

NOTES FROM THE
Observation
Deck





About

Notes from the Observation Deck is a new quarterly created through the Brand Strategy Group at Team Detroit. This publication will provide you with an examined look at the interesting phenomena and trends taking place around us today. We present them to you as a communicative buffet of tasty and of-the-moment morsels with the hopes to spark broader conversations, debates & ideas within the agency.

Next, we'll be featuring the vastly growing and evolving culture of video on the Internet. If you are interested in suggesting ideas or contributing in any way, contact Gabrielle.George@teamdetroit.com for more information.

Letter from the editors



Spring has sprung and the temperatures are beginning to rise. As the calendar page turns from April to May, we find ourselves right in the thick of a wonderful time of year: Music Festival Season. To celebrate this most joyous of seasons, we're dedicating our entire inaugural agency trends report to the cultural impact music festivals have had on our society historically and the growing impact they are having now.

Today, with SXSW maxing out the capacity of the entire city of Austin, Coachella mirroring its event over two SOLD-OUT weekends, and new festivals popping up every year, interest in and attendance at music festivals has officially passed the tipping point. Though most festivals are undoubtedly influenced by Woodstock — the godfather and holy grail of music festivals — we can trace festival origins all the way back to the Middle Ages with documentation of people traveling to large, central social gatherings to bond over human and animal competition spectacles, music, and celebration.

Our research also led us to the anthropology of events where the "grand shared social experience" is pointed to as a key indicator of a generation's identity creation. Now, with the Internet allowing more people to peer in and participate, we are able to share out immediately, so the festival popularity explosion and its infiltration into the mainstream popular culture makes perfect sense.

In this report you'll find bite-sized morsels of juicy information that examine the Internet's impact on music festival culture and music festival culture's impact on music, fashion, connectivity, brands, and pop culture.

After this, we hope you'll be inspired to assemble a crew of friends to go out and experience a festival for yourself. We also hope your head will start to swim with ideas about how we can view festivals as opportunities for the brands we service to engage with people in meaningful ways and contribute to culture.

Thanks for reading!

Contributors
Jon Dones
Gabrielle George
Stephanie Pool



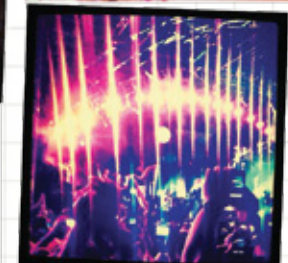
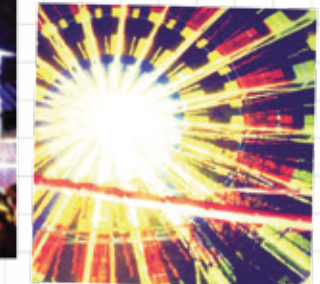
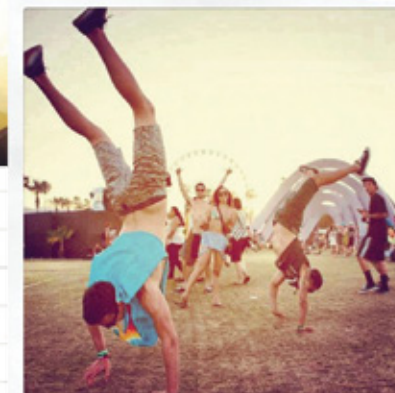
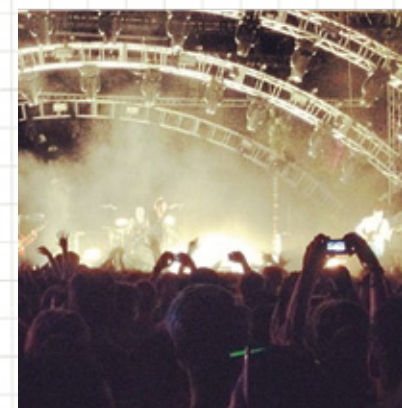
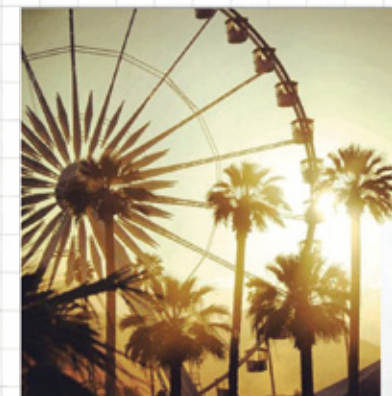
COACHELLA IS A MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL IN THE INDIO, CALIFORNIA, DESERT.

