Elado a bérletem.... grin emoticon

N. G. A fesztivál a fesztivállal törődjön... a szivárványnak az égen a helye, nem máshol...

M. Gy. A legszomorúbb az, hogy tudtommal ez az egész amire eddig mi soproniak büszkék voltunk egy rock fesztiválként indult...

B. J. Es meglátasod szerint a rockzene egyenlo a homofobiával? Vagy azt képviseli, hogy mocskos buzik? Mert en eleg regota nagy rockzene kedvelo vagyok, de ilyen nyomokban se vettem észre.

B. Sz. Mert aki ezt a politikai-hatalmi, most éppen "meleg" kisebbséget eszközként maga elé tartó, jelképekkel operáló manipulatív hulladék néphülyítést utálja az talán már mingyárt egyenlő esetet jelent azzal mintha a "melegeket" mint embereket utálná ugye? (Nyilván vannak ilyenek is persze) Na ezek azok a társadalmi kisebbségek, akik még nem tudják sajnos hogy egyrészt a bőrükre megy a vásár, másrészt nekik sem lesz ettől jobb, csak a hatalom dobja őket oda. Még mindig sokan nem akarják érteni, majd annál nagyobb gondok lesznek ebből később, de úgy látszik hiába minden figyelmeztető jel... ijesztő az egész

V. T.ettol függetlenül, hogy a szervezők is támogatnak egy hatalmas dolgot, ugyan olyan lesz a fesztival mint az előzőekben.. "remelem tele lesz smaroló fiukkal", tudjátok attól, hogy valakinek más az identitása ugyan olyan joga van bárhol ott lenni! sokan jobban is tennetek, ha inkább tényleg eladnátok a jegyetekeket, mert ti fogjátok tonkre tenni a hangulatot, nem a melegek!

VOLT Fesztivál Official elég elszomorító volt olvasni a kommentek egy részét... Mi az elfogadás pártján vagyunk, a legjobban azt szeretjük Bennetek, hogy nyitotta vagytok... De majd minderről vitatkozhatunk egy jót a VOLTon is... Szeretettel várunk!

K. G.Nem az elfogadás kérdése a lényeg, hanem, hogy álszentkedés ez az egész, ilyenkor az egész világ tudja hirdetni magát az új jogok védelmezőjeként, ahol viszont tényleg szükség lenne a segítségre, oda nem érkezik meg, akár csak egy támogató sms formájában sem. Nekem nincs semmi bajom a homoszexualitással, csak unom, hogy a csapból is ez folyik.

P. S. Most akkor hogy is van ez kedves VOLT? egyszer színes aztan fekete-feher . Most akkor van elfogadás vagy nincs ? Ja , hogy meg ti sem tudjátok ? Szanalmas .

G.Sz.Fáj az igazság? Volt fesztival? A buziságot támogatom, hogy el kell fogadni? Az ellenérveket meg töröld?

VOLT Fesztivál Official a kulturált stílusban megfogalmazott ellenérveket nem töröljük. sajnos abból van kevesebb...

G.Sz. Teljesen kulturált volt. Maximum csak neked fáj, mert átgondoltad. Mindenesetre szép volt srácok.

Sz. G. Valóban, Freddie Mercury is homoszexuális volt, ahogy például Rob halford, vagy Elton John, vagy Adam Lambert az... és láss csodát, sem a Queen, sem a Judas Priest, sem Adam, sem Elton facebook oldala nem váltott okádék színűvé. Ahogy én tisztelem őket és jogaikat, és nem változtatom meg a képetet őket sértővé, ők sem provokálnak engem. Na EZ az elfogadás, nem az, hogy összeszivárványozzátok magatokat, az csak ócska provokáció. Elnézést, amiért ebben a témában még írtam, ide, remélem EZ az utolsó hozzászólás e kérdésben, és visszatérhetnénk a VOLThoz!! Motörhead!!!!

I. P.Tudjátok a szivárvány színei azt is szimbolizálják, hogy nem vagyunk egyformák, másban hiszünk, mást szeretünk, másképpen élünk. Elfogadni egymást annyit tesz, hogy szellemileg elerünk egy szintet, ahol a másság nem betegség, nem természetellenes tény, kifejezés, fogalom, jelenség. Love and peace smile emoticon

J.G.Ne legyetek már beszarik! Rakjátok vissza szivárványos zászlót!

Z. K. A kép levétele valóban ballépés volt. Félnék, hogy 60-nal kevesebb jegy fog elfogyjni... Ezután maga a fesztivál sem hiteles, nem tud kiállni amellelt, amit támogat.

Zs. K. Azért durva, ez most a fesztivált is lejárátja. Hisz a kommentelők alapján csak elmebetegék járnak ki oda...

3. Logo debate (9. March 2011)

H.M. most komolyan... mi ez a rózsaszín vagy magenta vagy mittudomén milyen szín...? egy ribifesztiválon ok, de ez a VOLT FESZTIVÁL.. unsure emoticon

E. K. Nem tetszik az új logó.

Á. B. a régi jobb volt, nem kell a rózsaszín

Á. L. nem tetszik az új logo... olyan soundos érzésem lesz tőle, sound meg szar.....

VOLT Fesztivál Official a csendben lájkolgatók egyelőre többen vannak...smile emoticon nekünk is szokni kellett, de megszerettük...

M. N. Miért nem csináltak inkább kettőt és aközött kéne nekünk választani, hogy melyik lájkabb:-) ez annyira nem voltos! Előző kreatívabb és dizájnosabb volt.. egy rossz buzifesztivalra hajaz inkább.

