



# INTRODUCING CONTENT MARKETING FOR B2B

Case study: Subcontracting

Maiju Kari



Bachelor's thesis  
January 2016  
Degree Programme  
in International Business

## **ABSTRACT**

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu  
Tampere University of Applied Sciences  
Degree Programme in International Business

Maiju Kari  
Introducing content marketing for B2B  
Case study: Subcontracting

Bachelor's thesis 54 pages  
January 2016

---

Thesis was commissioned by Tampere Trade Fairs Ltd. Purpose of thesis was to analyze the potential influence and value of content marketing in the marketing communication of Subcontracting Trade Fair.

First part of the thesis covers background information about the industry where Tampere Trade Fairs operates in. Subcontracting Trade Fair as an event will be introduced.

After an introduction, thesis focuses on content marketing strategies and the differences it delivers over traditional advertising. Theoretical framework about history of content marketing in reflection to traditional advertising will be presented.

Theory presented allocation of resources to offline and online channels with a short look about the concept of earned and paid media sources.

Benchmarking study of was conducted in order to analyze improvement potential of a key communication point. Study aimed to discover if there truly is convertible value in consumer engaging content through a website analysis.

Findings indicate that consumer engagement is an excellent addition to any communication strategy.

---

Keywords: Content marketing, Advertising, Marketing communication

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction.....	4
1.1 Purpose of thesis.....	5
1.2 Research question.....	6
1.3 Structure of thesis.....	7
1.4 Limitations of thesis.....	7
2.0 Trade fair industry.....	8
2.1. Tampere Trade Fairs.....	9
2.2 Trade Fair location .....	9
2.3 Subcontracting Trade Fair.....	10
2.4 Decline of trade fairs.....	11
2.5 Reasons for participation.....	12
3.0 Traditional advertising.....	14
3.1 Business-to-business advertising .....	14
4.0 Content marketing.....	16
4.1 Content marketing plan.....	19
4.2 Engagement factor.....	24
4.3 Measuring content marketing.....	25
4.4 Offline or online?.....	25
4.5 Earned or unpaid?.....	26
5.0 Research method.....	29
5.1 Benchmarking.....	29
5.2 Benchmarking practices.....	30
5.3 Benchmarking implementation.....	31
5.4 Elimination process .....	31
5.5 Benchmarking structure.....	32
6.0 Engaging website.....	34
6.1 Statistics and Search Engine Optimization.....	35
6.2 Accessibility .....	37
6.3 Navigation .....	38
6.4 Design .....	39
6.5 Engagement .....	42
7.0 Conclusion.....	49
7.1 Key Findings of theoretical framework .....	49
7.2 Key findings of benchmarking study.....	51
7.3 Recommendations for Tampere Trade Fairs .....	51
7.4 Thesis authors learning.....	53
8.0 References.....	54

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

*The real fact of the matter is that **nobody reads ads**. People read what interests them. Sometimes it's an ad.* - Howard Luck Gossage, Socrates of San Francisco

Regardless of the vehement refusal of some parties, we now live in a world where marketing communication is wrapped around a consumers finger, not the other way around.

Marketing has changed more in the last two years than in the previous fifty. Once upon a time, video equaled television. music was radio, books existed only in print. Today, all lines are blurred. New and dynamic environments and platforms with engagement driven tech advances are turning accepted nostrums and behavioral patters upside down. (Lush, Vargo 2014)

Even with so many tools readily available, few businesses are actually doing anything differently than what they used to. Facebook is a fancy scrapbook and Twitter is often just a tiny press-release machine. These businesses think that communicating through these tools is the same shouting, just with a different megaphone.

“Technologies change, people change, users change. You have to be there to adapt to it or else you will be making cassettes when the CD comes around” (Davis 2014)

An online cross world integration between businesses, people and marketers has taken over. Digital revolution has also undoubtedly impacted everything in the world of communication. Marketing communication from product development to final promotion has changed.

