



# Customer-to-customer co-creation practices in tourism: Lessons from Customer-Dominant logic

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## H I G H L I G H T S

- Customer-Dominant logic provides insights into tourists' co-creation practices.
- Practices performed on a continuum autotelic – instrumental and private - public.
- Tourists' C2C co-creation results in affective, social, functional and network value.
- Pragmatist paradigm and qualitative methods needed for C2C co-creation research.

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## A B S T R A C T

This study aims to explore specific customer-to-customer (C2C) co-creation practices and related value outcomes in tourism. The importance of C2C co-creation is first discussed in the context of the Service-Dominant logic, then a new approach to the study of tourists' social practices and related value-outcomes is proposed, drawing on the recently emerged Customer-Dominant logic in marketing. A pragmatic philosophy is adopted to best address the research questions in a purposively selected sample of five UK-based festivals. Qualitative interview- and observation-based methods are adopted to identify 18 C2C co-creation practices, placing these on a continuum of autotelic/instrumental and private-public practices. Four value-outcome categories are discussed: affective, social, functional and network value. The conclusions highlight the importance of value formed when tourists cocreate with each other in tourism settings and the authors identify specific opportunities for facilitating this process. Possible applications for future research are discussed, highlighting the merits of pragmatism.

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## 1. Introduction

Tourists' customer-to-customer (C2C) interactions are often viewed by managers as an uncontrollable aspect of the service encounter (Nicholls, 2010), yet they represent a crucial source of social value for tourists. Tourism consumption in contexts such as

cruise ship travel, group tours, holiday resort stays, and festival and event visitation often involves spending time with peers and significant others, interacting and connecting with strangers, or simply being co-present as part of a larger collective. The social value of such encounters may not be directly linked to the immediate service exchange but rather, it is formed in the process of tourists' C2C co-creation. The purpose of this paper is therefore to empirically explore tourists' C2C co-creation by focusing specifically on social practices in the context of festival visitation, and to discuss the social value implications of C2C co-creation for tourism management.

Extant research undertaken within tourism, leisure, events and hospitality servicescapes highlights the positive effect of

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collaborative C2C encounters on hospitality patrons' well-being (Rosenbaum, 2006), on vacationing families' relationships (Lehto, Choi, Lin, & MacDermid, 2009), and conference attendees' personal business relationships (Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplowski, 2007). Furthermore, successful C2C interactions are shown to influence managerially-relevant outcomes, such as tourists' evaluation of service experience and quality (Huang & Hsu, 2010; Kim & Lee, 2012; Levy, Getz, & Hudson, 2011; Martin, 1996; Milman, Zehrer & Tasci, 2017; Papathanassis, 2012; Wei, Lu, Miao, Cai, & Wang, 2017; Wu, 2007).

In addition to positive individual value outcomes, C2C-oriented encounters may represent a source of collective social value and well-being, thus contributing to a blooming collaborative or sharing economy (Belk, 2010; Cheng, 2016; Sigala, 2017) and socially responsible service economies (Altinay, Sigala, & Waligo, 2016; Grönroos, 2011; Lamers, van der Duimb, & Spaargarena, 2017). There is some recognition of the effect of collaborative practices on strengthening stakeholder ties within tourism communities, both physical (Hamilton & Alexander, 2013) and virtual (Rowley, Kupiec-Teahan, & Leeming, 2007). Similarly, collective value in terms of trust and intimacy among backpackers (Germann Molz, 2013), and the forming of both a spontaneous and long lasting sense of community among tourists sharing their experiences (Arnould & Price, 1993; Goulding & Shankar, 2011; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Mackellar, 2009) have been identified.

The importance of the C2C co-creation perspective in services is highlighted by the Customer-Dominant (C-D) logic, introduced by Heinonen, Strandvik, and Voima (2013) as a new ontological position distinct from the now well-established Service-Dominant (S-D) logic in marketing (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The C-D logic considers the importance of value formed within experiences and practices situated in and influenced by customers' own social contexts, rather than emphasising business-to-customer co-creation of service-related value from the firm's perspective (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2015; Holttinen, 2014). Interestingly, the C-D perspective has yet to be adopted in empirical tourism studies to explore the co-creation concept. Additionally, only a few papers to-date have attempted to understand the C2C co-creation process and the social forms of value that emerge (Finsterwalder & Kuppelwieser, 2011; Loane & Webster, 2014; Reichenberger, 2017; Rihova, Buhalis, Moital, & Gouthro, 2013; Uhrich, 2014). These are important research gaps that this paper aims to address.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Recent developments in value co-creation research: S-D and C-D logic in marketing

For decades marketing research has explored the notion of 'perceived' or 'consumer value' (see e.g., Gallarza, Saura, & Holbrook, 2011 for review). Assuming that value is highly subjective to each customer, researchers strive to identify specific types of value in order to find out what customers' needs are and to determine how a specific product or service offering fulfils these needs (e.g. Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991; Williams & Soutar, 2009). Sheth et al.'s (1991) multi-dimensional value model (social, emotional, functional, epistemic and conditional) and Holbrook's (1999) consumer value typology (efficiency, excellence, status, esteem, play, aesthetics, ethics, spirituality) have been adopted in tourism research that explores how each value dimension may influence tourists' purchase decision-making in different situations and phases of the consumption process (Duman & Mattila, 2005; Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Sanchez, Callarisa, Rodriguez, & Moliner, 2006; Williams & Soutar, 2009).

While perceived value continues to attract the attention of

tourism scholars, recent perspectives grounded in service marketing literature increasingly acknowledge the role of the consumer not only in perceiving but actively co-creating value (Grönroos, 2011; Lusch & Vargo, 2014; Löbner & Hahn, 2013; McColl-Kennedy, Cheung, & Ferrier, 2015; Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The now well-established S-D logic in marketing figures prominently in many tourism papers (Buonincontri, Morvillo, Okumus, & Van Niekerk, 2017; Cabiddu, Lui, & Piccoli, 2013; Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Prebensen, Vittersø, & Dahl, 2013; Shaw, Bailey, & Williams, 2011). The S-D logic views co-creation in terms of participatory, interactive activities that involve different actors, while value (sense of being better-off) is defined as 'value-in-use'; that is, "the value for customers, created by them during their usage of resources" (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014, p. 209).

Co-creating customers are conceptualised as resource integrators who possess certain skills, knowledge and capabilities (termed 'operant resources') and use these to 'act upon' generally tangible, static things ('operand resources') to create an effect (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). More recent value literature has therefore turned its attention to the nature and aspects of customers' resource integration (co-creation) (e.g., Baron & Harris, 2008; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2015; Payne, Storbacka, & Frow, 2008; Peñaloza & Mish, 2011). For instance, Cabiddu et al. (2013) study the importance of Information Technology as a resource used by stakeholders in co-creating value in tourism networks. Other authors identify the specific nature of resources that tourists and tourism organisations draw on to create positive outcomes, such as service satisfaction or loyalty (Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Mathis, Kim, Uysal, Sirgy, & Prebensen, 2016; Prebensen et al., 2013; Prebensen & Xie, 2017).

