Twitter Thread by Aidan Fitzmaurice



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FYRE FESTIVAL FOR KIDS

Strap in folks for I have story about a festival I ALMOST worked at many years ago that essentially turned out to be a massive scam akin to Fyre Fest only it was aimed at families.

And believe me when I say this tale has a killer twist ending.

THREAD

I say 'almost' worked at because I backed out a few days before. My suspicions were already on alert due to the natural wariness a balding man like myself has towards any full grown adult who uses loads of hair gel, like the Event Organiser (EO) in question. Also he was horrible.

I looked after a STEAM workshop for Science Gallery for a few years and in 2014 we were asked to do a new family friendly festival in Malahide called Wonderfest.

I met with the EO to discuss details & from the off he seemed a bit off. Not my kind of guy.

https://t.co/9qT8lOqq1m

He promised everything under the sun but wouldn't just give me a fixed budget. The way he talked about the festival sounded great but also far too good to be true. Anyway, we agreed to do the festival, I put a programme together and he approved.

And then it started to get weird.

This was 3 months before the festival & I didn't hear from him again until 3 weeks out. I sent him numerous emails to discuss info we would need for the festival. We did soldering workshops with kids & on a weekend like this you'd get through around 200 workshops, details matter!

Something smelled off. I discussed it with my boss and we agreed it was probably best to back out. This was confirmed when we saw he'd been advertising us with the wrong name, logo, details...the wrong everything.

2 weeks from the festival I sent him an email saying we were out.

That evening I received a call from the EO. And what a call. He basically shouted abuse down the phone at me for 30 mins. Called me 'unprofessional' among other things, which may be correct but for all the wrong reasons.

I was blown away by the call. Madness. He was very angry.

I told my boss about the call & refused to work with the guy. EO went over my head & insisted we work the festival, he'd pay up front and everything!

I stood my ground but it was agreed we would do the festival & I would sit it out. Obviously the upfront payment never happened.

BUT THE FESTIVAL HAPPENED.

A complete shitshow. Worse than you could imagine. Loads of the acts on the bill weren't booked, there was barely any staff to tell people what was going on, tickets were vastly overpriced, the camping was awful, the bouncy castles weren't inflated...

The 'Pirates Cove' area was just a sandbox in a field. There was nobody onsite from the festival itself, just loads of venders like ourselves and all the families in attendance left to figure things out for themselves.

Their facebook page was flooded with complaints...

So they did the thing all innocent parties do: started deleting comments. The whole thing has basically been scrubbed from the internet hence my lack of accompanying photos.

We didn't get paid. Most of the venders didn't get paid. Families wanted refunds. And the EO vanished.

So why is this playing on my mind I hear you ask?

Well believe it or not before Xmas I saw the EO's name pop up in the newspapers! He was back in Ireland.

Was he a changed man who now realised the error of his ways? Had he returned to atone for Wonderfest 2014?

Well folks I'll let you be the judge of that.

Here's the story I saw his name in:

https://t.co/ovXWZ9Jyrt

And then again last night:

https://t.co/AhiMAAdVnN

Good to see he's gone from promising upfront cash payments to demanding them himself.

And that is the story of Wondefest 2014 aka Fyre Fest for Kids

In summary: I don't think this guy should be getting HSE contracts.

Here's the business card he gave me back in 2014, still in my wallet to this day.

If a suspicious man ever gives you a business card hold on to it.

"Powerful experiential brand solutions"

I have nothing to promote but I can do some really cool maths tricks with credit card details.

Please reply with your CC details and I'll show you how much fun maths can be.