Marketing communication has become an integral part of a business. This states that an urgent review of values, ideas and messages a business communicates with. Companies who do not acts on this multilevel change and generate true bonds with customers will be slowly eaten alive by competitors. At some point competitors create stronger bonds, provide comprehensible real life value and create concrete emotion in to the lives of consumers. This will undeniable lead into a change in customer allegiance. (Pulizzi 2014)

In fact, distinguishing between traditional and more modern marketing methods already sounds dated. As **P&G's** Mark Pritchard stated in 2013 at Dmexco;

*“The era of traditional marketing is over. It’s almost dead, barriers have fallen. It’s now just brand building and telling stories. It’s what we do.”*

Marketing communication has changed; it has been up rooted and planted in to a different world. Parameters, strategies, tools and basic values have all been turned inside out within the last 20 years. To be more specific, this change has been so fast that the same marketing communication strategies that worked just three years ago are not applicable today. (Lush, Vargo 2014) As boring and repetitive as it sounds, globalization and the rapid improvements in technology have truly staged a platform for significant changes in human behavior and in the way businesses operate. World of marketing has gone from orange paper prints shouting “SALE” to strategic niches calculated through search engine optimization.

In a way, marketing communication is a big playground for adults. A playground that is constantly changing and evolving, a playground where exists a constant game of tag. Surviving in this complex world of communication has become a truly fundamental part of a company’s business strategy.

A simple approach has emerged. Tell your story. Tell your story in a way that creates emotion, heartache and interest. Define your value, choose the correct channel of communication and speak from the heart, with all you got.

### **1.1 Purpose of thesis**

Thesis has been conducted for Tampere Trade Fairs with a focus on the international clientele of Subcontracting Trade Fair who communicate with English language. Purpose of thesis is to analyze the potential influence and value of content marketing in a key communication point of Subcontracting Trade Fair.

Subcontracting is a business to business oriented event, but not only corporates are the consumers of content that is produced at Subcontracting Trade fair. Subcontracting

generates interest outside the trade fair location. Due to the fact that the benchmarked website serves both, thesis is not solely directed to business-to-business (abbreviated B2B) or business-to-consumer (abbreviated B2C) companies.

Theory will be supported by a benchmarking study of a centric communication touch point. Website of Subcontracting Trade fair is the only source of information about the event itself for all clientele using English as a primary language.

subcontractingtradefair.com (abbreviated stf.com) truly is the sole commercially and publicly available touch point for potential exhibitors, customers and investors looking for information online. Due to these facts, the website holds substantial value as a marketing communication channel and therefore it will be benchmarked.

Finished thesis will contain an overall look about history of changed marketing communication strategies with a clear example and a conclusion directed to Tampere Trade Fairs and all other B2B's with a content marketing orientation.

## **1.2 Research question**

Topic of the thesis was chosen based on the needs of Tampere Trade Fairs. Thesis author's personal interests and study degree were combined with this need.

For many content marketing is new, intimidating and uncharted territory of the recent years. These facts result in why companies have difficulties with application and differentiating between content marketing and “traditional advertisement”. These two terms are interrelated, but very different. Having these arguments in mind, the main research question for the thesis is:

### **What is importance of content marketing on a website aimed at promoting a business-to-business event?**

Thesis will cover basic theory and a thorough look into communication strategies of yesterday and today. Content marketing theory will be reflected on theory about traditional advertising.

Improving marketing communication strategies for potential English speaking exhibitors, customers and companies of Subcontracting was a clear goal that was apparent even before topic delimitation. subcontractingtradefair.com was chosen as the focus of benchmarking study. Website in question is the only communication channel between a potential English-speaking client and Subcontracting trade fair itself. As the only commercially available English touch point, stf.com holds a centric position within the overall marketing communication strategy of the trade fair.

### **1.3 Structure of thesis**

Thesis follows a conventional thesis structure. Research question, history, theory and data of the case company with Subcontracting will be covered. The first two chapters will provide an introduction to the thesis and provide a base understanding for all readers about the commissioning company itself and trade fairs in general. Chapter 3,4 and 5 presents all of the literature and theory supporting the thesis.

Chapter 6 there will present research methods for data collection. Physical results of a thorough secondary research will be supported by a benchmarking case. This benchmarking case will showcase physical applications of content marketing theory. Chapter 7 will state all of the final thesis conclusion and recommendations.