Customers' operant and operand resources are typically explored using a goal-oriented approach; i.e. focusing on understanding the nature of resources as means to identify opportunities for enhancing customers' value (Prebensen et al., 2013). While the above studies acknowledge the importance of factors, such as tourists' participation, skills, motivation, the environment, and opportunities for social interactions, as resources needed to co-create customers' value more effectively, they tend to view resource integration as ultimately rendering value for the organisation. The assumption that firms or brands co-create value through facilitating customers' resource integration means that even consumer value (value-in-use) is viewed as the final step of a process that begins with and is always facilitated by the provider (Anker, Sparks, Moutinho, & Grönroos, 2015; Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014).

A new service marketing perspective that challenges this assumption is the Customer- (or Consumer-) Dominant (C-D) Logic (Heinonen et al., 2013). The C-D logic relocates value-creating agency into customers' own life contexts and beyond specific visible service interactions that are normally in service providers' sphere of influence, rendering customers' value-forming processes 'invisible' to service organisations (Medberg & Heinonen, 2014). Similar to S-D logic, value in C-D logic is defined as 'value in use', although its formation relates to a "dynamic process which is not uniquely related to the service offerings of service providers" (Tynan, McKechnie, & Hartley, 2014, p. 1060). Nevertheless, it is still possible for companies to get involved in customers' value creation. As Anker et al. (2015) suggest, active participation in customer co-creation can help to facilitate customers' own value outcomes, and thereby lead to positive associations with the brand. The authors further argue that innovation and social entrepreneurship outcomes can be achieved through respectful observation of consumer practices in a relevant on- and off-line market domain using a range of observational methods. This perspective is in line with Payne, Storbacka & Frow's (2008) earlier assertion that by mapping out

the processes, resources and practices customers use to manage their activities and relationships, organisations can identify specific opportunities for co-creation that will result in more valuable outcomes.

According to C-D logic, value is both intra- and inter-subjectively determined; i.e. it stems from personal experiences as well as social contexts and processes that may involve a number of different actors (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2015). As Helkkula, Kelleher, and Pihlström (2012a) note, value is a multi-dimensional construct that originates in lived and imagined past, current and future experiences, and is both individually and socially constructed. But not many studies explore empirically the processes through which such value emerges, and what this then means for customers and companies. Mainly an experiential approach has been adopted in C-D logic studies that emphasise individuals' subjective and contextual value, created in experiences that take place outside of traditional servicescapes and may be only remotely associated with specific brands. For example, Medberg and Heinonen (2014) refer to some 'mental and invisible actions of the customer', but do not discuss the mechanics of such actions beyond focusing on the value they generate. Heinonen et al. (2013, p. 109) see value as formed in "customers' behavioural and mental processes when customers interpret experiences and reconstruct an accumulated customer reality". Tynan et al.'s (2014) study of customers' value creation in the context of luxury car consumption uncovers experiential/hedonic value created in sensory, behavioural, emotional, relational (through association with brand communities) and social (related to interactions with others) experiences.

Importantly, the C-D logic perspective highlights the importance of a social context beyond encounters with the service organisation. However, while identifying inter- and intra-subjective, phenomenological value that tourists experience as they co-create in C2C contexts, research also needs to take into account the "routines, activities and practices of customers" (Heinonen et al., 2013, p. 116, emphasis added). As Ellway and Dean (2016) note, practices and experiences are intertwined in value co-creation. Similarly, Helkkula, Kelleher, and Pihlström (2012b, p. 563) argue that

"our sense making in relation to value experiences from a phenomenological perspective cannot (and should not) be divorced from the experience of value-creation practice itself. At a conscious and unconscious level, we experience ourselves and indeed others partaking and engaging in value co-creation practices."

A related research stream within C-D logic therefore positions the formation of value into customers' *social practices* (Cassop Thompson, 2012; Holttinen, 2010; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2015), as discussed in section 2.2.

## 2.2. The practice-based perspective on C2C value co-creation

Sociological literature views social practices as central social phenomena and a reference point for understanding other social entities, such as actors, structures and institutions (Bourdieu, 1977). Traditional practice theory discourses focus on how agent's actions and interactions produce and reproduce social structures (Giddens, 1984; Goffman, 1959), while also acknowledging the influence of structure on the human body and human activity (e.g. the notions of power and habitus). In contrast, we follow C-D logic's more applied view of practices as "a context-laden arena for value creation" (Holttinen, 2010, p. 102). Therefore, tourists' social practices and the elements that orchestrate the performance of practices represent units of analysis in the study of C2C co-creation. This

approach highlights the importance of contextualised social processes involved in the performance of practice (Warde, 2005) and the sometimes routine yet still important aspects of co-creating that may be invisible to the service organisation.

We draw on Schatzki's (2001, p. 11) definition of social practices as "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understanding". Schatzki (1996) distinguishes between *dispersed practices* (customs), which comprise relatively basic actions such as following rules or questioning, and *integrative practices* such as cooking, doing research or indeed, 'festivalling' – the practice of attending festivals. Integrative practices differ from dispersed practices in that they comprise a number of practice elements. However, there is little consensus among practice theorists regarding precisely which elements practices actually 'consist of'.

According to Reckwitz (2002, p. 249), practice elements include "forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, and background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge". Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould (2009, p. 31) refer to practices as "a spatially dispersed nexus of behaviours that include practical activities, performances, and representations or talk". These are linked through the interplay of procedural understandings (i.e. explicit rules, principles and instructions); skills, abilities and consumption projects (i.e. culturally-embedded knowledge of what to say and do or 'how-to'); and emotional commitments (actors' ends and purposes expressed through action). Similarly, Korkman (2006) argues that practices are performed in actions, dynamically interlinked with physical spaces, images, actors and the tools and embedded know-how used by actors.

In other practice conceptualisations, Warde (2005) notes that practicing individuals have a level of commitment in their use of consumption objects, they possess the capability to manipulate tools, and apply know-how of institutional arrangements characteristic of time, space and social context. Practices according to Holttinen (2010) integrate specific operand and operant resources and their use, mental states and bodily activities, and are encompassed by meaning structures, influenced by socio-cultural, spatial and temporal contexts. Here, we follow Holttinen's (2010) understanding of practices, based on Schatzki's (1996) interpretation of practices as directed by *rules* and *teleoaffective structures*, which Holttinen refers to as meaning structures. These govern customers' behaviours in a practice, insofar as the teleological (goal-oriented purpose, task) and affective (emotions, moods and passions) dimensions may produce different versions of the same practice (Schatzki, 2001).