*

The annual festival has become an enormous opportunity for buzzed-about artists to gain exposure, for brands to gain leverage, and an innovative platform for exhibiting mind-blowing, interactive art. It, as well as festivals the world over has become a petri dish of culture that many industries are taking notes on and extracting insights from. In the pages that follow, we use Coachella as our festival archetype to note how festivals have masterfully utilized social media, influenced fashion culture, and even how they are dynamically shifting the profit model for musicians. We have also analyzed how brands are learning that their logo isn't enough for engaging with festivalgoers and have included thoughtful considerations and ideas to leverage the brands we represent in authentic ways.

A SHARED EXPERIENCE

The Internet serves as a catalyst for exposure to festivals. People are not only experiencing festival culture at the festival but through live streams, social media websites, and apps. If social media brings like-minded people together online, music festivals bring bodies together offline in the same way. We are seeing the shared experience at the festivals bleed into the commercial world in a variety of ways.



NINE WAYS TO FOLLOW COACHELLA

People massively interacted with what was happening at Coachella and carried their experiences over in various ways into the social media space, creating electricity around the festival on the Internet. People engaged with content, pictures, and discussions online to gain knowledge and form active conversations about the fest. Check out nine ways people stayed in the loop with what was happening at Coachella.

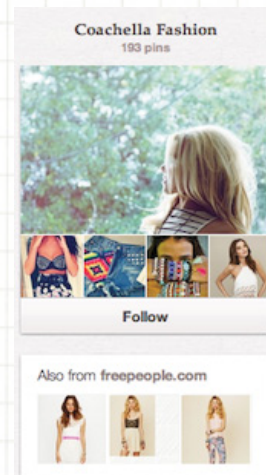
Generating Identity Forums

On Facebook there are 518,685 likes, 31,625 talking about this, and 9,882 'were here' by checking in. Instagram users posted over 150,000 images using Coachella hashtags (#Coachella). Currently, there are over 252,125 users following the official Coachella Twitter page (@Coachella). On YouTube, there are 79,190 subscribers and an astounding 8,840,286 video views on the Coachella channel.



Facebook

Facebook feeds were blowing up with pictures and opinions from users at the fest as well as those who were enjoying the activities vicariously through real-time content streaming and live updates. "Like" the official Coachella page or any of the official sponsors to keep up on the buzz.



YouTube

Beginning in 2011, YouTube introduced Live Stream for all users to engage in the Coachella experience. Whether you follow the Live Stream on the official Coachella homepage or experience it on the YouTube channel, you'll be tuned in.

Twitter

Hashtags are one of the ways users at the festival stay connected. It gives followers an ambient awareness of what's going on and where their friends are. Popular hashtags included #Coachella and #Coachella2012. Many celebs — including Rihanna — used the platform to share an inside look at their experience.