Qualitative research method was chosen based on the topic itself. Quantitative research method would have lacked the personal touch that qualitative research gives to result. Qualitative research in its nature is one to create new theory and concepts. Quantitative research is an excellent tool on validating existing data. (Patton 2002)

### **1.4 Limitations of thesis**

All of the results and recommendation are tailored for Tampere Trade Fairs, therefore results might not be exactly alike for another B2B company.

Subcontracting is a business to business event, but not only corporates are consumers of content that regards Subcontracting. Subcontracting generates interest outside the trade

fair location. Therefore thesis is not solely directed to either B2B or B2C oriented languages, due to the fact that the benchmarked website serves both.

Topic limitation was executed around the personal resource limitations of the thesis author and written thesis guidelines provided by TAMK. Absolute truth in accuracy is not guaranteed for all claims.

All theories, methodologies and background information about content marketing or website benchmarking were not researched and presented. Large correlating topics such as branding and social media were not included due to the shire magnitude of these entities.

## **2.0 TRADE FAIR INDUSTRY**

Trade Fairs serve to further and the cultivate customer relationships. Trade fairs are a place for searching partners and personnel, an industry hotspot to position your company as a whole in one single location. Trade fairs are a new testing market for new innovations while also functioning as a market research instrument. Trade fairs increase public awareness of a business. Start-ups and new companies are able to gain an overview of competitors, their performance and over all product range. Sometimes a visit to a carefully selected trade fair is all that is needed at an early direction of a market. Trade Fairs can be roughly categorized in two;

- Professional trade fairs
- Consumer fairs

Focus of thesis is; how to communicate with engagement within traditional business to business environment. Professional trade fairs are not aimed for an everyday end user, it is for the industry experts, manufacturers and various players from a specific sector of business introduce their new innovations and for other professionals.

If approached with the right strategy, trade fairs can be meeting place where companies can truly enforce their brand presence, continuously network and create new contacts with industry professionals. Finding new retailers and developing existing customer relationships can happen in one place. (Jansson 2007)

### **2.1. Tampere Trade Fairs**

Tampere Trade Fairs Ltd. is one of the largest and most substantial trade fair companies in Finland. The company was established in 1967 and currently the annual turnover is 8,0 million Euros. The yearly event program includes 30 events with approximately 15 trade fairs. These trade fairs are attracting an average of 3494 exhibitors and 151 622 visitors annually. The largest of all trade fair events is the professional trade fair Subcontracting.

Subcontracting has the most substantial number of international exhibitors, making it the ideal candidate to withdraw data for the thesis. (Tampere Trade Fairs, 2015)



Picture 1. Location of Subcontracting Trade Fair.

## 2.2 Trade Fair location

Foreign trade accounts for over one-third of Finland's gross national product annually. High tech products and other forms of technology dominate the nation's trade. Due to the fact that Finland is a manufacturing economy, country imports high amounts of raw materials and components for its manufactured goods. Both importing and exporting are vital for the Finnish economy, international trade is encouraged and welcomed. International players are welcomed at trade shows with their new innovations and ideas. Trade fairs are a relatively low risk investment to test the markets. Trade fairs are in need of new international players to network with. Helsinki and Tampere are the two cities with largest of trade fair events organized on a yearly basis.

Trade fairs are not only for the benefit of an exhibitor businesses or visitors. Local economy within the Pirkanmaa region is also included in the surrounding trade fair venue. Hotels, restaurants, transportation companies and all other companies providing linked services to a trade fair for organizers and exhibitors, such as stand construction and logistics are among those who benefit.

The possible regional economic effects at major successful trade fair centers can amount up to five times the organizers' own turnover. (Järvensivu 2008)

Tampere is a strong epicenter of trade, industry, services and research with population of 223 thousand. The city has a central location with easy access to the north and south. Airport is within 15 minute car drive. Public transportation is organized well and operates on time with frequent intervals. A well functioning infrastructure combined with the second largest city population guarantees excellent opportunities for all businesses. Four million potential visitors live within a 250 kilometer radius from the city of Tampere. (Tampere Trade Fairs 2015)

### **2.3 Subcontracting Trade Fair**

Subcontracting trade fair is the largest professional trade fair organized by Tampere Trade Fairs. Out of all the trade fair events, Subcontracting has the most substantial number of international exhibitors, making it the ideal candidate used for the research.