The practice perspective has been previously adopted in tourism settings. Authors have focused mainly on tourism as cultural practice and have explored specific practices through which cultural representations and meanings are constructed (e.g., Crouch, 2004). Pantzar and Shove (2010) and a number of other scholars (Holt, 1995; Korkman, 2006; Lamers & Pashkevich, 2015; Rantala, 2010) have viewed tourism activities such as cruising, forest tour guiding, baseball spectatorship, Nordic walking, scuba-diving and wildlife photography in terms of combined situated social practices, the study of which can provide a more sophisticated starting point for tourism management. For example, Lamers and Pashkevich's (2015) and Korkman's (2006) detailed studies of cruise tourism practices have provided insights into how specific practice elements can be altered or enhanced by managers for tourist practices to be performed more successfully.

Yet, few studies have emphasised specific practices in tourism settings as a way to provide insights into the social value co-creation process and in particular, to illuminate how social forms of value are co-created in C2C contexts. Section 2.3 therefore briefly

explores the relationship between performed practices and value, as evidenced in a number of service and tourism contexts.

### 2.3. Social value-in-practice

Studies focusing on C2C co-creation practices include [Korkman's \(2006\)](#) doctoral research which considered how families co-create in cruise ship contexts. The author identified 21 co-creation practices, categorising these according to the subjects who carry out these practices (i.e. family; parents; children). Practices listed include parents' 'taking time off', family 'fine dining rituals' and children's 'looking for new actions', which result in both individual and shared value. [Schau et al.'s \(2009\)](#) study of consumers' collective value-creating practices across nine brand communities uncovered social networking and community engagement as two important categories generating C2C value. Social networking practices such as 'welcoming', 'empathizing' and 'governing' help to create, enhance and sustain social and moral bonds among the brand community members, which often extend outside the brand community itself. The authors found that through practices such as 'staking', 'milestoning', 'badging' and 'documenting', community members reinforce their engagement with the brand and thereby help to increase social capital within the community ([Schau et al., 2009](#)).

The above studies have gone some way towards understanding the interlinking between practices and value outcomes, though there appears to be some confusion as to how and where precisely value emerges in practice. For example, [Schatzki \(1996\)](#) posits that customers' voluntary participation in practices is itself a sign of value co-creation, while C-D logic sources appear to conceive of value as a *product* of certain value-forming practices. [Ellway and Dean \(2016\)](#) draw on [Bourdieu's \(1977\)](#) field-habitus-practice framework to explain the link: through the engagement with resources during a practice, as well as the (conscious) experience of a practice, customers are able to articulate what value they are experiencing by interpreting their experience within their own subjective situation and the wider social context. Value articulation becomes problematic in routine, or unconscious practices, however, as the experience of a practice remains implicit ([Ellway & Dean, 2016](#), p. 20):

"The boundary of value creation during 'routinized practice' becomes blurred because individuals subjectively interpret and [sic] their experience of practice through sensemaking processes, whereby they perceive and evaluate the present based upon the past."

Tourists visiting a tourist attraction or attending festivals may engage in C2C co-creation in a variety of ways, while experiencing more or less consciously a variety of different value outcomes. For some, an all-encompassing sense of social belonging may be co-created through participation in relevant social activities, while for others, a simple day out with the family may generate a stronger family bond that only gains meaning as time passes. It is therefore important to understand what specific types of value may be experienced both in routine practices, and in purposeful, goal-oriented C2C co-creation practices.

Several authors draw on [Holbrook's \(1999\)](#) value typology to categorise value outcomes in social consumption contexts. For instance, [Sheth et al. \(1991\)](#) acknowledge the importance of affective (hedonic or emotional, such as joy and happiness) and social (status- and esteem-based) forms of value stemming from practices related to social group membership. Others point to the functional or practical value, such as cognitive value related to efficiency, or excellence value gained from advice and support offered by other

customers in physical and online consumer communities ([Prebensen & Foss, 2011](#); [Reichenberger, 2017](#)). [Reichenberger \(2017\)](#) also refers to atmospheric value as another social value type that stems from the cumulative impact of social interactions among tourists on visitor experience. [Loane and Webster \(2014\)](#) use the term 'network value' to encompass social value outcomes that are not necessarily related to status ([Holbrook, 1999](#)) or other affective or functional value types, but instead stem from customers' membership of social networks.

[Loane and Webster \(2014\)](#) propose two functions of social networks membership that results in network value: perceived cohesion and social capital. Perceived cohesion relates to the concept of neo-tribes, defined as emotional communities that form around a particular interest, brand or consumption activity ([Maffesoli, 1996](#); [Schouten & McAlexander, 1995](#)). Another relevant notion is 'sub-cultural capital', defined in terms of cultural knowledge and commodities acquired to help differentiate individuals from members of other groups and providing status within defined social worlds ([Thornton, 1995](#)). Holbrook's status and esteem values are comparable to some extent, although in this case value stems from the support and in-group ([Tajfel, 1982](#)) membership experiences, as opposed to status gained through consumption of a product or service. Social capital as a resource available to members of social communities and providing benefits such as access to favours and goodwill from other members ([Adler & Kwon, 2002](#); [Coleman, 1988](#)) is well documented in tourism and events research; for instance [Wilks \(2011\)](#) draws on Putnam's notions of bridging and bonding social capital to describe the positive impacts of music festivals.

The above concepts converge to some extent with C-D logic's notion of customers co-creating value (affective, functional, social, and network value) with each other by integrating their resources in order to achieve some desired goals, such as increasing their social capital and perceived togetherness. However, this process does not always take place with specific goals in mind and tourists may not be able to articulate what specific value outcomes are being experienced. This study therefore seeks to also consider mundane practices and encounters, such as cooking a campsite meal to be shared with family and friends, as well as seemingly insignificant social practices that involve fleeting stranger encounters within physical tourism contexts.

### 3. Study methods

The study was guided by the pragmatist paradigm ([Rorty, 1991](#)), which views research as a tool that can help individuals cope with the world and to facilitate human problem-solving. The pragmatist paradigm emphasises methodologies and explanations that best produce desired outcomes ([Pansiri, 2005](#)), and therefore has been adopted in much of the multi- and mixed-methods-based tourism research. In the context of this study, the multi-method approach involved a combination of qualitative observations and interviews. The qualitative methodology is in line with previous research on co-creation practices, both in wider systemic contexts ([Vargo, Maglio, & Akaka, 2008](#)), and in explorations of the role of practices in customers' value co-creation ([Ellway & Dean, 2016](#); [Tynan et al., 2014](#)). This approach allows for a purposeful identification of insights that would be useful not only to tourism managers and marketers, but also to co-creating tourists themselves, as more knowledge of their value co-creation process may lead to more positive value outcomes. As such, the qualitative methods were applied with specific goals in mind, rather than using a purely inductive, social constructionist perspective, which is common in practice-based research ([Echeverri & Skålén, 2011](#); [Korkman, 2006](#)).