Pinterest

Pinterest

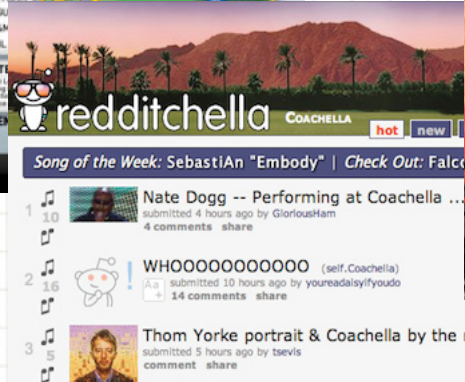
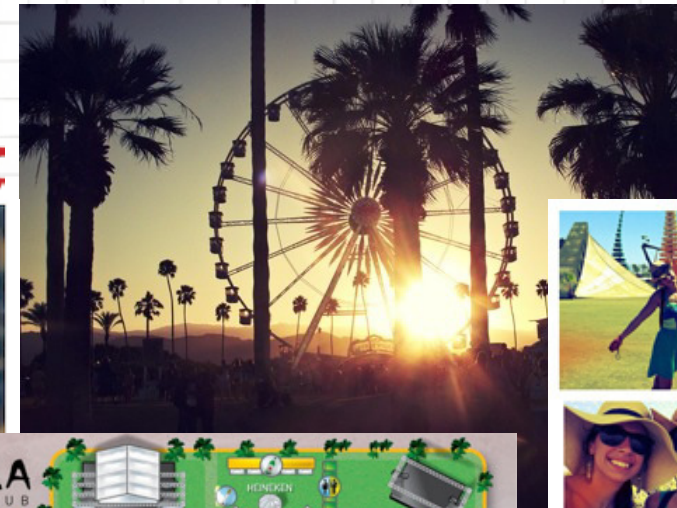
Navigate the "Coachella" tag on Pinterest, and follow any of the numerous Coachella inspiration pinboards dedicated to band lineups, style inspirations, photos from the fest and festival memes through this interactive online inspiration platform.

Tumblr

Just as on Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter you could search tagged posts for microblogged POVs of the festival and its goings-on in a visually beautiful way. The Tumblr platform is a great resource to find trends from videos and images from fans and festivalgoers.

Apps

The Coachella app allowed users to create their own personal festival schedule and more easily navigate around the grounds from their iPhones, iPads and Android devices. Additionally, festivalgoers used the app to register their wristbands to get enhanced customer support, access centralized social media features, merchandise specials and potential upgrades.



Instagram

Instagram users gave personal views of their experiences using the photo-sharing site. The free app transforms the look and feel of their pictures by using romantic, analogue-feeling filters. The platform then pushes content out to multiple prominent sharing websites, like Facebook and Twitter.

Reddit

People tuned in and sounded off on "Redditchella" to find out the latest on what was hot and controversial at Coachella. This social news platform is entirely user-generated and user-edited using a simple "up" or "down" voting system. This is a great source for exploring popular topics and POVs.

Spotify

This music streaming app is still relatively new but it wasted no time in becoming a premier go-to channel for listening to the latest and greatest tracks and curated playlists from the Coachella lineup. The platform's hyper-social and gamified functionality has made it a stand-out new way to socially extend hype and awareness around music as well as a great tool to help people plan their festival weekend.

MOST BUZZED ABOUT

Whereas SXSW is known for promoting bands you've never even heard of and giving them a stage, Coachella instead creates stages for bands that already have a big fan base in their particular genre. Coachella has the formula for its lineup down to a science: huge headliners, growing, fresh acts, and a token "reunion" band from the late 80s, early 90s. Coachella is a petri dish for popular music every year.

Here are some acts that got the most hype in 2012:



Gotye

Singer-songwriter and illustrator Gotye is one of 2012's top rising artists, best known for his single "Somebody That I Used to Know," featuring Kimbra. The global hit has sold over 542,000 digital copies in America alone.



Snoop Dogg

Snoop is the everyman rapper — he's just a likable guy who has created a prolific amount of work over his career and generally seems like he's just having a good time. This Coachella, Snoop performed for an 80-minute hip-hop revue with appearances by Dr. Dre, Eminem, 50 Cent, Wiz Khalifa and a Tupac hologram at his Sunday-night performance. Snoop was seen puffing away on the ganja through the entire set.



Radiohead

One of the most influential acts of the last two-going on three-decades, Radiohead remains massively successful without a backlash from their hardcore fan base. As vocal critics of the music industry's greed and flaws, it only makes sense Radiohead would play a giant, accessible venue like Coachella.



Swedish House Mafia

Electronic music has taken the industry by storm. Swedish House Mafia's performance of "Save the World" channeled an upbeat performance and actionable message at Coachella. Known for being extremely protective of their culture, fans traveling to Coachella for the electronic music scene have been less appreciative of Coachella's increasingly headliner-centric lineup.



