

Visual communication on social media.

Case: Suomen Partiolaiset

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Abstract



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The purpose of this study was to investigate what kind of visual messages the Central Association of Scouts and Guides in Finland use in their social media, how the messages are perceived and how they could be optimized.

The theoretical part explains the key concepts of social media and how it is used among Finnish youth. The chosen social media platforms, Instagram and Twitter are also looked into, followed by chapters explaining the science of studying social media monitoring, visual messages and introduction to the commissioning party and its communicational goals.

In the empirical part the activity in each platform is analyzed first by using simple volume metrics and later after extracting the most and least popular posts, the opposites are analyzed through qualitative framework.

In conclusion there are suggestions how Suomen Partiolaiset – Finlands Scouter ry could enhance the use of social media. By choosing the right platforms and timing for each message, and using more campaigns and calls to action the messages could reach a larger audience.

Keywords

Social media, visual communication, communication

Table of contents

1	Intro	duction	1	1
	1.1	Termir	nology	2
2	Suo	men Pa	artiolaiset	4
	2.1	Comm	nunication in the Finnish scout movement	4
	2.2	Comm	nunication strategy	4
	2.3	Guide	to communication	5
	2.4	Graph	ic guidelines	6
3	Soci	ial Medi	ia	7
	3.1	Young	people in social media today	7
	3.2	Instag	ram	8
	3.3	Twitte	r	9
4	Soci	ial Medi	a Monitoring	10
	4.1	Metric	s	10
	4.2	Choice	e of platforms and timeline	11
	4.3	Anato	my of a good post	11
	4.4	Link to	performance metrics	12
5	Visu	al Com	munication	13
	5.1	Identit	у	13
	5.2	Conce	pt	13
	5.3	Brand		14
6	Res	earch n	nethods	15
7	Mult	iplatfor	m comparison	17
8	@partioscout, SP on Instagram			
		8.1.1	Posts per day	20
		8.1.2	Likes and comments	20
		8.1.3	Weekdays	22
	8.2	Posts.		22
		8.2.1	Most popular posts	23
		8.2.2	Least popular posts	24
	8.3	Tende	ncies	26
		8.3.1	Memes	27
		8.3.2	Regrammed pictures	27
9	@pa	artiolais	et, SP on Twitter	28
	9.1	Posts.		28
		9.1.1	Most popular posts	29
		9.1.2	Least popular posts and tendencies	29
10	Con	clusion	8	30

10.1 Platform choice	30
10.2 Amount and timing	31
10.3 Picture type	31
10.4 Call to action (CTA)	32
10.5 Campaigns	32
10.6 Dialogue	33
10.7 Reciprocity	33
11 Evaluation	34
References	36

1 Introduction

The thesis is commissioned by Suomen Partiolaiset – Finlands Scouter ry (from here on SP) which is the central association of scouts and guides in Finland. The thesis investigates visual communication on social media of SP. In the end of this communicational strategy season 2013-2015 (Suomen partiolaiset 2012a) it's useful to reflect on the success, and on the other hand identify the areas of improvement.

Instagram and Twitter were chosen as my main social media platforms, since alongside Facebook they are the official social media platforms where images are shared. Regarding the previous research on the topic of Facebook, it is given lesser attention. Since most of the social media platforms work hand in hand, it cannot be left out completely.

The aim of SP is to have well planned and executed communications which strengthen the brand impressions and in which the younger scouts have an active role. In the 2013-2015 strategy season, the objective for SP is to form an appealing public image to support growth in the organization by using methods of marketing communications. The main target groups are children and teenagers. (Suomen partiolaiset 2012a)

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how SP can utilize social media in a way that contributes positively on the reach of the content, which would support growth to the organization and also affect the quality of scouting activities. The report will provide an outlook of the factors that are contributing to the visual communication. Since the target market is youth, it is sensible to do research on the platforms that are popular among them. The aim is to optimize the channels so that the messages are appealing and within reach, and that they are in line with the strategy statements. As an end result there are concrete ideas on how to produce better visual content on the social media and thereby increase the visibility online. The main research questions are

- 1. What kind of pictures are published by SP
- 2. How are these pictures received

The reception of the posts will be analyzed by simple volume metrics, such as amount of engagement regarding the content or timeframe of posts and engagement. The type of content will be analyzed in relation to SP's guidelines for visual content (Suomen partiolaiset 2012b).

1.1 Terminology

The terminology on different social media platforms varies, since they're constructed by different service providers. In this thesis, the following terms are used:

Post

Post means the Instagram pictures, Tweets and Facebook pictures that SP has posted themselves.

Hashtag

A word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#), used on social media sites such as Twitter or Instagram to identify messages on a specific topic (Oxford dictionaries 2015).

Comment

Comment in this case means the comments that have been posted by other users under the pictures on Instagram and Facebook

Retweet

Retweet means a tweet that other user has tweeted by him/herself also. The original poster of the tweet (in this case SP) is shown in the retweet.

Like

On Instagram and Facebook users can like a picture (or a text post) by tapping or clicking the like/heart symbol.

Favorite

On twitter, users can "save" their favorite tweets, or just show sympathy (in the same manner as like on Instagram & Facebook) by using the favorite function on other people's tweets.

Activity/Engagement

In this research, I will use the words activity and engagement to describe the volume of comments, likes, retweets and favorites on posts by SP.

Follower

Users can follow accounts on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, which means that the posts of the followed account are displayed on their feed.

Regram

If a person shares a picture from another account, it's called "regramming". The original poster is shown.

2 Suomen Partiolaiset

Suomen Partiolaiset – Finlands Scouter ry is the central association of scouts and guides in Finland. The purpose of the association is to promote scouting activities and support local groups. SP is also a member of World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts WAGGGS) and World Organization of Scout Movement (WOSM) (Suomen Partiolaiset 2008a.)