**Table 1**  
Festival sample overview.

	CampervanFest	WorldMusic-Fest	Storytelling-Fest	Music&Arts-Fest	FolkMusicFest
Festival type and genre focus	Commercial camping and entertainment event with a food & drink exhibition element	Grassroots music festival with a charitable focus (psychedelic techno and 'space rock', folk, world music)	Public sector-supported cultural and storytelling festival (storytelling; theatre, poetry, folk and world music)	Commercial music and arts festival (folk and popular music genres, arts, comedy)	Grassroots folk music festival
Duration and scale	4 days duration; approx. 500 campsite residents →5000 day visitors	3 days duration; up to 1500 campsite residents and day visitors	3 days duration; up to 2500 campsite residents and day visitors	5 days duration; up to 2000 campers +3000 visitors per day	3 days duration; up to 1500 campsite residents and day visitors
Location	Greenfield site within an urban location in West Midlands	Rural location in the East Midlands region	Remote coastal location in the South of Wales	Rural location in the South-West region	Rural coastal location in the South-West region
Target audience	Predominantly middle-class local day visitors; motorhome owners, campers, Volkswagen van owners	Predominantly working-class, families and more mature audiences	Predominantly middle-class families and older couples	Large proportion of predominantly middle class day-visitors; younger audiences and families	Predominantly local middle-class, older audiences and families

Fieldwork was undertaken at five UK-based outdoor festivals selected purposively based on a number of criteria detailed below. Festivals were considered a suitable research context for the exploration of C2C co-creation practices as they represent a socially dense setting and potentially a rich and complex social value landscape. They are public occasions organised for different purposes and to celebrate different genres or themes, such as folk music, performing arts, literature and storytelling or visual arts (Getz, 2007). Given the variety of tourists' objectives and motivations, festival attendance often involves casual socialising (Begg, 2011); the sharing of interest in a specific genre (Kyle & Chick, 2002; Matheson, 2005); ritualistic celebration of a particular sub-cultural element (Goulding & Shankar, 2011; Kim & Jamal, 2007); and, escaping into hedonistic, transgressive spaces that allow for alternative forms of identity to emerge (Bakhtin, 1968; Turner, 1995).

It was important to access a variety of festivals to allow for observations of a range of social practices, including both goal-oriented and routine practices. A purposeful intensity sampling approach was adopted, which prioritises rich examples of the explored phenomenon but does not necessarily include extreme or highly unusual cases (Patton, 2002). Those festival types and genres were therefore considered that offered plenty of opportunities for interactions, socialising and 'sociable merry-making' (Kim & Jamal, 2007), as opposed to passive spectatorship only. Potential research sites were identified by screening festival portals (e.g., [efestivals.co.uk](http://efestivals.co.uk)) and reading their promotional materials, and subsequently evaluated in terms of their target audience (as such, family-friendly festivals within different price ranges were sought out, as they are accessible to audiences with a variety of demographic attributes); location and site layout (to allow for a variety of physical spaces in which social encounters could be observed); and, scale and accommodation options (accounting for both day visitors and more immersed campers, as well as social density variance). To ensure ease of access for both the researcher and participants, only spatially-bound festivals that took place between the end of April and end of August in England and Wales were considered. The five festivals in the final sample varied in terms of the above criteria and had a different main content and genre focus, as reflected in the following pseudonyms: CampervanFest; WorldMusicFest; StorytellingFest; Music&ArtsFest; and, FolkMusicFest (see Table 1).

As Lamers et al. (2017, p. 58) suggests, analysis of social practices involves "taking a closer look, [...] getting engaged and experiencing first-hand what it is like to be a participant to the practice." The lead author therefore arrived at the festival field sites "dressed in festival garb" (Kim & Jamal, 2007, p. 186), and immersed herself in the research settings by staying at the campsite alongside regular festival tourists. As a result of this deeper immersion, the researcher participated in some of the same actions and practices as those observed and reported by the tourists. During fieldwork, the researcher's background as a young, Central-European female, her relative lack of knowledge of UK festival sub-cultures and a lack of previous festival going experience allowed for a somewhat distanced and naive view of what was happening. Theorising emergent C2C co-creation practices was therefore done based on interpretations of tourists' knowledge of cultural meanings and symbols, made explicit in their own voices, observations and reflections, as opposed to the researcher's preconceived ideas.

A total of 52 semi-structured individual and group interviews were undertaken (16 interviews with individuals, 22 with couples/pairs, 13 with groups of 3–5, and 1 with a group of 6 and more festival goers), lasting between 25 and 60 min. Interviews with naturally occurring tourist and day visitor groups represented a realistic reflection of co-creation practices at the festivals and they often followed on from brief casual conversations with tourists that

took place in routine social situations, such as waiting in queues, sitting down with a meal or relaxing at the campsite. A small number of festival volunteers were also interviewed, as their practices differed little from other tourists' practices during periods when they were not providing voluntary service. The individual voices totalled 135, which was deemed sufficient to achieve theoretical saturation, as no new insights were being provided beyond this point. Interviewee sample characteristics, including gender, researcher-estimated age categories, visitor and accommodation type, level of genre specialization, and size of social unit, are detailed in Table 2.

Holttinen's (2010) conceptualisation of practice elements was used as an organising framework to determine the scope of data collection. To uncover specific actions, operant/operand resources and their use, and teleoaffective structures, interviews focussed on festival goers' social encounters/interactions, the skills, knowledge and other resources that influence the ways in which they co-create, and their understanding of any implicit or explicit norms present in social situations at the festivals. In order to gain deeper understanding of rules and the cultural, spatial and temporal contexts of practices, the research furthermore drew on over 200 photographs and hand-written notes of ideas, reflections and observations of interacting actors, types and patterns of visible actions and interactions, enacted social rules, and features of the physical space. This combined qualitative approach allowed for holistic explorations of "things being taken for granted" (Lamers et al., 2017, p. 59), as well as the emotions involved in the shifting of practice performance in the physical space of the festivals.

Analysis involved repeated familiarisation with and immersion in the data following each period of festival data collection. Data were manually analysed before each subsequent festival visit, allowing for a more focused fieldwork approach. Upon fieldwork completion, interviews and observation notes were digitally transcribed, and QSR NVivo 9 (released in 2010) was used to manage the data and aid coding. Five-step qualitative thematic analysis (Bazeley, 2007) was then undertaken. In the first stages a contextual broad-brush coding approach was used following each festival, with the codes later distilled, re-labelled and merged to comprise a thematic framework for further analysis. Four main descriptive and more abstract categories emerged, including contextual and personal factors in co-creation (e.g. campsite, weather, perceived class differences), social atmosphere (e.g. relaxed, safe), and practices (e.g., dancing, camping, sharing food).

In the third step, in-depth "coding-on" was undertaken, which expanded and further divided each category to form a relatively complex hierarchy with four levels of sub-codes. Next, summary memos were written on each code and sub-theme by drawing on practice-theoretical concepts, which then aided data reduction and cross-case analysis in the fifth step. The resulting coding structure was re-organised into three main themes: C2C co-creation practices that encompassed the 18 'Integrative practices' outlined in section 5, and the teleological and affective structures that shaped practices. NVivo's data-query function (looking for indicative

patterns in the data using cross-tabulation) was helpful in discovering patterns within the data with respect to identifying links between specific C2C co-creation practices and other practice elements, as well as between practices and observable value outcomes.