Azealia Banks

Azealia Banks has gained major coverage in the U.S. through the popularity of her single "212." Coachella 2012 marked her first official gig in the U.S. and she can be perceived as an edgier version of Nicki Minaj (that's possible!?) through her unapologetic lyrics and street beats that are oh-so-danceable.





Tupac lives? The hologram heard 'round the world.

The buzz about the already epic Tupac Shakur hologram erupted on the Internet and hit a cultural nerve during Coachella this year. During the week between show dates, the Twitter response alone covered an incredible range from praise to condemnation, from jokes to brainstorming, from art thoughts to money talk. And, of course, an unofficial Hologram Tupac Twitter account soon appeared, gaining over 30,000 followers.

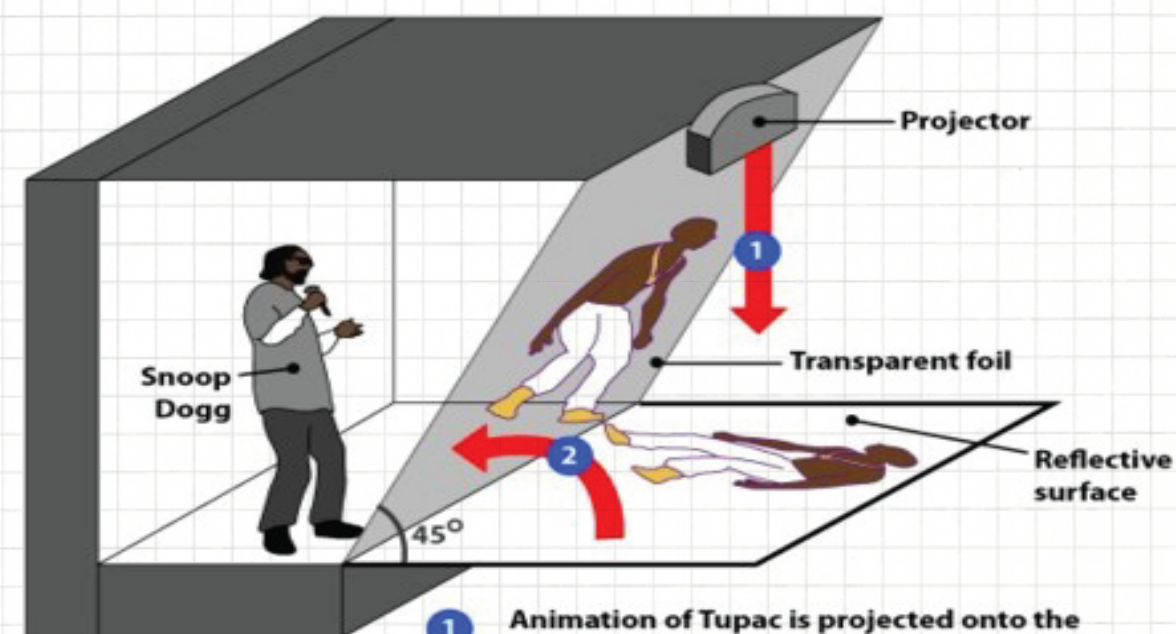
The digitized and projected performance reignited Tupac's social currency in music culture, even for the 20 to 30-year-olds who dominate the festival scene but are a bit too young to remember the rapper's peak and mysterious and much-debated death beyond pop folklore. (Many hardcore fans still believe Tupac's death was faked and scoured his lyrics for cryptic messages about his eventual return.) Beyond Tupac's

mystique, there was something deeper to this stunt than a simple gimmick, and that might be precisely why it spread so quickly and with such fervor. Musicians, who we noted are looking for new ways to earn money, saw this stunt as a glimmer of opportunity to be in more than one place at a time. T.I. the rapper said: "If I could get this same technology to perform in three cities at one time, then that's another stream of revenue! I could do six shows a night in six different places."

Other business-minded folk in the music realm saw the opportunities of tours for the long-deceased but still beloved. Elvis in Vegas? The Beatles return? As questionable as it might be in terms of taste, it will be interesting to follow this technology and how it is used from here on out - whether it be for good, evil, or a good laugh.