SP is the largest organization for youth in Finland and every year up to 65 000 people take part in its activities. One in every five Finns has been a scout at some point of their lives. Everyone is free to start scouting, and ideologically it encourages responsibility, taking the environment and other people into consideration, as well as leadership skills. (Suomen Partiolaiset 2008a.)

2.1 Communication in the Finnish scout movement

Communication is often divided into internal and external communication, but in social media the line between the messages that are sent to people within the organization, and outside the organization are blurred. The image of scouting is not only formulated by the central organization of SP, but also the local groups. The public image of communication within scout movement is constructed of many factors, and the quality of scouting activities also affects the success of communication. It's not enough for the local groups to have a nice brochure of if the quality the activities doesn't meet expectations. (Suomen Partiolaiset 2008b.)

2.2 Communication strategy

SP published its original communication strategy in 2010. The objective is to form an appealing public image to support growth in the organization by using methods of marketing communication. The main target groups are children and teenagers, who use internet on a daily basis, and don't think of it as a separate channel such as television or radio. The primary values in communication are transparency, speed, reliability and fairness (Suomen Partiolaiset 2012a).

Mäkinen claims in her bachelor's thesis about the scout's communication strategy that the four main strategic guidelines that reinforce the objective of communication are as follows (Mäkinen 2014, 15.)

- Communication strengthens the brand impressions and activates the younger scouts.
- 2. Scouts must take the expert role, go where the youth goes and engage in discussion with them. Social media services enable the dialogue.
- 3. Open and interactive communication aspires getting as many scouts as possible to engage in decision making concerning scouting.
- 4. Scouting must be narrated in young people's voice in a way that is interesting to them.

According to Mäkinen's research, the most common of these categories in SP's Facebook and Twitter is number 1, strengthening the brand impressions, although many of the posts didn't relate to any of the categories. (Mäkinen 2014, 24).

2.3 Guide to communication

In SP's guide to communication, the presence in Social media should be inclusive, inspiring, empowering and in accordance to the brand of scouting. It is said that the power is in the interactivity, and it is important to inspire the target-group to take part by commenting.

The official communication in social media is monitored and executed by SP and the official channels are Facebook and Twitter.

SP tweets under the username @partiolaiset and its official hashtag is #partioscout. SP wishes to profile as an expert in youth related issues in Finland. Local groups are advised to register into twitter and take part in various conversations, and to produce preferably a lot of content (without forgetting the quality). Some tweets with the official hashtag are retweeted into to the official @partiolaiset feed.

Although not yet classified as official communication channel, SP has its own Instagram account, @partioscout. Its bio requests to tag scouting pictures with the official hashtag, and so that the pictures might be shared under the official account. (Suomen Partiolaiset 2013, 8–9).

2.4 Graphic guidelines

SP published its graphic guidelines in 2012 to ensure that the organization looks like its members; stylish, bold, fun, innovative and "cool". Photographing and photo sharing is encouraged, and in order to make sure that positive image is convened they offer tips for publishing photos (free translations):

- 1. Children are not the only scouts; there are also teenagers.
- 2. Both genders are represented
- 3. Scouting is not only camps, nature, knots and singing round the campfire
- 4. Scouting is active, fun and inspiring
- 5. Scouts will grow up to be active and responsible members of the society
- 6. Scouting is multicultural, international and worldwide.
- (7. Scarf is a symbol of scouts, it's important to show it)

Other advice:

- 1. Happy faces instead of sad or serious faces (to show that scouting is fun)
- 2. Action photos instead of "boring" group photos (to show that scouting is about action and adventure instead of meetings)
- 3. 7-22 year olds instead of adults (to show that this is a hobby for youth)
- 4. Girls and Boys of different age groups instead of only cute young girls (to show that scouting is a hobby for both genders no matter the age)
- 5. Young people with scarves instead of camouflage-pants and army like activities (to show that scouting is a fun hobby instead of an army like activity.
- 6. Outdoor adventure instead of knots (not to feed the clichés)

(Suomen partiolaiset 2012b, 12)

3 Social Media

The term social media can imply many things. As a temporal development stage of Internet it means the time period from 2004 to 2009 when many of the popular social media services were launched and rapidly became frequently used. Today the term *social media* usually refers to all the online services that are perceived as somehow social (Pönkä 2014.)

3.1 Young people in social media today

According to a study conducted by statistics Finland in 2014, 99% of Finnish people aged 16 to 24 use internet every day. 93% of the population used some social network service in the timespan of 3 months (Statistics Finland 2014.) There is no denying that social media, with its user generated content, plays a major part in young people's lives today.

People born between 1980-1990 have been often called "digital natives" since they have been born into a world where information technology has always been present, but the concept of digital natives as a people who think and process information fundamentally differently has been rejected. While before there has been a tendency to divide people online into different groups, such as natives and immigrants, it has become evident that the online behavior is not stable among these groups. (Kupiainen 2013.)

Social media researchers are dividing users into "posters" and "lurkers". Lurkers see social media as a source of information, whereas posters use social media as a channel of self-expression (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 38.) There are, however, many reasons why people post online. Motivation to post can be altruistic, where one is interested in sharing his/hers opinions in order to help other people make better decisions. Poster can also be involved in a brand, product or service so much, that it itself serves as a motivation to post. The third generic reason is self-enhancement, where the individual posts in order to build up their reputation in a given field of expertise. (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 40–46.)

Research suggests that only a small part of people aged 13 to 16 produce media content, such as blogs or Youtube-videos. Photographs are the most significant way of contributing (Kupiainen 2013.) According to Mind the Gap, 6th grade students focus on "hanging out" in social media with their friends. While both genders participate in the hanging out, boys are more likely to play computer games seriously, whereas girls tend to "construct" infor-

mation. There is no difference in information technology usage between 6th graders engaging in different hobbies (e.g. sports) (Mind the Gap 2014.)