## 4. Study results

### 4.1. C2C Co-creation practices at festivals

This section provides an overview and description of tentative findings relating to the C2C co-creation at festivals, constituted in 18 integrative practices. These are clustered in groups of three, starting from less socially immersive practices that focus on in-groups (Tajfel, 1982) and what Rihova et al. (2013) term 'social bubbles', to more socially immersive co-creation that appears to result in the emergence of network value. Illustrative data excerpts are presented in Table 3. A discussion of how the practices link to specific value outcomes follows in section 4.2.

#### 4.1.1. Insulating, territorial and non-conforming practices

Physical spaces such as separate dining areas and secluded cul-de-sacs within the festival landscape afforded small groups an opportunity to distance themselves from the hubbub of the festival, while allowing for the performance of insulating and territorial practices. These were performed predominantly by individuals and couples but also by larger family and friendship groups at the more commercially-oriented Music&ArtsFest. The notion of 'in-groups' (Tajfel, 1982) from social psychology resonates well; these are defined as reference groups that an individual identifies with, while out-group members are often excluded (Tajfel, 1982). Together with insulating and territoriality, non-conforming practices highlighted the need for autonomous social goals, needs and desires, which were not always aligned with the expected 'code' of the event.

*Insulating* was especially apparent where large groups congregated to find a private area in which they could relax or socialise undisturbed. This was observed at the CampervanFest, where a large group of approx. 60 members of a semi-organised motorhome club purposefully parked their motorhomes in a remote section of the campsite. Some tourists appeared to insulate themselves by keeping a physical distance, while still absorbing the social atmosphere at the festival. Small groups of tourists were often observed sitting close together in dining areas to deter strangers from penetrating their own 'social bubble' (Rihova et al., 2013), with stranger interactions limited to short exchanges of pleasantries. *Territorial* practice took insulating even further by creating physical barriers to discourage outsiders from intruding. Windbreakers, tarpaulin sheets, gazebos and temporary picket fences, often decorated with fairy lights, flags and colourful bunting, demarcated personal territory around a campsite pitch and prevented others from coming too close. In the festival arena such private spaces were created by laying down picnic rugs and occupying seating areas with an almost selfish desire to take the best spot.

**Table 2**  
Interviewee sample characteristics.

Category	%	Category	%	Category	%
Female	51	Visited - first time	38	Genre novice	20
Male	49	Visited - been before	27	Genre experienced	39
Age - teens to early 20s	7	Visited - regular visitors	35	Genre committed	41
Age - mid-20s to mid-30s	18	Camping - 'Glamping'	3	Single visitor	13
Age - late 30s to mid-40s	27	Camping - Motorhome/Van	22	Couple/pair	32
Age - late 40s to mid-50s	33	Camping - Tent	65	Family	20
Age - late 50s to mid-60s	15	Day visitors	10	Friends	35

**Table 3**  
Illustrative examples of C2C co-creation practices.

Practices	Illustrative examples
1 Insulating	Janet, CampervanFest: “[...] we, you know, we wanted to have like a little area, so our vans and awnings around, so that there's an area in the middle, so that we can communicate ... 'coz, you know, if the weather's alright, we'll sit outside, you know, into the night, tonight we'll be in one of the awning, won't we, it's just a bit cold.”
2 Territoriality	Nolan, WorldMusicFest: “[...] then someone came along yesterday and they put their tent sort of right opposite ours with their guy rope sort of [in front of our tent], when there is plenty of space. And we were all quite miffed by this, we sort of thought, 'ah, what the ... they are sort of encroaching on our space this is our territory!’”
3 Non-conforming	Ally and Estell, Music&ArtsFest: (Ally) “If it's a big group of [...] boys and girls not actually with one of them and you're trying to impress ...” (Estell) “Because if you're with the group of friends that you're with all the time, I don't think you escape your normal social restrains. Because if you're a young teenager with other young teenagers, there's always gonna be bloke politics and things like that going on, just because you're now in a field listening to some music that doesn't take that away.”
4 Communicating	Jackie, CampervanFest: “and it's nice, 'cause you can just catch up with people, 'cause we don't see each other all the time, because everybody's lives are so busy. But when it comes to an event like this you just sit together and catch up.”
5 Sharing	StorytellingFest (observation notes): I watched a mum and daughter just in front of me, with the mum lying down with her head in the daughter's lap, and the daughter playing and braiding her hair while they were both listening to the stories and music.
6 Collaborating	Nolan, StorytellingFest: “[...] my other half is very much, 'what are you doing, we don't have to get up early', like the other people we are with ... ehm, I think sort of, I think I need, when I go to these events, I'll be a bit selfish and go, 'I don't like that thing, I wanna do this, this, this, this.' So we, we sort of go on and do our own things and agree to come together and eat at such –and-such time and all the rest of it.”
7 Acknowledging	Gary, FolkMusicFest: “People come and say, 'hi', but you know, it's all very much small talk, like some, you know, one sentence and that's it. Which is fine, because I don't know why you'd have to sort of sit down and have a big conversation with everybody. People just, they're happy just to walk through and say hi, I like to just, 'Hello!', you know”
8 Advising	Emily, StorytellingFest: “I'd be like 'oh, are you waiting for this' and then we would talk about what we've seen during the day and what our favourites were, exchange ... what's the word that you'd say, oh, this is a good thing to see ... and they'd say, oh, this is a good thing to see.”
9 Conversing	Laura, CampervanFest: “[...] you sort of just make conversation, like the girls are doing a food, cookery thing round in there (cooking workshops area) and there's mums and that, standing outside, you just get sort of chatting, don't you with different people, making conversation.”
10 Helping	Ben, Music&ArtsFest: “[...] the group that we pitched up next to, one of them was having a bit of trouble with their tent. And then, they were taking picture of us a couple of times and given us sausages and burgers yesterday ... yeah, everyone's very generous with their time and their stuff.”
11 Relating	Lee, WorldMusicFest: “[...] we were basically looking for some other people who were vaguely our age so that we could kind of [...] 'Cause otherwise, there's a lot of kind of families, and a lot of older guys here. And we figured that we need to kind of chill with some people that are more near our age. So we kind of had a little scuttle round, saw some people here, just pitch up a tent over these and just met these guys, so ....”
12 Confiding	StorytellingFest (observation notes): Neville told me about his future plans and how he felt about life in general. It was a relatively deep, spiritual conversation, despite the fact that we would probably never see each other again. Back at the campsite we said our goodbyes – he asked me if I was 'googlable', I replied that he could find me on Facebook, and he said that he was not on it. “Never mind”, he said, “nice to meet you and have a good life!”
13 Conforming	Heather, CampervanFest: “Caravanners tend to have a rally, motorhomers tend to have meets. We don't really call it a rally, I don't know why ... I don't know whether the phrase rally conjures up lots and lots and sort of rows, quite regimental, whereas at [name of motorhome club] we are quite relaxed, so long you don't park on top of somebody.”
14 Trading	Diana, FolkMusicFest: “Sometimes at a festival we, you know, at the end of the night we come back, be around the campfire playing and other musicians will come and join you that you never met before ... [and] they'll join in and you could be there for hours on end. And it's lovely, because you learn things from each other. People say, oh what was that tune you played and that's good as well, so ... it's learning and as well listening to what other people do.”
15 Initiating	Dylan, StorytellingFest: “Some people have come just as a family and some as a group, [...] and maybe they do it every year and they love doing it. And partly I think it's an induction of children into the, into this tribe, into this [storytelling] community.”
16 Embracing	Shaun, WorldMusicFest: “[...] another one of the lads who we were walking around with at that festival was a dustbin collector from Glasgow, but it meant nothing. We all had a beer, we all had a laugh and sat there, we all stayed up we all looked at the stars, everybody was equal in the same way. It doesn't matter what you do.”
17 Fun-making	FolkMusicFest (observation notes): Suddenly the lights in the main bar area went out and the crowd of about 200 people all went Oaaaaw! in a disappointed, slightly shocked tone of voice. When the light came back on 10 s later, the whole crowd exclaimed, Yeeey! Then the lights went out again 20 s later and came back on again repeatedly, about 5 times, with the crowd reacting more and more enthusiastically with each Oaaaaw! and Yeeey!, obviously relishing the collective moans and cheers.
18 Rekindling	Melvin, Music&ArtsFest: “Every year you come back and there'll be people that you recognise from last year. Like, I'm always stopping and saying, 'hey mate, how are you doing? Can't believe it's been a year, I haven't see you for a year' ... 'case sometimes you meet up outside of the festival, and other times you won't meet, lives are busy [...] and it's like an extended family I think, isn't it.”