V. P. ne rinyáljon már mindenki, a logót le kell szarni, a fesztivál, a hangulat és a soproni a lényeg! ;D

Gy-I B.Magenta a kedvenc színem,de PINK VOLT????!!!!...Barbie-zni fogunk???Pink busz?Pink plakátok?Pink Sopron?Kíváncsian várom:)

Tavaly a női magenta pólók amúgy jók voltak!Logó végül is mindegy,a lényeg az az 5 nap,jó hangulat és jó koncertek:)))Én ott leszek!

B. M. Elég homos logó:-D dislike! Vissza a régit!

O. Sz. Magenta... T-. Dislike. Nem Voltos, vissza a régit. smile emoticon

G. A. örülnék ha nem ilyen tini pop fesztiválá alakítanák át a VOLT-ot. EZ EGY ROCK FESZTIVÁL és 5 nagy ROCKLEGENDÁT várunk!!!

F. J.FOS a logó! A régi logó vitt valami dögöt a megjelenésbe, volt patinája, volt benne ritmus. Ez egy kivert vészleállítógombra hasonlít. Lehet, hogy modern, de a fesztivál történelmét hazudtolja meg!

Persze hogy az érzés fontos.. de azért nem mindegy mi viszi hírét egy érzésnek!

E. A. Nem kell megváltoztatni!Max. a színét!!!Ragaszkodom a régihez!!! Héééé!Ne már, hogy ez is ilyen nyálgépes lesz frown emoticon

M. T. régi jobb volt!!

B. T. lol...vigyétek a buzi büszkeség felvonulásra...

K.A.Régen Volt Volt volt. Most ahogy nézem Love Parade LESZ.....

Z. F.Nem akarjátok visszaadni a régi VOLT logókat? Még ha a színe meg is változik. Abba legalább VOLT valami design. Ez sajnos csak egy sima felirat egy körben. Ha megnézik a hozzászólásokat, akkor láthatjátok, hogy erősen az győz, hogy a régi logó jobb volt. Kérlek írjatok, és köszönjük szépen, hogy értünk fesztiválózókért vagytok - persze mi is értetek - grin emoticon. Nyilván nem az dönti el a fesztiválon való részvételüket, hogy milyen a logó, de igenis fontos, hogy az ember magáénak érezze a fesztivált. És ez így elég idegen. Üdv!

VOLT Fesztivál Official Szia Zolek!

Személy szerint én - mi is nagyon szerettük a régit, de szerettünk volna megújulni 18 évesen. Tényleg nagy fejtörést jelentett, hogy váltsunk vagy ne, ez az egyszerű logó pedig millió verzió után született meg. Lehet rá mondani, hogy "nincs benne semmi", de a legjobb logókban általában "nincs semmi", mégis bennük van minden (lásd: Sisley, Boss, stb.)

A fent feltett kérdésre érkezett válaszok valóban többnyire a régit támogatták, azonban 735 lájk is érkezett, szóval ez alapján nehéz dönteni.

Szerintem bizonyos helyeken (pl. pólók) még mind a kettőt használni fogjuk, vegyesen, és hidd el, nekünk is nehéz egy ilyen döntést meghozni.

Üdv: LN

Music- Rock vs. Electro

Á. M. valami rockosabb nem lesz??? mi ez a techno szar???? frown emoticon

T. T.Nagyon hulladék! Sehol egy normális rockbanda?? Csupa DJ, meg elektronikus előadó??? Mi lesz ebből, Balatonsound? Azért Offspring, Manson, KoRn, Limp Bizkit, Sepultura stb után ez elmondhatatlanul ratyi! És k*rvá drága! House of Pain az egyedüli értelmes, de azok meg vagy 15 éve nem hallattak magukról frown emoticon

T. S. anti like gyenge a volt a limp bizkit manson.....év óta nem ér semmit átváltott 1 óriási diszkó feszté nagyon gáz!!!! ennyi.....

T. M.kár ,hogy egy kommersz ,a pénzes hülyegyerekek játszóterévé tették/teszik!a magyar átlag fesztiválózó mind anyagilag, mind pedig színvonalban kiszorul (itt értem azt például,hogy kis profó fellépő a volton!!! s köszönhető a kapitalista szemléletnek lesz még ennél is lejjebb,ahol már absolute nem a minőség mindinkább a mennyiség lesz a fő jellemző s szempont egyaránt!)a volt is elvesztette egyediségét miután felvásárolta a sziget.ez is csak egy brand lesz ,egy logó semmi több,csak a nevében fog különbözni jobbra a cég többi termékétől

G. E.hmm így életem első Sound-ja után megállapíthatom, hogy semmi az egész a VOLThoz képest, és hiányoztak a VOLTos vidámarcú emberkék, akik mindnkivel kedvesek. de azért Jamiroquai és Pendulum mindNképpen említésre méltó. ui: várlak 2011-es VOLT fesztivál ^^

M. P. Kedves Volt feszt Szervezők! Ez a zene nem fesztiválra való. Nem szólhatok bele és nem is válltoztathatok rajta, viszont a véleményemet ezzel kapcsolatban, ki szeretném nyilvánítani.

Számomra ez egy borzalmasan lehangoló stílusú előadó. Ehelyett lehetett volna mondjuk inkább egy Apocaliptyca smile emoticon

VOLT Fesztivál Official de, fesztiválra való... nem bármelyikre, de a VOLTra igen. Nagyon nagy dolog, hogy sikerült elhozunk, sokan lesznek boldogok tőle, és persze sokan lesznek, addig más programot keresnek majd magunknak. Ettől jó egy fesztivál. Szerintünk.

T. B. G.Én szeretném meghallgatni,még akkor is ha nem tombolós partykat csinál,és szerintem sokan vagyunk így ezzel.Az a jó a VOLT-ban,hogy egyre sokszínűbb.Ahány ember....és mindenki megtalálja a maga kedvencét.Remélem még sok-sok éven át itt rendezitek meg:))