In the world of user generated content a whole lot of movement is happening, the roles of those who produce and those who observe aren't written in stone. The social media is a warzone of different interests, such as commercial, ideological, political interests, in creation of which we all can have a role (Kupiainen 2013.)

3.2 Instagram

Instagram is a social media platform launched on 2010 where users share pictures via an application. The meaning is to see glimpses of your friend's lives through "filtered" photos which are shared instantly. In 2015, there were 300 million active members worldwide and an average of 70 million photos are shared every day (Instagram 2015). In Finland there are around 850 000 registered users, of which 80% are under 30 years of age (Heikkinen 2015.)

A great deal of companies is also on Instagram, but the service has not gained the same popularity in Finland than Facebook. Accurate and up-to-date usage figures in Finland can only be guessed, but according to a study by a media agency Kurio in 2013, there are 0.13% corporate Instagram accounts for every Facebook account, and only 24% of the companies that have an account, are using it actively. (Kurio 2013).

According to a qualitative study by Ira Hietikko in co-operation with Kurio in 2014, Instagram is the most popular social media platform among young people. 13 to 17 year olds mostly use Instagram to follow their friends and to stay in touch with them. Photos about themselves, their friends, scenery or interesting situations (such as birthday parties or travels) are shared with great consideration. Posts from friends usually liked, but rarely commented. Brands or companies aren't followed, because advertisements are consciously avoided. Inspiration is sought through hashtags, and the topics usually come from hobbies (Hietikko 2014, 26.)

In Instagram, SP's account @partioscout has (26.3.2015) 3 137 followers (Suomen Partio-laiset 2015a.). The accurate amount of scouts on Instagram is hard to estimate, but in 6.3.2015 Telephone operator DNA reported that over 40% of their users under 25 years of age use Instagram, which means that the potential of growth is evident (DNA 2015). The amount of followers has grown steadily throughout the existence of the account.

3.3 Twitter

Twitter is a social media platform launched in 2006 in which users share "tweets", which can include text up to 140 characters, pictures and videos via third party applications. A Tweet is an expression of a moment or idea (Twitter 2015). Twitter is a unique combination of blogs, forums, e-mails and messengers, with as many possible uses as there are users. (Haavisto 2009, 6).

Twitter has 288 million active users and approximately 500 million tweets are sent every day (Twitter 2015.) Twitter has only recently gained popularity in Finland, but according to Tommi Nummela's statistics, there were 45-50 000 original twitter accounts tweeting in Finnish in the beginning of 2015 (Nummela 2015.)

SP joined twitter in November 2009, and has currently around 2,669 followers. By the end of March 2015, @partiolaiset has published 160 photos.

4 Social Media Monitoring

Social media can be used for variety of purposes, staying connected with friends, sharing pictures or opinions. When organizations examine behavior on social media, it's called social media monitoring. For the organization, the goal is to learn about stakeholders and gauging their opinions to guide strategy. (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 4–5.)

While market research earlier focused on questions such as "which advertisements were the most memorable?" or "is the target audience less likely to remember the message if the spokesperson is a woman?" social media data has opened up new research opportunities. Not only can researchers look to social media to answer these specific questions, but also to recognize problems that might have otherwise gone undetected (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 129.)

In the book Social Media Intelligence (Moe and Schweidel 2014) it's proposed for organizations to employ the following five step process for measurement. The following process is one of the guidelines for this research:

- 1. Measure what matters
- 2. Cast a wide net
- 3. Analyze the text
- 4. Understand the biases
- 5. Establish links to performance metrics

4.1 Metrics

Social media platforms contain massive amounts of data, and volume metrics are a signal of popularity and visibility. They track down how much discussion a topic has raised, but not necessarily the sentiment of discussion (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 14—15.)

For the purposes of this research, I will be primarily using volume metrics. Since the communication strategy highlights the importance of raising awareness of scouting and thereby increasing the amount of members, the amount of followers, tweets & likes etc. will give a picture of how many potential members the messages can reach. Measuring engagement is also important since SP also wants the youth to have an important role in communication (Suomen Partiolaiset 2012a).

4.2 Choice of platforms and timeline

It isn't possible to analyze all the data online, so the scope needs to be narrowed. The amount of teenagers in Facebook is decreasing, while other platforms are gaining popularity (Pönkä 2014). Also in the given timeframe SP hosted a picture competition in their Facebook page, which means that the information there is biased.

Even though we cannot predict which platforms will be the most popular in the near future, I've chosen two platforms that are rapidly gaining young users in Finland, Instagram and Twitter. Both of these are also rich in visual content.

These platforms have massive amount of data, so I've chosen a timeline from which all the entries are analyzed; from 1.1.2015 to 28.2.2015. This is because two reasons:

The chosen timeline has relatively up-to-date information

There are no distracting factors, such as major events or post series. This enables us to have an accurate view on "everyday content"

4.3 Anatomy of a good post

The content in social media is often scrolled through fast, which means that the process of visual perception is left at its early stages. According to the study materials of university network of communication, the basic elements we see in a picture are its color, contrast, curvature, end points of lines and movement (Viestintätieteiden yliopistoverkoston oppimateriaalit 2015). For this reason, the posts should be analyzed through means of marketing communications, and social media.

Katleena Kortesuo lists in her book Sano se someksi 1 a few qualities an interactive text in social media should have. In my opinion couple of these could well be applicable also to interactive visual content (Kortesuo 2014, 26).

1. Interactive

A text (or a picture) asks, discusses or sometimes answers

2. Positive

Opinions should be stated in a constructive and positive manner, even if they would be different to others'.

Easy to read

Language in a text piece should be natural, but it should be easy to look at pictures and see what the author has meant to say.