Some tourists were also found to engage in *non-conforming* practice, which appeared to break expected social norms, both with respect to generally accepted norms (e.g. expectation of politeness) and specific sub-cultural rules (e.g. accepted dress-code). Graham talked about ‘pushing and shoving’ he experienced when queuing for children’s workshops at the Music&ArtsFest. He perceived the practice as impolite and out of line with the generally ‘chilled-out atmosphere’ he had come to expect at the festival. Younger audiences (15–20-year-old) were observed wearing clothes more akin to the current ‘festival chic’ high-street-style fashion trend, as opposed to the generally accepted laid-back or ‘hippie’ clothing style. Fitting within the norm structures of their own peer groups (i.e. ‘outside’ the festival), appeared to lead to a level of detachment from the rest of the festival community.

#### 4.1.2. *Communicating, collaborating and sharing practices*

Communicating, sharing and collaborating practices often took place in private spaces at festivals, such as tourists’ tents and campsite areas, which served as focal points for family and friendship group reunions. As a number of authors point out, group travel and shared experiences enhance family functioning and reinforce friendship ties within pre-existing social units by establishing traditions and generating memories (Kyle & Chick, 2002; Lehto et al., 2009) and there was evidence at the festivals of such functions being fulfilled. The physical environment and the social unit make-up played an important role; CampervanFest and Music&ArtsFest included designated family campsite areas and family- or group-oriented activities in their programming, which appeared to facilitate the performance of these practices.

Families and friends were found to spend a lot of their time at the festival *communicating* with each other – catching up on news, sharing opinions and insights, reminiscing about past events, and joking together. In so doing, families and friendship groups reinforced and invigorated their personal relationships and felt closer to each other. Such bonding function was also fulfilled through *collaborating*, in which groups delegated tasks, revised family roles, and worked together to achieve some common goal. Tourists collaboratively organised their ‘duties’ when camping, and decided on a schedule of their time and activities at the festival. Many couples and groups were for instance observed pitching tents and loudly debating about what to do, both at the campsite and within the festival arenas. While arguments were likely particularly in family situations, an increased willingness to be more accommodating for the good of all was evident.

*Sharing* practice involved the sharing of objects and consumables but also active sharing of experiences among family and friendship groups, resulting again in perceptions of stronger interpersonal bonds. A typical field note entry from all of the festival sites described families sitting at the campsite under gazebos with their BBQs and picnic sets, partying by campfires outside their tents or sharing a meal at tables in catering areas. Experiences of dancing, playing games, partying and getting drunk were also actively shared. This helped to create a sense of ongoing closeness and intimacy; groups of friends talked of re-connecting with each other after the festival and recounting stories of object-centred sharing actions, such as listening and dancing together to a specific music performance.

#### 4.1.3. *Acknowledging, advising and conversing practices*

Acknowledging, advising and conversing practices were evident across all five festival contexts, though were more commonly observed at campsites where a more holiday-like atmosphere prevailed. These practices represent relatively superficial, less socially immersive co-creation oriented at tourists-strangers and performed mainly by individual tourists, but also by tourist dyads

and groups, the majority of whom were day visitors and therefore less immersed in the festival environment. These co-creation practices appeared to be rather limited in that they rarely developed into deeper, long-lasting social connections and relationships. Nevertheless, acknowledging, advising and conversing appeared to create a friendly atmosphere at the festivals, which has been shown to contribute to positive evaluations of the service experience as a whole (Prebensen & Foss, 2011).

In *acknowledging* practice tourists recognised the social presence of others through nodding, smiling and greeting. A welcoming, open body language with plenty of eye contact, grins and cheerful nods was observed as tourists walked past each other on their way to festival venues, eateries or toilets. As tourists walked around campsite pitches or the festival arena, they also performed *advising* practice, engaging in non-committal, brief conversations about consumption objects, characteristics or possessions that were not necessarily related to any special interest genre. Specifically, advising pertained to offering practical information relating to the festival site and customs; e.g. where to get water; which food vendor to choose or what festival performance to go to. In a similar vein, *conversing* practice involving autotelic and relatively superficial verbal exchanges with strangers was reported by tourists. Conversing revolved around everyday topics, such as the weather, where tourists or day visitors came from or what their tastes, likes and dislikes were, both at the festival and outside it. Many informants referred to small talk or polite chitchat, in which opinions were shared and a sense of general friendliness was established, though little effort was made to take such interactions much further.

#### 4.1.4. *Helping, relating and confiding practices*

Consumer behaviour studies suggest that service contexts which draw together customers with a perceived common set of values and attitudes can become ‘social villages’ (Oliver, 1999), where social alliances emerge that contribute to a sense of camaraderie among customers. At the Music&ArtsFest and the CampervanFest for example, the more overtly commercial nature of the event led to a perceived sense of a holiday-like care-free zone, which contributed to the formation of a social village. Helping, relating and confiding practices were evident in all of the festivals, and could be observed in relatively short-lived but often intense collaborative inter-group and dyadic practices of festival tourists and day visitors.