Subcontracting Trade fair is Finland's leading industrial trade fair for all subcontractors. This professional fair is organized for the 25<sup>th</sup> time in 2015 and had approximately 1,000 exhibitors and nearly 20 000 visitors from twenty different countries. Subcontracting trade fair has the largest Nordic attendance out of all industry events from the overall trade area. During the three-day fair all the key areas of industrial subcontracting, metals, electronics, plastics, rubber industries, industrial ICT solutions and consulting services are present. (Tampere Trade Fairs 2015)

Although Subcontracting is used for the main Trade Fair to pull data from, commissioned thesis is not solely focusing on Subcontracting trade fair. The overall goal is to research something that might be of use in other events as well. Subcontracting is used as the main source for secondary data due to the magnitude of the event and international presence. (Tampere Trade Fairs 2015)

## 2.4 Decline of trade fairs

Attendance at a majority of trade fair exhibitions has been hit with a heavy decline from former times. Many explanations have been affecting for this decline in popularity of trade fairs:

- Cost of participation for both exhibitors and attendees
- Business decline; reduced budgets and personnel
- Digitalization has moved operation online; there is very little new to see that can't be reviewed via the Internet
- Decline of personal contact; Skype conferences, e-mail, internet board meetings (Goltz, 2010)

The general direction of all business functions seems to be online. Services are designed in a way that there is no need to leave from your office seat. Before the digital era, in the “good old days”, there was a lot of posturing involved with exhibitions. Business felt they had to be there because everybody else was there; a physical presence at a trade fair was equaled as the industry presence. (Rosson 1995) Sometimes hidden rivalry about the sizes of exhibition booths and who had simply turned up with last-years booth took place. Non-attendance would be seen as a sign of trouble or weakness.

Jim Pinto, an industry expert, analyses the declination of large scale trade fairs in several geographical locations:

*“Interkama gradually reduced down to nine exhibition halls from previous 13, and then to five halls in the Dusseldorf Exhibition Center. In the early days, attendance was up in the hundreds of thousands, which steadily declined to 90,000. The organizers played around with frequency and focus, but this failed to stem a reduction in exhibitor and attendance numbers. Two years ago, they gave up and became a sub-section of the Hanover Fair where, in 2004, attendance was down to some 60,000. 2005 Interkama attendance were camouflaged within the overall Hannover numbers. – –*

*– – In the UK there is no longer a major automation exhibition. The Control & Instrumentation show was the major event with a peak attendance figure of only about 12,000; it folded five years ago.” (Pinto 2005)*

Even though there was a definite decline in popularity detectable already in 2005, there are still a great number of players who see the absolute benefit of trade shows in 2016. For this specific target group trade fairs have always been a successful platform for exchanging knowledge. Even with the general decline in the business, Tampere Trade Fairs holds a respected and substantial pool of loyal trade fair businesses that attend annually. Tampere Trade Fair fiscal year of 2015 was profitable with record numbers in attendance. In today’s knowledge-based society information has become a decisive resource, which various parties persistently continue to find at trade fair shows.

## **2.5 Reasons for participation**

Even though overall popularity of trade fair shows has declined over the recent years, reasons for entry stay extremely strong for all supporters. Reasons for entry have ultimately never changed, it is the context behind trade shows that has changed with the world. Before, trade fair shows were the only place where you could shake the hand of an important CEO, this still applies today. Before, trade fair shows were place where to start building bonds with an honest handshake. Today it is the place to enforce the created bonds with a real life handshake instead of a digital one.

### **Face-to-face contact**

In the world of technology, a physical handshake is becoming a rare commodity. Both prospects and current customers visit trade shows to network, market, and sell directly to their target audience. Attending receptions and other networking event gives an the opportunity to engage in relationship building with others in the industry – including influential decision makers – and a chance to collect useful intelligence to take home with you. (Hermann 2005)

**Test the market and position yourself**

Trade Fairs are an industry hotspot to position your company as a whole, in one single location. Trade fairs are a new testing market for new innovations. Also functioning as a useful market research instrument.