- Up to date
 Information online ages fast, and post should be done real-time.
- Funny (only I appropriate situations)
 Witty comebacks and humor are advantages in social media, because the communication there is relaxed.

"Instagram Power" by Jason G Miles lists some qualities that good Instagram pictures have in common, and should be looked into when posting pictures on social media. These are also applicable on Twitter content. (Miles 2012, 67–68)

- 1. Subject matter
- 2. Composition
- 3. Lightning
- 4. Simplicity
- 5. Focal point
- 6. Perspective
- 7. Filters
- 8. Black and White/color
- 9. Sharpness
- 10. Depth of field
- 11. Color Saturation

Even though there is no need to be a professional photographer when posting to social media, it is useful to reflect whether the pictures actually help the viewer to focus on the important, rather than just ignoring the message. (Miles 2012, 67–68).

4.4 Link to performance metrics

In order to evaluate the success of Social Media campaigns, a way of measuring needs to be established. According to the communication strategy, the successes of SP's communication campaigns are measured by recurrent impression research, the amount of people willing to start scouting and the amount of new members (Suomen Partiolaiset 2012a).

5 Visual Communication

Every publication tells a story about the organization, what it does and what kind of people take part in its activities. In the past, planning and producing publications has been a long and expensive process, but in the age of social media the process of publishing content has shortened considerably. Social media much relies on visual content. In comparison to text, images are easier to understand for the reader, since they don't require special skills like language proficiency, for example. The message of the picture can be understood with one glance, although it can have concealed meanings that are more difficult to apprehend.

Only a minority of all scouting related content is produced by the central organization. For a person who isn't familiar with the organization, lines between the content by central organization, local groups, and even individual scouts are blurred. In order to make it all seem coherent, it's important to consider the visual identity, visual concept and brand. If these three are easy to understand and apply when sharing content, the personality of the organization will become clearer.

5.1 Identity

In business marketing identity is described as the way organization wants to be perceived. It includes the basic values, mission, vision and strategies, and is what displays to the outside world. Visual image is one of the tools by which an organization can impact its image. The visual image needs to be based on the true identity of the organization, or the general view will become biased and implausible. Visual Image is often communicated in abstract ways and it includes meanings on different levels and intensities. The content and its meaning will develop through other ways of communication (Pohjola 2003, 20.)

In the case of SP it is important to consider the fact that the visual representation of the central organization is something that shows the activity in the local groups, since the actual scouting happens in them. This is in line with the communication guidelines of SP, and should be an aim in the future too, so that the visual image of scouting remains credible.

5.2 Concept

Visual concept is constructed from the constant visual elements that have been chosen to create the aspired image. It contains the chosen identifier elements and how to use them

in communication. It is important to choose the elements that are applicable in the implementation of communication in the organization (Pohjola 2003, 118.) SP's chosen elements (such as use of fonts, logos and colors) are specified in the graphic guidelines.

In terms of social media, it's important that the posts are in line with the set of visuals chosen, so that the image as a whole remains coherent. Coherent set of messages is easier to understand for people outside the organization. Social media is all about user generated content, and having a clear visual identity makes it is easier for the people inside the organization produce to valuable content.

5.3 Brand

Traditionally a brand has been the name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies a product or service from another. In addition to the visual identity, a brand also consists of the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, beliefs, and attitudes etc. that are connected to it. An online brand can be defined as the sum of the experiences an individual has with the brand, which includes the social media interactions. (Rowles 2014, 7—11.) It is vital for SP to take into consideration, that all the individuals interacting with SP in social media, are building their own perception of the brand of scouting.

6 Research methods

This research investigates the visual messages of the SP, in order to improve the communication in the future. The objective is to form an outlook to the messages, and see which ones are the most appropriate for enhancing the visual image of the organization. The data of the chosen social media platforms has not been analyzed before, and it forms the base of this thesis.

The two main research questions are

- What kind of pictures are published by SP?
- 2. How are these pictures received?

Answers to these questions may provide insights to what kind of visual messages appeal to the target group. If the reason for popularity of certain group of messages could be extracted, the volume of them could be increased in the future, thereby improving the brand image of scouting. The aim is to optimize the messages and channels so that SP can utilize social media in a more efficient manner.

The main materials chosen for this research are the pictures displayed on two social media platforms updated by SP, Twitter and Instagram. Research includes all the pictures that appear on these sites, whether they're original content by SP, or if it acts as secondary publisher. This is to ensure that complete visual representation is analyzed. This study is constructed by using both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to employ the most appropriate techniques for the research questions. The timeline of pictures analyzed is from 1.1.2015 to 28.2.2015, and full sample consists of 27 pictures. The activities are visualized on a table.

The research begins with comparing the volume of activity on the picture sharing platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). Later from Instagram the amount of likes and
comments is analyzed on section 8, and then similar analyses are conducted for Twitter in
chapter 9. There are multiple reasons as why Facebook is given less attention in this research. First of all the target group seems to be disappearing from Facebook (chapter
4.2). Also due to a picture sharing competition hosted on the official page of SP during the
analyzing period, the information there is biased. Lastly there are previous research regarding SP on Facebook, a study on how the communication strategy fulfils regarding the

posts on social media (Mäkinen 2014) and how the scout leaders perceive the ethics of publishing content and public image of scouts on Facebook (Sinisalo 2014).

After extracting the posts which have gained most and least attention in the form of likes, the type of content will be analyzed in relation to the qualities of other popular messages on social media platforms as well as SP's guidelines for visual content. The pictures, literature and Finnish social media success stories of other organizations were reviewed, with the intention of recommending procedures which could improve the social media usage of the commissioning party. As an end result there are concrete ideas on how to produce more engaging visual content on the social media and thereby increasing the visibility online.