THE BACKSTORY

Pepper's Ghost – How 'Pac got his resurrection on.



Source: Musion Eyeliner system patent (U.S. Patent No. 5,865,519, "Device For Displaying Moving Images In The Background Of A Stage"); Musion Systems Ltd.

- 1 Animation of Tupac is projected onto the mirrored surface
- 2 Image is reflected onto the transparent screen, which is angled such that the audience sees Tupac but not the foil.

Graphic by Roxanne Palmer for the International Business Times

The agencies behind the hologram include *AV Concepts*, which produced the technology to stage Dre's concept, and *Digital Domain Media Group*, who created the effects behind Tupac's much-anticipated resurrection.

Despite the appearance of this futuristic, mind-blowing and somewhat eerie effect, Tupac's hologram was actually inspired by a theatrical technique utilizing plate glass and special lighting techniques called "Pepper's Ghost." The Pepper's Ghost illusion was first used and popularized by magicians in the late 1800s. This close-to-lifelike experience is gaining popularity in fashion shows, conferences, and concerts — Disney World boasts the largest application of this technique, and Madonna used "Pepper's Ghost" to perform alongside Elvis at the 2006 Grammys.



REMIX CULTURE

DJ culture is nothing new but its influence on music is, as its contributions over the last decade have gained the respect of the industry and the credit for pushing the culture forward.

Innovative technology and democratized distribution channels have shaped the emergence of the remix culture, which artfully combines a fusion of artists and genres into something completely new and unique. DJs are celebrities in their own right today, among both the fans and the musicians whose work they reimagine. Remix culture is inspired by music, but has expanded well beyond music alone. The concept of a “mash up” — or colliding two complementary ideas, styles or brands into one new thing — has, in a macro sense, influenced other industries, including fashion, art, food and design. All better for it, we say.



THE MEMES

The side effects of remix culture



Coachella Lineup

The annual lineup release is a much-anticipated moment for fans and festivalgoers. The lineup format reads in descending font size order, which refers to the relevance of artist performance at the festival. Also, a meme version of the lineup, which depicts the “real” Coachella lineup, has been circulating on the Internet.

