

Managing Tourism, Leisure and Events organization

Chosen leader in the events sector is the founder of Glastonbury festival
Michael Eavis.

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Introduction

The leader we have chosen to speak about is Michael Eavis, who has earned his name as one of the key figures in the events industry and the founder and public face of the Glastonbury festival. Starting its humble beginnings with a vision of a small blues and folk festival named the Pilton Pop on his dairy farm in Somerset in the 1970s Eavis has managed to create and grown this into one of the most iconic, famous multi-genre events music festivals in the world attracting people from all over the globe, reporting two hundred thousand attending per year (Anderton, 2018). His vision, resilience and commitment while maintaining the festival's strong sense of identity and maintaining its unique atmosphere made it what it is today. Recently giving his daughter Emily Eavis more hands-on responsibility in the day-to-day management of the event Michael's drive and ethos is still very much present attending key meetings and TV appearances Michael now eighty-nine, visionary ambassador and figure head for the brand has moved into a well-earned less active role letting his daughter take the reins. The festival has had its challenges throw-out battling the British weather, economic recession in 2008, battling rising costs, logistics as sheer scale of the operation grew and grew, upping security to prevent potential terrorist threats, crowd control, waste management, sustainable and environmental impacts the years such as, the foot and mouth 2001 covid 19 pandemic in 2020 and has had to make changes to managing its environmental impact and evolving with the future trends embracing digital platforms, live streaming with the BBC, Eavis constantly evolving to stay at the forefront adapting financially, culturally, financial and environmental challenges.

Michael's leadership style

In the book Glastonbury fifty Michael recaps the moment that inspired him to create a festival on their dairy farm, At that time he borrowed money from the bank to buy the farm

from his mother after the untimely death of his dad due to Cancer, Eavis was a high teen and in the Navy at the time, he had already served four years and had no plans to return until he received the call to inform him of his dad's diagnosis, six months after this call his dad sadly died and Michael was left to run the farm, he turned down the offer of 15000 for the sale of the farm by his financial adviser but instead borrowed the same sum from the bank so he could buy it from his mother so she could retire, she was only forty-seven. Michael's Methodist upbringing distilled his intent for social responsibility and fifty years on still maintains his drive and self-esteem comes from always trying to do the right thing (Murdock and Dolezal (2018)). Michael worked extremely hard on the farm with his all or nothing approach and admits although he got married and had three children due to his extremely stressful work schedule on the farm he wasn't the best husband so eventually they got a divorce causing an up and down with his Methodist church and local close knit community almost tainting his character. It was early 1970s and himself and his new wife Jean attended a neighboring farm that was having a jazz festival, Eavis recalls standing in the crowd of people, watching Led Zeppelin play, inspired he turned to his wife and says he's going to put on a show like this on their farm, with no previous event experience just his impulsive drive and tenacity he rang up a booking agent and booked a band to attend three months from that day (Eavis and Eavis (2019)). This leadership go-get-it approach and the belief to always do the right thing has directed Michael through some difficult times, one of which was in the very early days of the festivals when he trusted two new friends with their vision of festival, the results were festival attendees and staff leaving Eavis's farm in a mess and in debt with artists and stall holders being owed money from the organizers, Michael wanted to do the right thing so he paid the debts himself hence owing more money to the bank, there was also another time when he put his farm down as down payment to put on their third festival, he believed in the vision so much and his gamble paid off after the festival he took the cash straight to the bank and got his farm back.

People and culture

Michael's visionary approach and transformational leadership style (Allen (2005)) and ability to inspire and unite a diverse group by attracting people who share the same goal when he donates to charity and supports his community he sets a precedent, this resonates and inspires his employees to mirror his actions, this also fosters a shared purpose working towards something bigger than themselves therefore expressing experiencing self to his as well as continually adapting to new challenges and demonstrating resilience during setbacks are just some of his key leadership qualities (Murdock and Dolezal (2018)). Demonstrating his individualism and encouraging his team to think out of the box he has created an empowering environment where

individuals are seen and valued towards the festival success and shared vision. Neutering talents and encouraging expression and diversity thousands of volunteers loyally come back each year. (Eavis and Eavis (2019).

During the 1980s Michael was moved by an event that happened at a free event at Stonehenge involving travelers, now known as the bean fields (Smart, 2017), police who were instructed by Edd Miliband, descended on the free festival and proceeded to destroy every caravan/home they came across, this turned in to panic and fights between the festival goers and police as people tried to defend themselves and save their homes., as Pilton farm wasn't too far and already had a reputation from the previous small free festivals and the belief by some travelers that the farm was on sacred ground due to its position on ley lines the festival goers seek refuge there and Eavis was happy to help and could see it as an opportunity recalls his first encounter with this type of demographic before and could see travelers fitting in to his vision. Due to people having nowhere else to go as they fled to safety the dairy farm was starting to fill up, so Michael purchased an unused field from his Neighbour to hope these individuals, friendships formed and trust developed many of these travelers returned and go on to work for Eavis till this day. In the festival's infancy he relied on friends to help him with the organization and festival, beanfield attacks showed people that he's not scared of the government can be relied on looked up to and trusted. His need to do what he believes is right helped him to collect more willing volunteers in exchange for a ticket and a place to camp. If Eavis had taken a different approach and refused to help these individuals the word would have spread as the travelers continue to Rome and could have had a detrimental effect on the business people would also be less likely to want to work or attend the festival. In doing what he did by doing what he felt was right he showed bravery and highlighted his non-conformed side to the political agenda; this was to eventually frame the ethos of the festival.