In *helping* practice, tourists shared resources with each other, offering physical assistance or advice to tourists-strangers, which then often led to further interactions and a temporary sense of neighbourliness. For instance, experienced camper Sarah found herself showing strangers at the StorytellingFest campsite how to operate their new gas stove. Within the festival arena, tourists would often keep an eye on a stranger’s blanket while they went to get a drink, offer to take a photograph, or share lifts from the festival. *Relating* practice pertained to creating a more intense, if only a short-lived, sense of connection in shared moments or circumstances. Andrea and John from the Music&ArtsFest, for example, engaged in a social interaction with a stranger based on a negative service incident. Perceived similarity, or homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001), also appeared to serve as a medium through which people sought to establish contact with others perceived as similar. For instance, relating took place on the basis of shared attributes, such as age or social group composition, which then led to tourists camping next to and befriending a group of alike strangers.

Lastly, another practice that appeared to contribute to a ‘social village’ sense was *confiding*. Some tourists used encounters with strangers as an opportunity to share their life-story and off-load



their personal problems, and this often led to a perceived sense of relief or joy and an intense personal connection. As Marcus from StorytellingFest noted, “pouring one’s life story at complete strangers before you realise what you’ve done” was relatively commonplace at the festival, though rarely led to a long-lasting friendship.

#### 4.1.5. *Conforming, trading and initiating practices*

In conforming, trading and initiating practices festival tourists enacted and expressed their membership of various sub-cultures or neo-tribes. Particular tribal structures emerged around consumption objects at some of the festivals; these included folk music at the FolkMusicFest, storytelling at StorytellingFest, campervans at CampervanFest, but also ‘Hawkwind’, an iconic music band headlining at the WorldMusicFest. As Holt (1995) notes, customers-tourists often use such objects to co-create value by classifying themselves and the meanings associated with particular objects of consumption. In the case of the festivals, the specific genre, band or sub-cultural focus constituted a set of images that shaped tourists’ C2C co-creation practices.

Tourists were observed *conforming* to the rules and norms accepted by their respective sub-cultural communities. Many FolkMusicFest and StorytellingFest attendees wore ‘folksy’ clothing and brandished pewter tankards from which ale and cider were consumed. The use of particular discourse was observed; at the CampervanFest, members of the motorhome tribe referred to the festival as ‘a meet’, whereas the Volkswagen campervan enthusiasts talked of similar events as ‘shows’. Genre-specific know-how, experiences, advice and skills were *traded* by tourists. At the CampervanFest, tourists often stopped to appreciate and ask questions about customised ‘buses’ put on display by other festival attendees. At the StorytellingFest, ‘chill-out’ spaces at the campsite and informal organiser-facilitated sessions were used to hone tourists’ storytelling skills and to collect new stories. Lastly, many first time tourists were spouses, children or friends of existing members of the sub-cultural groups, invited along to be *initiated* into the tribe’s festivaling tradition. At the FolkMusicFest, for instance, strangers who were attending for the first time talked of the folkies ‘showing them the ropes’. Such practices contributed to a stronger sense of sub-cultural community and tribal membership.

#### 4.1.6. *Trusting, embracing, fun-making and rekindling practices*

The last group of C2C co-creation practices reflects strongly the nature of festivals as liminoid spaces (e.g., Gardner, 2004; Gibson & Connell, 2005). These represent a temporary state in which usual social rules and constraints of everyday life are transcended or inverted (Turner, 1995) and a ‘code of conduct’ marked by laughter, respectfulness, egalitarian sharing and helpfulness often emerges (Falassi, 1987). A number of tourism studies (Arnould & Price, 1993; Kim & Jamal, 2007) describe how the liminoid state leads to ‘communitas’; a spontaneous, unstructured sense of community or ‘we-ness’ (Turner, 1995). The liminoid rule structure was particularly evident at the smaller, more grassroots WorldMusicFest and StorytellingFest, where embracing, fun-making and rekindling practices were performed.

The emerging sense of communitas was particularly evident in the dissolving and blurring of social boundaries. Social and physical differences, such as sexual orientation, age and social class, were actively ignored with tourists accepting strangers as equals in *embracing* practice. Additionally, the escapist nature of festivals was encompassed in tourists’ *fun-making*. Playful, ludic and at times transgressive behaviours were evidenced particularly at the WorldMusicFest and the Music&ArtsFest, and included dressing up in costumes, nudity, romantic or sensual encounters, and indulging in alcohol and recreational drugs. As everyday social rules were cast

off upon arrival, new ‘festival identities’ were adopted. ‘Going crazy’, as Andy from WorldMusicFest put it, contributed to an immersive atmosphere of merriment, laughter and festivity, and also represented a venting mechanism for tourists’ desire to escape the mundane, orderly nature of everyday life (Bakhtin, 1968).

Another co-creation practice that was performed within the liminoid zone but appeared to have temporal implication by going far beyond the festival was *rekindling*. Fifty-year-old Shaun from the WorldMusicFest talked about the deep friendships that he developed through festival attendance and that were more important to him than those in his everyday life. For a group of tourist volunteers from WorldMusicFest, rekindling at festivals facilitated the development of a sense of kinship among ‘known strangers’ at festivals. Turner (1995) distinguishes between unstructured, spontaneous communitas that emerge in liminoid contexts and what he calls ‘normative communitas’ – communitas that have over time developed into more structured social systems. Rekindling resembles the latter, in that festival friendships firmed up over time through more structured volunteering.

#### 4.2. *Value outcomes in C2C co-creation*

The findings presented in section 4.1 suggest that many positive social outcomes, such as an emerging sense of friendliness or temporary/ongoing communitas, are often the result not only of tourists’ resource integration but also relatively mundane, routine social practices, such as greeting passing strangers, conforming to tribal norms or embracing those who are in the everyday consumer society perceived as ‘different’. In such cases, experiences of value may remain implicit and only become evident as tourists’ bodily actions, emotional engagement and performance of practice is captured through observational research methods (Ellway & Dean, 2016). The findings show that social value outcomes differ, based on two main aspects of co-creation practices.

First, the types of emerged value depend on the degree to which C2C co-creation encompasses purposeful vs. autotelic integration of resources to achieve some goal. This corresponds with Schatzki’s (1996) teleological practice dimension, insofar as festival tourists’ goal- or purpose-oriented co-creation became more explicit as practicing tourists needed to actively acknowledge relevant rule and role structures, as well as use consumption objects, apply know-how or skills and adopt certain bodily activities to carry out the practice (Holtinen, 2010). Second, Schatzki’s affective practice dimension is reflected in the emotional and meaning-based aspects of tourists’ social lives and contexts. In some practices, tourists’ C2C value outcomes related to perceived membership in some social groups; for instance, where activities at the festival focused on reinforcing status and identity within pre-existing neo-tribal or sub-cultural structures (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995; Thornton, 1995), or where temporary communitas (Turner, 1995) at festivals led to perceived cohesion and the building of social capital. In other cases, a higher degree of individualism led to the casting away of out-groups (Tajfel, 1982), and focusing instead on known-others – families and friends, but also those perceived temporarily as members of the tourist’s in-group in what Belk (2010) terms pseudo-kinship.