7 Multiplatform comparison

In the given timeframe SP has published 27 pictures on Twitter and Instagram. In chapters 8 and 9 there are deeper analyses of the organizations presence on chosen platforms. However some of the pictures where published on all three official platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.). In the given period of time (1.1.2015—28.2.2015) there were three pictures of such kind, and they are monitored in this chapter.

In order to get an overview of the popularity of a single image in all the visual platforms, the pictures and the activity in relation to those are examined here. The situation regarding the activities is of 18.3.2015. Pictures are first presented individually, and later on, the content engagement regarding the pictures is presented in a table format.



Figure 1 #partioscout

26.1.2015

Likes and comments on Instagram: 550+1

Favorites & retweets on Twitter: 8+1

Likes and comments on Facebook: 121+2



Figure 2 Magazine

Published 16.1.2015

Likes and comments on Instagram: 561+0

Favourites & retweets on Twitter: 3+4

Likes and comments on Facebook: 176+1



Figure 3 Valentine's day

14.2.2015

Likes and comments on Instagram: 585+10

Favourites & retweets on Twitter: 10+6

Likes and comments on Facebook: 588+3

Table 1 Activity on social media platforms

	#partioscout	magazine	valentine's day
Instagram	550+1	561+0	585+10
Twitter	8+1	3+4	10+6
Facebook	121+2	176+1	588+3

When the amount of engagement in these pictures is compared, it is clearly visible, that pictures published in Instagram generate most activity.

8 @partioscout, SP on Instagram

Since SP is the largest youth association in Finland, it is not relevant to compare their Instagram usage figures on any other Finnish associations. In this chapter comparisons are made to other popular Instagram users, which are mostly followed by Finnish people. The popular accounts chosen are based on news pieces and discussion forums used by youth such as Demi.fi, YleX, Nyt.fi etc. For the figures presented here tool called Picstats, by Dan Zarella, was used. (In order to compare different users, an Instagram account needs to be made.) (Zarrella 2015.) In this chapter the Instagram-username of the given user is displayed after @-sing as it is used when searching people from Instagram.

In Instagram, SP's account @partioscout has (26.3.2015) 3137 followers (Suomen Partiolaiset 2015a.). Some popular Finnish accounts have an exponential amount of followers compared with SP. For example the Finnish popstar, Isac Elliot (@isacelliot) currently has 257 000 and Robin (@robinpackalen) 182 000 followers (Isac Elliot 2015) (ROBIN 2015). The unpopularity of scout movement on Instagram is not unique for Finland, UK Scouts has only 3794 followers, and follower count for Swedish scout movement Scouterna is 1376. (Scouts 2015); (Scouterna 2015.)

8.1.1 Posts per day

@partioscout has 0, 34 posts per day. This means that scouts post on average one picture for every three days. In comparison to some other accounts, Robin makes 1, 41 posts per day and Isac Elliot 1, 14. (Isac Elliot 2015) (ROBIN 2015) TV presenter Arman Alizad with the follower count of 77 143) posts per day count is 1, 31 (Arman Alizad 2015). The posts per day count is relatively in comparison to famous people on Instagram, but for example the hamburger-chain Hesburger has 0, 58 posts per day (@hesburgerfin and 8,322 followers) (Hesburger 2015)

Although a correlation between the amount of posts and amount of followers cannot be proved, the posts per day rate seems to have an effect to the number of followers. It is reasonable to presume, that when people want to follow a brand, they find something to follow.

8.1.2 Likes and comments

In Instagram, there are two possible ways of engaging with a picture, likes and comments. Liking a picture in Instagram is similar to liking a post on Facebook. Likes of an account are visible to others, and if you follow an account, its likes are visible in the activity-feed of your followings. Average number of likes per post for @partioscout is 265, 69.

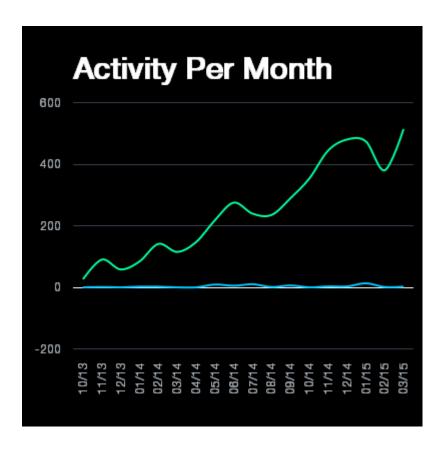


Figure 4 Activity Per Month

In the graph (400x400) x-axis presents the amount and y-axis the timespan (from November 2013 to March 2015.) Likes are presented by green and the graph visualizes how the amount of likes has been increasing. This however can be expected relating to the increased follower count.

The average amount of comments per post is 2, 42. In the graph comments are presented with blue, but it's barely visible due to the minimal amount. For example Robin has a comments per post rate of 418, 57.

8.1.3 Weekdays

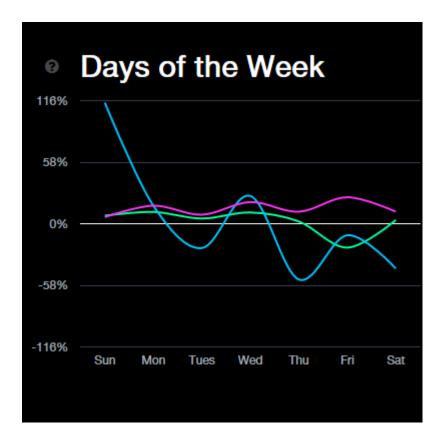


Figure 5 Activity by Weekdays

The graph presents in which days @partioscout and its followers have been active. Blue line represents the comments, pink line is for uploaded pictures, and green line is for likes. From this graph, a few important observations can be made.

People are most likely to comment on Sundays, and least likely to comment on Thursdays. The amount of comments is so low that any other significant conclusions cannot be drawn. Secondly, although most of the pictures are published on Fridays, It is the day when people are least likely to like them.