**Buying power**

According to a report from the Center for Exhibition Industry Research, 81 per cent of trade shows attendees have buying authority. That means more than 80% of your trade show booth visitors have money to spend. Economic state has eliminated all the indecisive personnel from the trade shows. Resource cut downs and saving often allow only the top management to take part in events such as trade shows. (Hermann 2005)

### **3.0 TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING**

This chapter will provide a base understanding about overpowering evolution of traditional advertising world. Look into traditional advertising was necessary in order to set parameters and context for benchmarking study. As a natural part of the research problem, it is important to discover the relationship and co-existence of both; content marketing and traditional advertising.

“Advertising is a powerful business management instrument which is used in mass communication. As a communication tool, advertising has made mass selling possible. Through advertising, businesses promote the sale of their goods and services. During this process, advertisers use information and persuasion techniques to convince the customer to buy.” (Chunawalla & Sethia 2008)

#### **3.1 Business-to-business advertising**

Historical role of advertising since the dawn of times is to enhance sales. Business to business advertising is no exception to the previous statement.

*“Advertising should act as an enhancement to the sales process.”* (Hutt & Speh 2012)

The general opinion of B2B communication states that today's consumers have been exposed so much to advertising in recent years, that majority of time they have become irresponsive to it. Advertising in its most conventional form is a tool becoming less and less effective in the world, simply due to the consumers overexposure to it. (Besik 2014)

B2B advertising exists to create awareness over a company goods offered and services provided. Advertising is aiming at informing potential customers of a new innovation and trying to influencing a customer's decision in order for the process can be finalized with the actual purchase (Hutt & Speh 2010).

On a principle, traditional advertising and content marketing facilitate exactly the same job. Difference is that the two approaches simply are completely different. Traditional

advertising aims to boost the confidence of the company. Advertising tells a price and all the unique selling points of a product. Content marketing aims to serve to the actual needs of a targeted consumer, boosting their confidence. Content aims to provide a solution with the product, to add real life value in the the everyday life of consumers.

## 4.0 CONTENT MARKETING

Chapter number three will present theories, angles and literature relevant for the thesis. Concept of content marketing in relation to the B2B world will be introduced and analyzed thoroughly.

Six Principles of Epic Content Marketing:

- **Always fill a customer need** – be useful
- **Be consistent** – deliver on time every time
- **Have a point of view** – experts always do
- **Be human** – find your voice and project it
- **Never use “sales speak”** – talk about them
- **Be best of breed** – deliver genuine value over others (Pulizzi 2014)

Quality content marketing is not about good storytelling. It is about telling a true story well. If there is truly something to tell, tell it in a way that reflects authentic conversation with a customer. (Vaynercheck 2015) Preaching doesn't generate a bond of trust. You have engage your audience, so that learn to come to you, to believe the communicated content and desire to build trust, only with you. Trust has never been more important as an asset for a company. This trust must be managed well for people to genuinely embrace the information you are putting out. (Miller 2013) Trust does not overcome unique product selling points or price dynamics. Trust gives a brand that extra edge, that winning tiebreaker which will ultimately mean everything.

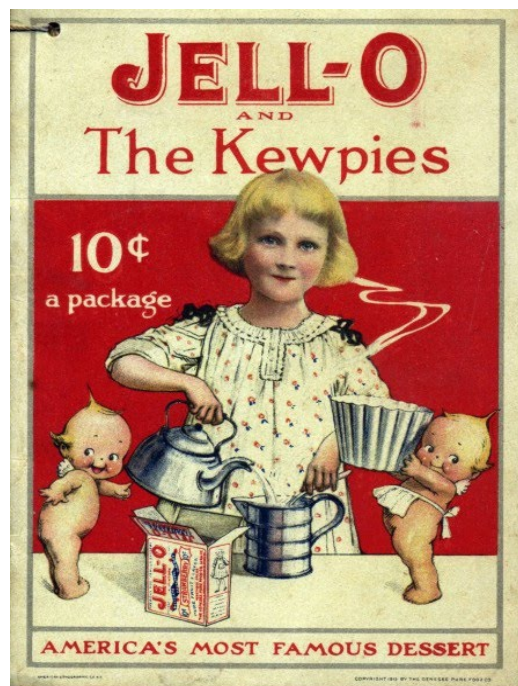
In 2001 Kotler defines content marketing as a marketing process for creating and distributing truly valuable and honestly compelling content to attract, acquire, retain and engage a clearly defined target audience. Content marketing will engage your audience n term own terms. Content marketing will bring additional value in to their lives with produced content. Consumers life and the product or service offered becomes intertwined with valuable content. Bonds of trust and loyalty are formed when a consumer chooses a brand based on value instead of price point. (Bista, Kumar, Nepal, Paris 2012)