The Employee centered approach he leads with would suggest Michael Eavis works under the y theory (Heil et al., 2000) defining his management style as someone who empowers, and supports his employees. We analyzed the x and y theory to compare Eavis' management style. Developed by D McGregor his theory suggests that there are two different work types, McGregor has categorized theory x as a person who lacks motivation and needs constant guidance and direction towards the goal in hand, They need micromanaging as believed to be inherited lazy and dislikes work and only work because they have to, the management style for theory x would present a strict, rigid work environment with clear rules, breaks and instructions with possible cash or time incentives to come to work with a positive look and are naturally motivated with many just working for free to be part of the vision, capable and self-actualizing apposed the beliefs

with theory x that people are lazy and need micromanaging as well as avoidant of responsibilities. This approach will affect the type of employee, but his trust could be abused resulting in employees doing the minimum just to get a ticket into Glastonbury, (Robinson, 2016) which was fast approaching being the best ticket in town. Michael's commitment to providing full training with his coaching and mentoring as well as his transparency and hard work inspires others to perform to their best. For instance if you was to volunteer at the festival you would be asked to pay a contribution of three hundred pounds towards the ticket, for this the volunteer gets a space in crew camping and a meal ticked on days they work and access to hot showers and loos plus lots of time to experience the festival, the volunteer is expected to complete 3 x 6 hour shifts over the whole of the festival once these shifts are completed the three hundred will be returned within four weeks. This has been very successful especially as the popularity increases it is more difficult to purchase tickets so for some people this is their only way in to the festival.

It has been noted that Michael's non-conformist exclusivities was a big attraction for all types of people with him saying himself due to the nature of the environment and the ability for people to feel free although he tried to turn a blind eye in the beginning to people using narcotics' as the scale of the festival got bigger so did the problem and he didn't want it feeling unsafe so after a shooting between drug dealers trying to secure their turf he decided to call the police and tighten the security to protect the spirit and vision of the festival. (Croft, 2019) his reliability and drive while collaborating with charities such as Green Piece and Oxfam to name but a few attracted volunteers joining the waiting list to hopefully volunteer at the next festival. (Katerina Dshedshorov, 2000)

Following the wake of the twin towers terrorist attack September 11th 2001 and growing concerns for the festival's security and fencing there was conversation to cancel that year's 2002 festival but then came the foot and mouth outbreak that caused mass destructions to the British tourism and farming community, foot and mouth which is a highly contagious viral disease that spreads through livestock reportedly affected over two hundred farms across the UK resulting in the slaughter of more than six million sheep and cows to prevent further spreading. (World and Regional Emerging Diseases Intervention Centre, 2011) this resulted in Michael's dairy farm although livestock unaffected, Glastonbury festival decision to cancel that year due to prevention of further spreading, this had a detrimental effect on not only Michael and his family but the community who most now rely on the annual tourism injection, the cancellation also impacted the staff, vendors and music industry not just financially but also mentally. Dairy farmer Eavis' approach to this was to utilize his platform and organize a concert in Cardiff's millennium stadium to raise money and support those affected, this he named Farm Aid had headline acts like Coldplay and

reef and was broadcast on the BBC Raising an estimated £1.2million .this also insured although the festival was canceled that year his staff would still be needed that summer. (Sisko, 2016)

Recommendations

Michael showed his strong leadership skills back in 2020 during the Carona virus outbreak, putting people's safety first despite the finical implications, He also donated money to the arts and hospitality sectors, this generosity will have a pay it forward approach with more people wanting to work for him in the Futchter. During the two-year break from the festival Eavis thought out of the box and broadcasted live at worthy farm which was basically an online festival with prerecorded performances from previous years and guests interviews this was very successful attracting over two million viewers worldwide .With this in mind Michael could prepare more events like this in the case of unforeseen circumstances, implementing health and safety protocols in advance and setting out a plan for less attendees so people have more space, also more virtual events ,possible storing personal protective equipment for staff and festival goers, this could ensure the festival would be able to safely open if this was to happen again.

There is no actual figure to pinpoint how many staff Eavis employs ,and although it is help over the space of a few days each year the scale of the event makes it a year round effort planning and sousing security electricity for the event as well as water, traders, staff etc...not to mention the dairy farm.

Report recap

Michael Eavis grew the festival from a thought and Pashion for music, he used the Resorces of the farm what he already had and his gut as well as relaying and trusting on strangers to create his vision alongside him. As the festival grew, he delegated the responsibility and learned how to organize a festival from trial and error. Starting with a small crowd of 1,500 to 200.000 he is truly a visionary leader while maintaining who he is while protecting the festival's charm and magic.

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