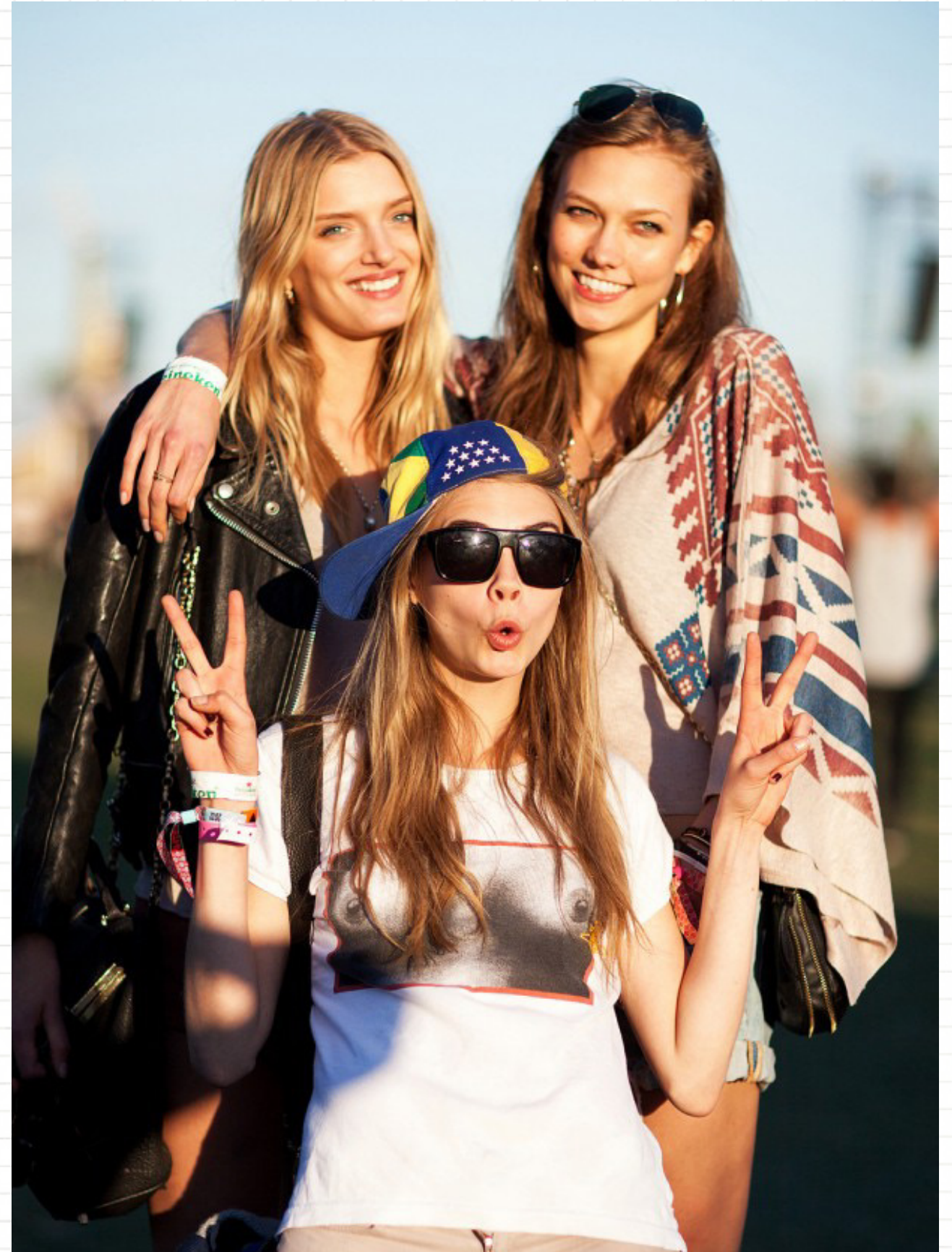
FESTIVAL x FASHION

In addition to the music and art, the festival culture has been a hotbed for what is current in fashion and lifestyle.

The festival world has been a hotbed for what is current in fashion and lifestyle. With bloggers, fashion magazines, and stylish trendsetters flocking to festivals to capture the most creative frocks, mass clothing brands and couture fashion houses are extracting culture from the festival field and bringing it to the mainstream mall.

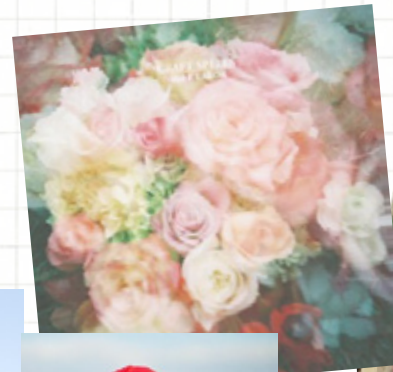
Historically, ethnic and historical fashion has influenced festival culture by adapting a tribal influence, as demonstrated in the monumental festival, Woodstock. More recently, fashion bloggers and industry influencers contribute to the visibility of festival influence in mass fashion. The progression of technology has allowed for festival fashion to be seen as a lifestyle branding opportunity through the fusion of style and sound.

Retailer H&M is an official sponsor of Coachella and creates stylish gear for festival going fashionistas including inspired-by collections and even sleepers for Coachella festivalgoers. Mainstream and niche designers are catching onto the festival influence by including fest-inspired pieces in their collections. For example, Prada recently launched its new candy perfume advertisements. These ads – and many others – seem to be derived from the electronic music festival aesthetic and the “kandi culture” that exists within this subculture.



Floral

Spring 2012 runway collections are accented with dainty floral prints and feminine tones. Festivalgoers again are proving to be the earliest adopters of this movement. Inspired by the '20s, the floral movement could be a pendulum swing that complements the neon trend that has dominated festival fashion for the last few years.



Aztec Influence

The festival "uniform," Aztec style combines various prints, patterns, and styles that originate from tribal influences in Mexico. Aztec influences are deemed popular in the festival scene because of the authentic print detailing and are symbolic of cultural behavior.