Companies find it hard to digest that end consumers do not give substantial value to a company's physical products or services. What they hold of more importance are their own needs and wants. If a consumer is presented with information that represent real life interests, they will present you with their full attention. (Pulizzi 2014)

Content marketing involves less or no direct selling at all. Content marketing is truly about the art of communicating and creation of organic conversation. Company providing useful information with true real life value for a content consumer will see an educated and an entertained customer in the end. The most important part of this process is creating the emotional bond, which will ultimately outweigh all other unique selling point. (Miller 2013)

### **Jell-O**

In 1904 Jell-O corporation produced a recipe book for the use of their brand new product which was sitting as store shelves without anyone buying it. By distributing free copies of recipes that suggested creative and useful ways to use this strange new unknown product. (Figure 2.) Before this time, Jell-O was unknown and unused. On 1904 consumers were not excited about a wobbly, see-through-color-wander. After two years of content marketing with distribution of recipe booklets, Jell-O's sales rose to over \$1 million dollars per year by 1906.

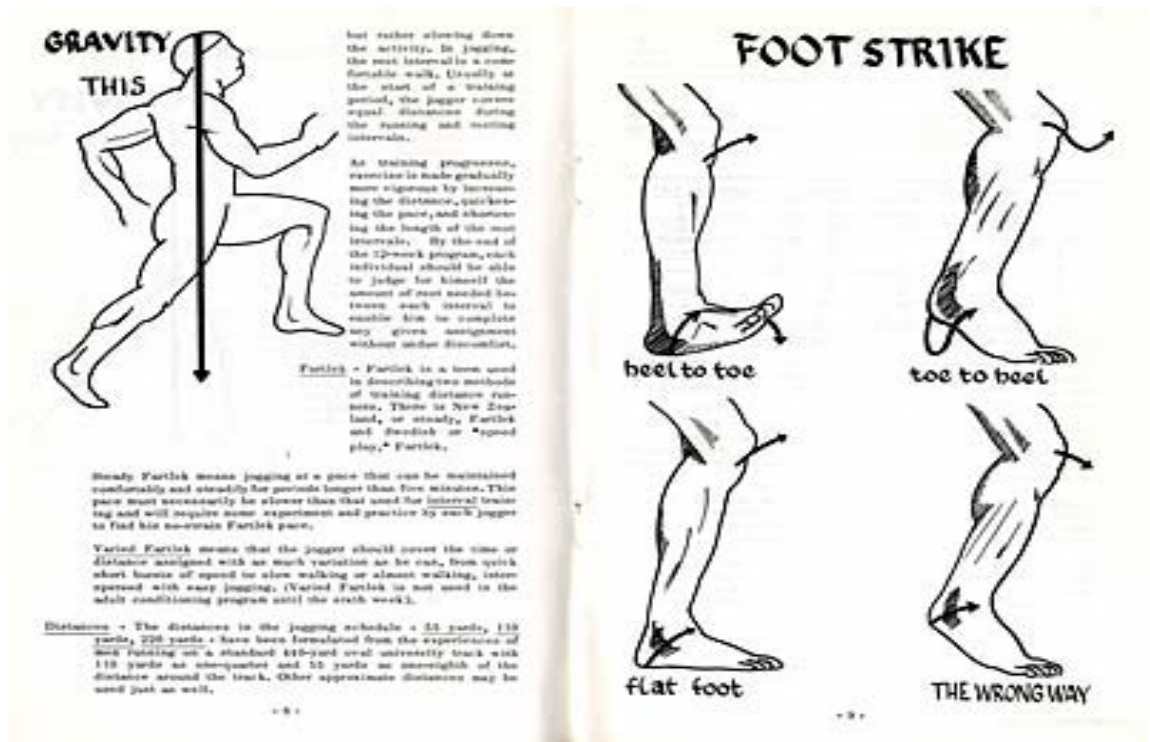


Picture 2. Jell-O company advertisement.