This principle is conceptualised in Fig. 1, which presents C2C co-creation value outcomes in a matrix that places them on a continuum of Autotelic ↔ Instrumental practices on one hand, and Private ↔ Public practices on the other hand. The autotelic dimension comprises more routine, run-of-the-mill practices which have an end in themselves and often only gain meaning with the passing of time, while instrumental practices are performed with specific goals in mind. Social-affective structures in the private dimension then orient co-creation toward familial, in-group



greater service satisfaction and brand loyalty (Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Even though recent S-D logic debates increasingly acknowledge the autonomous nature of resource-integration as embedded in a systemic context affected by institutional logics and symbols, this perspective does not necessarily account for C2C value co-creation that may be invisible to the organisation and therefore outside of its scope of influence (Medberg & Heinonen, 2014). Recent customer-centric developments in service marketing research, and in particular the contributions of the Customer-Dominant logic, have not yet been fully incorporated in tourism literature. This paper therefore provides a novel perspective on tourists' social practices by conceptualising these as C2C value co-creation, using the more recent C-D logic perspective.

The prominence of social practices in tourism is echoed by a number of authors; Lamers et al. (2017) note that practice theories can be successfully applied in tourism research as an alternative to the dominant economics-driven perspectives, particularly with regards to tourism policy. The authors caution that some tourism practices may lead to societally undesirable outcomes, but on the other hand, practice theory can aid in identifying more desirable practices that may be facilitated by policy and management. As discussed in section 4.2, specific C2C co-creation practices may increase tourists' social value in various ways; the tourism context can become embedded with kinship meanings, bring about the emergence of collaborative commercial friendships, or represent a platform for the enactment of tribal rituals. This may be particularly important for increasing the well-being of communities or the improvement of host-guest relationships within destinations.

Tourists' C2C co-creation practices are not always necessarily linked directly to the tourism service offering, but the tourist landscape is likely to be embedded with one or more of the social elements that play an important role in the performance of practices. The tourism organisation is merely one element of the customer value ecosystem (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2015), and consequently, it is important to define potential situations in which tourism businesses can be more present in customers' co-creation practices. The findings presented in section 4.1 and 4.2 serve to indicate the importance of C2C co-creation practices for tourists, and highlight a few implications for the planning of tourism spaces.

### 5.2. Managerial implications

This paper goes towards defining potential situations in which tourism businesses can be more present in customers' life worlds by focusing on customer-to-customer (as opposed to business-to-customer) co-creation, and help facilitate the emergence of positive Affective, Social, Functional and Network value outcomes by identifying specific practices that are likely to generate such outcomes. It is therefore important to actively seek opportunities to reveal tourists' perspectives on value by employing research methods that enable such access. Thick descriptions and first-hand participant experiences of what it is like to participate in a practice can be gained through ethnographic methods, such as in-depth interviews and participant observation.

By 'zooming-in' on tourists' C2C co-creation in such way, tourism organisations are able to gain practical understanding and insider knowledge and skills in relation to the rules and resources required (Lamers et al., 2017). This is important, as practices are dynamic in that they can change or be changed by re-adjusting and reconfiguring some of the elements that underpin them (Kemnis, 2010). This dynamism represents interesting opportunities for tourism management. Holttinen (2010) suggests that value improvement opportunities may be identified by understanding the meaning structures and resources used in practices. By changing or improving some of the practice elements through

positive interventions, it may therefore be possible to make practices more valuable (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Korkman, 2006).

Obviously tourism service providers need to facilitate access to resources. For instance, by encouraging the display of symbolic objects and artefacts (e.g. particular types of clothing and memorabilia displays) in the tourism setting, organisations may be able to facilitate the emergence of Network value and other positive Affective and Social outcomes, such as perceived higher status and strengthened social identity. Tourism providers may also encourage an explicit rule structure that allows for connections to be made more easily in an otherwise privately-oriented tourism setting. Technological platforms and social media can prove useful, as seen for example in Melia Hotels' use of Twitter to help 'break the ice' among strangers visiting the same hotel resort. Online contact can facilitate immediate C2C co-creation and encourage the emergence of a social village that is more conducive to Functional and Network value outcomes. In a similar vein, UK-based festivals facilitate embracing practices and the sense of we-ness among festival goers by organising carnival days or training staff and volunteers to introduce themselves and start friendly conversations with strangers and thus nudge attendees toward more open, out-group-facing practices.

### 5.3. Future research

This paper set out to frame empirical explorations of C2C value co-creation as captured in the somewhat limited context of UK-based, multi-day, family-friendly festivals. While there are certainly similarities with other tourism, leisure and hospitality settings in the ways in which groups of friends, families or strangers interact with each other in social practices, it is recognised that this methodological homogeneity has limited our ability to move beyond the current conceptualisation of the C2C co-creation construct. Nevertheless, we argue that the pragmatist approach utilised in this study is aligned well with tourism management's focus on practical solutions and understandings, while acknowledging the social reality that is based on tourists' socially constructed practices and beliefs (Pansiri, 2005, p. 194). In this sense, C2C co-creation research should not be weighed down by positivistic striving for an absolute truth or pre-determined models of behaviour, nor should it see reality as existing purely in the mind. Instead, practical applications and solutions to particular research problems should be favoured.

In our case, the methodology used to study practices has been a qualitative one, with triangulation of a variety of qualitative data deemed to produce the best results. A more pluralistic approach to the research design and a focus on different tourism contexts may be utilised to provide holistic perspectives, richer insights and perhaps go towards more concrete implications for specific tourism contexts. We establish four social value outcome categories that stem from 18 different types of C2C co-creation practices. The framework could be used as a theoretical basis for empirical research in a number of similar C2C co-creation-rich tourism settings, such as hotel and leisure resorts, campsites, wildlife and adventure holidays, cultural, religious and ethnic festivals, cruise experiences and more structured cultural holidays in urban contexts. Further insights should also be provided by exploring in depth the impact on social value outcomes of different provider-facilitated resources and tourist-specific teleological structures (goals, motivations and other personal characteristics) that guide the performance of practices. Such research endeavours would contribute to the increasingly important focus on tourists as value co-creators.

### Declarations of interest

None.



## Contribution made by each author to the paper

Dr Rihova as the lead author collected the research data, performed data analysis and drafted the paper. The theoretical and methodological perspectives adopted in the paper were devised in collaboration with Dr Gouthro, while Prof Buhalis was key in formulating the main contributions of the research and drafting the discussion section. Dr Moital assisted with writing the conclusions and abstract and provided feedback and corrections in the final stages of the paper.

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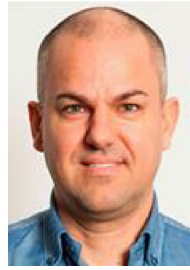
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