Less is More

Festivalgoers are often seen in minimal clothing (aka nearly naked) due to extreme temperatures and because festival life exists outside of "real world" standards. Crop tops, bikini tops, worn jean shorts, Speedos, and tank tops have achieved a mutual acceptance from a "less is more" perspective.



Spirit Hoods

Animal hats and spirit hoods continue to flood mass culture. The hoods, inspired by electronic music festival culture, are supposed to represent peoples' inner animal spirit.





Kandi Kid

Definition: A Kandi Kid is an individual who physically trades or shares small gifts, which are mainly brightly colored beaded necklaces and bracelets. The beaded bracelets are handcrafted and exchanged from person to person through a kandi kiss, handshake, or handoff when they encounter new friends.

Is there a way to utilize or learn from this unique social dynamic as we approach finding authentic ways to reach out to festival folk?

Neon, Neon, Everywhere

Vibrant neon apparel and accessories have become popular in the fashion industry. The rise of electronic music and special-effects lighting during performances has brought neon to the forefront of this fashion trend.

“What was initially identified as a trend has quickly developed into an explosive segment of the hospitality industry.”
- Wanderlust Hospitality



Glamping

Glamping (glamorous camping) is a growing global phenomenon that combines camping with the luxury and amenities of a home or hotel. Also called boutique camping, luxury camping, posh camping or comfy camping, glamping allows festivalgoers to personalize their living space with their own style and flair. Custom-designed tents, adorable candy-colored mini-bbqs, cute coffeemakers and even full-on livingroom furniture are some of the ways we are seeing people individualize their campgrounds. Brands have noticed too and are offering premade versions of all of the above and then some. Glamping's origins stem from African safari adventures which entertained mostly well-to-do British “adventurers” who preferred a decidedly unrugged approach to enjoying the wild outdoors.

BRANDS AT THE FESTIVAL

Smart sponsors are viewing festivals as a way to enhance the festival experience for their communities and an opportunity to contribute to lifestyle, art, and culture. The festival scenario allows sponsors to engage in more intimate and experiential town-like simulations where people seek entertainment, shopping, food, and culture. Coachella 2012 sponsors actively engaged and enhanced the Coachella experience by creating interactive environments that entertain as well as provide resources to make the desert weekend more comfortable.



The **Musicians Institute "MI LIVE!" tent** at Coachella was an oasis for air conditioning and nonstop music. If you would rather play your own music, then grab a guitar, headphones and jam with your friends. Meanwhile, the **PlayStation Loft** provided a chance to win PlayStation gear and enjoy the 60'x60' pop art-inspired space designed to let the PS3 experience blow you away. You could hang out with **Red Bull** around the festival for a nonstop party experience filled with music, great people, and drinks by Red Bull. Given the scarcity for personal

access to electricity at festivals, brands including **Sony Music Unlimited** are providing branded cell phone charging stations. **Heineken** presented the **Heineken Beer Gardens** as a place to view all the favorite acts or to retreat in the **Heineken Dome**, where the A/C was as cold and delicious as the beer served. Catch a ride on the **State Farm shuttle buses**, drive around on one of their golf carts, or relax in the **"Better State" tent** to watch festival footage.



HYUNDAI AT COACHELLA

To launch the brand new **Veloster**, a three-door car aimed for young creatives, Hyundai wanted to infiltrate the creative culture by becoming a creator itself. The result was the **Regeneration Project**, a seventy-five minute film that documents a music experiment wherein Hyundai mashed up the new royalty of music — Rockstar DJs — and musicians from contrasting genres to create completely new music. The film has been a success — hitting the festival circuit and enjoying a wide distribution over hundreds of screens nationwide and finally being available for mass viewing on Hulu.

The film also provided the inspiration for Hyundai's involvement with Coachella 2012. Inside the festival, Hyundai played host in its own lounge outfitted with tools to create and kick back. For those who couldn't make it, Hyundai provided exclusive, behind-the-scenes access with live documentation being distributed online.



H&M AT COACHELLA

At **H&M's** tent you could hang out in the A/C, freshen up with product giveaways, view the Fashion Against Aids collection, and lounge on the waterbeds.