### Nike

Time and time again, content marketing has earned the reputation of bringing results. Nike probably wouldn't be what it is today without content marketing. In the mid sixties, founder Bill Bowerman published a booklet on jogging that basically brought the sport to America. The booklet never once mentioned Nike shoes. It didn't need to.

Great content brings big movement all on its own. (Bodnar & Cohen 2011) The book sold over a million copies and was credited with igniting the jogging phenomenon in the United States. In 1964 Nike had a capital of 1000 dollars with the largest purchase order of 200 pairs. After releasing the jogging booklet and by the year of 1969 Nike sales were at 200 000 dollars.



Picture 3. Nike “booklet on jogging” advertisement from 1964.

## 4.1 Content marketing plan

This chapter will give an overall coverage of a few simple basic blocks of any content marketing plan on the works.

One of the biggest audience distinctions is which business model a company is utilizing. Marketing communication can be categorized and divided into many chapters and sub chapters. But the most influential of them is whether you communicate content from a B2B point of view or from a B2C angle. (Bodnar & Cohen 2011)

There are countless options to go about a marketing communication strategy. One way B2B companies have marketed themselves is through conventional advertising. Traditional advertising is the safer of generating a set amount of attention and attracting customers, regardless of quality. Risks are smaller but true potential for growth are limited to the size of your wallet. (Kotler 2001) Limitations of traditional advertising have risen to new heights on the era of social media. Paying media and boosting your own parade does not generate trust between two parties. Does paid advertising honestly add long term value between the consumer and the goods?

A content marketing plan must be made before the publishing process. While making the plan it is much easier to recognize all possible flaws and correct them beforehand. A plan also acts as a clear guide and a schedule as where to take the next step. Overall plan with past history and future direction will aid in the organization of any marketing strategy. (Berthon 2012)

Clear components must be part of a concrete content marketing plan. Presented below are some of the basic block that must be considered in detail based on the company in question.

### **Content goal**

Initial component of any content marketing strategy is defining content goal. Setting goals in the beginning will aid in all parts of the process from result analysis to future planning. The very first goal will actually become the benchmark for the final

measurement stage. Other goals vary from customer retention, lead generation, brand awareness or customer acquisition. A second question to answer it; What the company wants to achieve with this goal? This goal must be in sync with the content message and overall brand image. (Berthon 2012)



Figure 1. Content strategy illustration.

### **Niche and persona**

Another basic component for a plan is defining the correct niche and target persona. It is necessary to define who is being spoken to. Purpose of content marketing is to produce content which will create growth in the business by adding real life value in to the lives of content consumers. (Berthon 2012) Defining who is the targeted audience and what is the desired end result after consuming the content is key. Speaking with eyes open, so that conversation counterpart is visible, makes conversation much easier.

Persona is an image of the targeted audience, the people who will be the end consumers of content. In order for content marketing to be successful, persona needs to be clearly defined. Persona will clearly demonstrate who is being addressed, what tone of message will influence them.