8.2 Posts

In order to analyze the posts in depth, I've chosen a timeframe of January and February 2015. In this timeframe, @partiolaiset has published 15 pictures. The following table represents the likes and comments concerning a single picture. Information is gathered 18.3.2015. The "regram" value is 1 if the picture is regrammed.

Table 2 Pictures on Instagram

Picture	Date	Likes	Comments	Regram
14 (figure 3) Valentine's day	14.2.2015	585	10	
2 (figure 2) Magazine	16.1.2015	561		
9 (figure 1) #partioscout	26.1.2015	550	1	
8	24.1.2015	499	2	
15	18.2.2015	486	3	
11	29.1.2015	465	2	
1	7.1.2015	427	13	
3	17.1.2015	425		
4	19.1.2015	417		1
7	22.1.2015	390		
10	28.1.2015	388	1	1
13	10.2.2015	386	2	
12 (figure 8) Lappipartio	9.2.2015	377	1	1
5 (figure 7) Työhakemus	20.1.2015	373	2	
6 (figure 6) Roihu2016	21.1.2015	346		1
Median		425	2	

8.2.1 Most popular posts

As it happens, the most popular Instagram- pictures 14, 2 and 9 are already displayed in the chapter 6. It's unclear why the pictures that are shared on multiple platforms are the most popular.

The most popular picture, number 14, (see Figure 3, Valentine's day) is a happy Valentine's Day wish and it portrays three girl-scouts holding a sign. The picture is colorful and well cropped (the girls and sign are in the center.) It also deals with the daily issues, so it's very up to date. It's very much in line with the graphic guidelines, since it has happy faces, outside.

The second most popular picture, number 2 (Figure 2, Magazine) is also up-to-date, it's a picture from a fashion magazine that portrays scouting badges as accessories. This picture is probably very popular because it shows that scouts can be popular with other

population than themselves, and shows scouting as a fashionable hobby (instead of dull and army-like.)

The third picture, number 9 (Figure 1, #partioscout) is a graphic that tells us that there are over 10 000 photos with the official hashtag tag #partioscout on different social media platforms. This picture also portrays the scarf, which is in line with the graphic guidelines. It is also up-to-date and shows clearly what it's meant to show with good cropping and contrast.

8.2.2 Least popular posts



Figure 6, Roihu2016

21.1.2015

The least popular post is number 6, a picture of a webpage promoting the next Finnjamboree Roihu, a camp taking place in 2016. It's a regrammed picture from the official page for Roihu. This picture is not well cropped, and it's not evident whether the main point of the photo is the "avoimet pestit" (available tasks), the logo of the camp, or the girls in the picture. It's not too up to date, since Roihu is organized next year.

LAISPOIKA ILMOITTAUTUU KAUSITÖIHIN!

Löysin työpaikkailmoituksenne Monsterin sivuilta ja innostuin siitä heti. Kausitöi hautausmaille ilmoittaut<mark>uukin ahkera ja ulkona v</mark>iihtyvä 16-vuotias lukiolaispoika

Opiskelen lukion ensimmäisellä lu<mark>okalla Tikkurilan lukiossa. P</mark>eruskoulun suoritin peruskoulussa hyvin arvosanoin.

Äidinkieleni on suomi, mutta pärjään tarvittaessa myös ruotsinkielellä, sillä puhur isovanhempieni kanssa ruotsia säännöllisesti. Englannin kielentaitoni on kehittyn pelatessani verkkopelejä eri maista olevien ihmisten kanssa.

/arsinaista työkokemusta minulla ei ole, mutta olen harrastanut säännöllisesti pa ruotiaasta saakka. Partio on opettanut minulle toivomaanne ahkeruutta ja ryhmä: oimimista, ja liikumme myös paljon luonnossa. Partiossa olen myös saanut koulu yhmänohjaamisesta, joka on kasvattanut oma-aloitteisuuttani ja yhteistyötaitojai larrastan lisäksi shakkia, jonka ansiosta olen tarkka ja järjestelmällinen.

isätietoja minusta voi antaa partioryhmänjohtajani Pekka Partiolainen, 040- 123 4 pivon hakemukseni kiinnostavan teitä, ja toivon mahdollisuutta haastatteluun.

tävällisin terveisin

Figure 7, Työhakemus

20.1.2015

The next one is 5, picture of an article which promotes scouting as a good hobby when job-hunting. The picture is full of small text, which people probably didn't bother reading while scrolling through their Instagram-feed. Also large parts of the text are unreadable. While the picture itself is up-to-date with its relation to the day's Helsingin Sanomat, the colors aren't appealing, and it shows scouting as an office activity, instead of kids being outdoors.



Figure 8, Lappipartio

9.2.2015

Number 12 is third to last, it's a picture from an event, where a person spray paints a wall. It's a regrammed picture from Lapland's scouts. While the person has his scarf, the gender, or the fact if s/he's outdoors or not aren't clear. It's up-to-date though, since it's straight from the event, but the event is only for a fraction of scouts, so it explains some of the unpopularity.

8.3 Tendencies

When pictures are of good quality (see chapter 4.3 anatomy of a good post), they seem to be more engaging and generate more likes and comments. There are also clearly two groups of images where differences are visible.

8.3.1 **Memes**

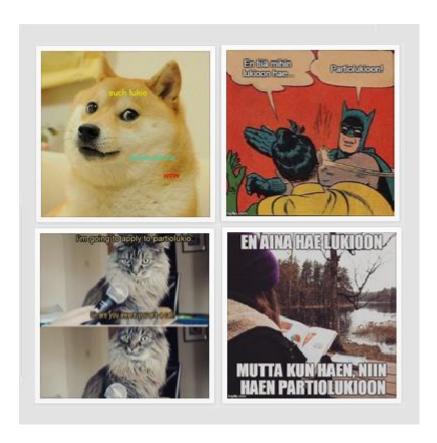


Figure 9 Memes

An internet meme is a picture, video, activity, catchphrase etc. which spreads from person to person. The most popular platform for Finnish Scouting memes is the Facebook page Scout.Me.In which has 4899 likes. (Sout.Me.In 2015) Memes are also very liked in SP's own Instagram page, the posts that can be classified as memes (also visible above) are number 1, 8, 11 and 15. The average amount of likes for these four pictures is 469, 25 while for other pictures than memes its 436, 18.