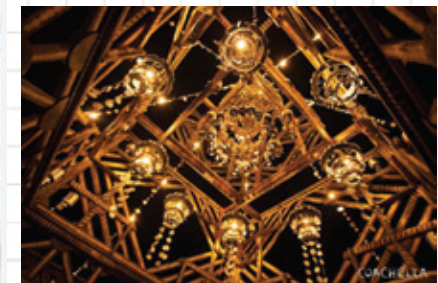
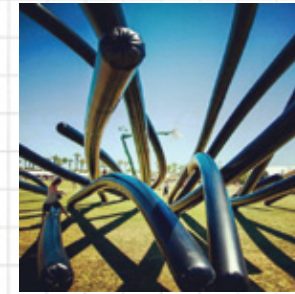
Perks in the lounge included: Air conditioning and recharging stations, Veloster branded audio-visual displays, DJs spinning from trunk-mounted turntables, DJ photos with fans, iPads with behind-the-scenes clips, and much more. This partnership also resulted in the "Re:Generation Drive-In @ the Festival Campground," late-night screenings of Re:Generation content with surround sound, VIP seating area for Hyundai owners, free popcorn for film attendees, all-new 2013 Elantra GT, Veloster Turbo and 2012 Veloster on display, and the stars — it's a drive-in movie, after all.



Perks included: Freshen up with Kiehl's products, view the FAA (Fashion Against Aids) collection, kiss for a cause in the photo booth, hydrate at the water bar, and help support Fashion Against AIDS. Following Coachella 2012, H&M debuted its Conscious Collection in stores on April 26. H&M is introducing an exclusive Glamour Conscious Collection, focusing on dressier party looks made of sustainable materials like organic cotton, hemp, and recycled polyester.

THE CREATORS PROJECT

The Creators Project partnered with Coachella in 2011 to form a creative partnership in an effort to reimagine the music festival experience. The Creators Project developed a series of art installations on the grounds. The installations showcased a global array of artists and pushed creative boundaries through technology and engagement of art with festivalgoers. A notable installation was during the Arcade Fire performance when 2,000 illuminated balls dropped on the crowd.





WRAP UP

In an effort to leverage the brands we represent, it is important to participate in such events that simulate positive lifestyle branding experiences.

THINK

How do we make the most out of our sponsorship opportunities?
How do we contribute to the experience in an endemic manner?
How do we enhance the standard of culture in an undetected way?

CONSIDERATIONS

Music and festivals can leverage brand imaging by triggering “cool cues” toward a desire and willingness to purchase.

Road tripping is a common practice among festivalgoers. How can we — as representatives of the Ford brand — enhance the road trip experience for festivalgoers?

In order to be a part of the culture and attract creators, we must become creators ourselves. How can we use a festival as a platform for our own original thinking?

Can we find authentic ways to “cue in” on unique social dynamics in society such as the electronic movement’s kandi exchange?

How do we focus in on and promote specific features of our brands in a way that adds value — not advertises — to festivalgoers who are there for the experience?

CURRENT FORD INVOLVMENT

Sunfest in West Palm Beach 5/2-5/6

Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival 6/7-6/10

Wisconsin Ford Dealers have partnered to participate in the Country USA Music Festival in Oshkosh, Wisconsin 6/19-6/23

WHAT’S NEXT?

The leading countries for festival culture include the United States, Canada and England, along with Belgium, Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Australia.

Soul'd Out Music Festival 4/12-4/26

SunFest 5/2-5/6

Beale Street Music Festival 5/4-5/6

Electric Daisy Carnival 5/19

Movement 5/26-5/28

Free Press Summerfest 6/2-6/3

Meltdown Festival 6/2

Bonnaroo 6/7-6/10

Wanderlust 7/5-7/8

Pitchfork in Union Park, Chicago 7/13-7/15

Lallapalooza 8/3-8/5

Dimensions Festival in Fort Punta Christo, Pula, Croatia 9/6-9/9

Austin City Limits in Austin, Texas 10/12-10/14

Glastonbury Festival 6/26 2013