Humor is listed as one of the qualities of a good post, so it might be a good idea to post memes every once in a while.

8.3.2 Regrammed pictures

The pictures that are regrammed from other users are numbers 4, 6, 10 and 12. The average amount of likes for these pictures is 328. It is notably lower than the average amount of likes of other than regrammed pictures which is 467, 91. While it's important to showcase the activities in local groups, it should not be done on the expense of quality.

9 @partiolaiset, SP on Twitter

According to the Statistics by Social Bakers, @partiolaiset is the 14th most followed "society" profile in Finnish Twitter. The most popular profile in this given category is the prime minister on Finland, Alexander Stubb (@alexstubb) with 198 857 followers, and the second most popular is the Finnish Embassy of Tokyo (@FinEmbTokyo) with 120 254 followers. The most popular non-profit organization is placed on the 6th place in the list, the Federation of Finnish Enterprises has 16 704 followers (Social Bakers 2015.)

9.1 Posts

For the purposes of this research I constructed a table to represent the pictures posted on the timeframe from 1.1.215 to 28.2.2015. The following table shows the date of each picture, in addition to the likes and retweets it has gained.

Table 3 Pictures in Twitter

Picture	Date	Favourites	Retweets	Total
3	20.1.2015	14	16	30
7	27.1.2015	13	4	17
12 (figure 3) Valentine's day	14.2.2015	10	6	16
6 (figure 1) #partioscout	26.1.2015	8	1	9
4	21.1.2015	6	4	10
9	3.2.2015	6	9	15
11	8.2.2015	5	4	9
1	13.1.2015	4	2	6
5	22.1.2015	4	2	6
2 (figure 2) Magazine	16.1.2015	3	4	7
8	28.1.2015	2	0	2
10	5.2.2015	1	2	3

The total number of pictures is 12, and the average amount of favorites is 6, 33. The average amount of retweets is 4, 7. The average numbers for all the pictures cannot be computed, but it is safe to assume that these figures represent the truth quite accurately for all the pictures with follower count being somewhere near.

9.1.1 Most popular posts

In order to determine which posts have been the most popular I have chosen to compare the total amount of user engagement. This means the amount of user engagement is the amount of favorites and retweets combined. This number, however, can be a bit biased, since there is a possibility that a person has both favorited and retweeted a single picture. While Twitter shows some of the users to favorite/retweet a tweet it will not show all because of its privacy policy. Therefore we just need to get on with the data we can extract, even though these numbers are not entirely comparable.

The most popular picture on twitter is number 3 which happens to be about the same article than picture 5 on Instagram (see 8.2.2 Least popular posts.) The second most popular is number 7 which includes a picture of a knot (even though it was one of the types of imagery that should be avoided) and a link to a page that advices how to make on. The third most popular picture is number 12, one of the most popular in the Instagram section (number 14).

9.1.2 Least popular posts and tendencies

The least popular posts on twitter have gained 2-3 retweet/favorites, which is next to none. These posts are numbers 8 and 10. In comparison to Instagram, posts in Twitter have gained very little attention. It seems though that in case the posts are up to date or fun, they seem to get a bit more likes and retweets.

10 Conclusions

To conclude this research, I have come up with seven different aspects of being active on social media that need to be taken into consideration. In order to get more people exposed to the messages of scouting, the right picture needs to be posted into the appropriate platform, at the right time, without forgetting the call to action which makes the message spread throughout social media.

What separates social media (Instagram, Twitter etc.) from other types of media (television, newspaper) can already be seen from the name. People expect something in return from their engagement, SP needs to launch more campaigns, encourage and take part in discussion and take interest in other people's posts as well.

10.1 Platform choice

One of the main goals of SP is to raise awareness of scouting and thereby gaining members. Since peers influence the decision to buy a certain product or join a group, it would be useful that there would as many individuals as possible promoting scouting activities via social media. The importance of visual content is particularly great for young people, since photographs is the most common means of sharing.

The whole point of social media is sharing, so it is important to measure the *potential* reach of scouting related material online. Since the engagements of one user are often shown in the feeds of others, it makes sense to measure the amount of activity in a single post. In the case of SP, the posts on Instagram generate most activity (chapter 6). That is why it should be made the primary platform for sharing visual content.

The half-life of content is also richer on Instagram. In twitter, no-one looks back on interesting content, since the media is all about conversation, and topics shift back relatively fast. Before the decision to follow, users usually scroll through the older pictures too (and even a three month old picture can gain attention.) Especially when considering the browser-layout of Instagram-pages from laptops and tabletop-computers, it's quite evident that old pictures also gain attention. (Miles 2012, 46)

However, other platforms need to be in use too, since free service providers might not be long-lasting and young people are quick to change platforms. By decentralizing the continuity of online presence is ensured. The use of multiple platforms is convenient when e.g.

Instagram pictures are syndicated to other platforms, like Twitter & Facebook. (Korpi 2010). Young people especially are switching social media service providers very fast, and possibly in the future SP should use services such as Snapchat or Pinterest, since they're gaining users right now.

10.2 Amount and timing

When we compare the post-per-day ratio of SP on Instagram to other popular accounts (as in chapter 8.1.1), we see that the amount of posts there is quite low, however, that is not the only reason why more content should be produced.

The more you tweet per day, the more links drive traffic to the website. It also builds the follower count, since shared content brings bigger audience. The activity persuades search engines notice the traffic and give it more visibility, and the engagement creates trust and improves perception of the website (Rowles 2014, 37)

While the timing of posts does not have a vast impact on the amount of activity it generates, it would seem that posts on Instagram should not be published on Friday, since it is the day the posts get least attention.

10.3 Picture type

In the least popular Instagram posts, the quality of content has been fairly low. According to my research, the following characteristics could improve the overall quality of pictures, and could thereby increase the amount of activity regarding the content.

Easy

Picture should have a good lighting and cropping, so that it would be clear what it's meant to show. Dark and grainy pictures don't get as much attention as clear ones.

Up to date

Pictures that tackle recent issues, such as today's paper or a holiday are more popular than generic ones.

Humorous

Humor is an advantage, since the young scouts use social media in their free time and are more receptive to funnier content.

10.4 Call to action (CTA)

The communication strategy of SP states that social media is an important channel when communicating with the youth, since it enables the dialogue, however right now there is very little dialogue to be found. One of the possible reasons to that could be the lack of calls to action. For example on Twitter, using the phrase please retweet, increased the amount of retweets by 50% (Zarrella 2013, 63)

Business Dictionary defines Call to Action to be

"Words that urge the reader, listener, or viewer of a sales promotion message to take an immediate action, such as "Write Now," "Call Now," or (on Internet) "Click Here"." (Business Dictionary 2015)

If the individual would be advised to engage somehow, using words such as like, share or comment, the activity could well increase.

10.5 Campaigns

Campaigns are an effective way of conveying messages in social media, and for example multistep campaigns work very well in social media, and are not much used by SP. A multistep campaign on Instagram involves an unveiling of details (for example an event) over an extended period of time. Through several steps the marketer works to capture attention, raise interest, creates a desire to participate and then call for action. This is called the AIDA formula (attention, interest, desire, action). If we take a scouting camp as an example, the AIDA-model could work like this:

Attention

Share a picture from the marketing material, or a behind-the-scenes photo of an activity from a camp to get attention

Interest

Share more exiting behind-the scenes material, so that the audience knows what you're working on and gets interested

Desire

Images prior to the launch date intensify the desire to participate, and by announcing the date when enrolment would start, people are certain of the date that can't be missed

Action

Call to action (link to the enrolment page). Since the workload of marketing has been done prior to the event, the last step can be quite soft. A good idea might be to give something tangible, for example hand out some free merchandise for the first 100 people to enroll,

which would make people want to act fast. And if there is even one person from a group to enroll early, his/hers friends are likely to follow soon. (Miles 2012, chapter 13.)

10.6 Dialogue

SP's communication strategy states the importance of inspiring comments and discussion. Discussion is also one of the easiest ways of evaluating the brand engagement. Evaluation of discussion is not helpful if the discussion is biased, but the quality will increase if the social dynamics in the conversations are minimized by encouraging a variety of voices and minimizing the expert effect (Moe & Schweidel 2014, 119—120.)

In the case of SP this means that it's important to encourage everyone to take part in conversation, instead of only letting the experts speak. Experts also tend to post more negative things online, in order to build up their own image. Encouraging to take part in conversation happens through CTA's.

Although having conversation on social media is a good goal, according to a study by Dan Zarrella, highly followed accounts tend to spend a lower percentage of their tweets replying to other accounts. The key to build up follower count is to share interesting links, pictures and other such content. (Zarrella 2013, 10–20.)

10.7 Reciprocity

One of the most important things on social media is that for organizations, social media is also a two way street. In order to gain followers, likes and comments, organization also needs to follow, like and comment. By posting 10 pictures on Instagram per day, one is quickly identified as a spammer, but if you like 1000 pictures on other accounts, it is completely acceptable. Actions on other accounts spread the potential reach of the organization's presence and message also. This is also applicable to twitter, and although you can't really tweet too often, retweets are a convenient way of showing other users that you're there and listening.

11 Evaluation

Social media is a topic that many of us find interesting. It raises a lot of emotions, since most of us use it daily. Studying social media has also been quite popular, mostly among young students. Numerous theses regarding the topic tell the story of a will to learn more about the digital world around us.

People often seem to forget that next to nothing we do online is completely private. Even though one's name could not be extracted from the list of all people that follow something on Facebook, the act of following always leaves a mark. While it sometimes might feel a bit "unethical" to measure these marks that are thought to be private, use things that we follow, like and share for marketing purposes, it is the most convenient way to know which brands and products interest us. This information can be leveraged to sell us more, but for example in this case, where the research is done for a value based non-profitorganization, I personally believe that this information is used for good.

The world of social media is very dynamic. While some platforms outlive others, new ways of interacting are introduced all the time. Especially young people are quick to adopt new things. Scouts is fundamentally a youth organization, which means that the organization needs to move in the same speed as the youth in them. If they want to use social media effectively in the future too, more research should be done recurrently. It would also be good to assess whether the recommendations presented in chapter 10 work in real life.

The topic for this thesis came from my own two hobbies, social media and scouting. The fact that I was able to look at the organization from internal point of view, has proven to be an advantage. Since the themes were familiar to me before the start, it was relatively easy to find relevant literature and other reference material. The internal motivation was also somewhat stronger because of my own interest regarding these topics. All in all I haven't regretted the choice of topic.

While constructing this thesis, I learned a whole lot about social media, not just from the user's perspective, but also from the organization's point of view. It was rewarding to try and comprehend the reasons of success for some brands as well as their products and campaigns.

The thesis process was quite prolonged for me, and even the main objective became clear later on. Writing process of the thesis was tedious and it consumed a lot of time and

energy, and I hope that my efforts are visible in this end product. In the end I hope that the result will help SP in their efforts to recruit new members and to make the scouting experience somehow better for all the existing members, through means of organizational communication on social media.

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