Large corporations can have multiple personas for the customer and another five for the investors. Having multiple personas translates into separated segments of well targeted

content marketing. (Berthon 2012)

### **Basics of channel selection**

“People just jump right to 'We are going to create this really cool thing and put it out there and people are going to magically find it.' You have to market your marketing.” (Chapman 2010)

Third component of an initial plan is choosing the right channels for addressing defined personas. Multiple channel from offline to online choices are available. (Heitz-Spahn 2013)

#### **Offline examples:**

- Printed media - newspapers, magazines, billboards, direct mail
- Locations - retail locations, events, trade shows, conferences

#### **Online examples:**

- Video platforms - YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat
- Image platforms - Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest
- Web discovery engine - StumbleUpon
- Publishing platform for professionals - LinkedIn
- Social network - Facebook, Google+, Quora

*“You start with the story and then you figure out what the best mechanism for telling it is. It will either be a book, a screenplay, a television show, Facebook post or something else. The fact is, it can not be all of those things.”* (Robert Rose, Content Marketing Institute, Content marketing seminar 2014)

Channel should not be chosen based on a popularity contest among consumers. Produced content should dictate the channels used. Planned channel strategy should actually follow the content strategy on the to-do list. Chosen channels must be integrated for maximal value. (Heitz-Spahn 2013) Channel integration also dictates adaptation of content in a way that it can be integrated with many channels. Instagram adaptation utilizes more visual content, Twitter is focused on getting the cornerstone of your communication out. Video platforms and professional networks add to an all base covering content strategy.

Content type, physical structure and the tone of the message needs to be defined next. After having clarified the goals and establishing a persona, it is important to choose content type that will complement these aspect. Structure of the content must be planned with the end use in mind, style images, length of text, video editing. The tone of content must be in sync with the persona, the channel type and the structure of the content. The content tone can be serious, playful, sarcastic or educational. (Pulizzi 2014, 225)

Different channels require different type of storytelling. Stay away from “spray and pray”. Develop a thoughtful and differentiating approach to each content channel.

### **Content Delivery Tools**

Content marketing delivery tools can simply be divided into various easy subcategories based on the media types. Content marketing guru Joe Pulizzi states that companies should always identify what their message is about, whom is the targeted audience, where to find this audience and what the expectation in the end will be. Once these basic parameters are set and answered, deciding on the content marketing tool is the final step. which will be used. Pulizzi's content marketing tools:

- Blogs
- Newsletters
- Articles
- Printed media
- Books
- Case studies
- Testimonials
- Seminars
- Mobile applications
- Online games
- Info graphics

## 4.2 Engagement factor

Content marketing and audience engagement are two concepts that go hand in hand. Actually, audience engagement is the ultimate result what should follow after content marketing. Content marketing would not be the huge phenomenon which it is today without the engagement factor. Having an engaged and entertained audience is deep in the core and ideology of content marketing. (Bodnar & Cohen 2011)

World was different before the tidal wave of change, much less than generation ago, if a company wanted to reach an audience, all it had to do was shout. The louder the point, the more audience it would reach. “Shouting” marketing messages will not do it anymore, there is too much and too many from all sources. Reason for this desensitization toward advertising is the risen empowerment of a consumer. In today's world consumers will decide if they have time to listen the message what a company is trying to communicate. **No one wants to be interrupted just to hear a sales pitch.** Integration between the message and everyday life must be born. This integration will convert in to real life value. (Miller 2013)

Become part of the buying process by offering outstanding value over others. The buying process is a complicated series of events:

- Consumer sees a problem without a solution.
- Consumer will engage in an information search to find the best solutions to the problem.
- In their quest for answers, a consumers identifies a few top choices and eventually make a purchase decision based on the information provided.

Buying process is not instant and happen from a single command. Consumers need more time to make a competitive analysis of their alternatives in order to ensure that the decision is correct. When the final decision has been reached, the engagement cycle is completed.

### 4.3 Measuring content marketing

One essential component in the process of implementing a content marketing campaign is the result analysis. Measurement is the last part of the content marketing process.

According to Pulizzi, measurement of content marketing has to start from the raw data. All of the data that has been collected throughout the content marketing campaign. This data can be divided into three main categories:

- User indicators
- Secondary indicators
- Primary indicators

**User indicators** means the raw data that analytics team has access to. Indicators such as: page views, visitors, keywords, conversations, page rank, comments, engagement, website traffic, followers, likes, etc. These analytics are provided by the online channels used by the company. (Pulizzi 2011)

**Secondary indicators** which often outweigh user indicators in customer potential. These indicators include the following: subscribers, leads, leads quality, cost per lead and cost per visitor. Secondary indicators are utilized by the management to monitor changes in a campaign daily, weekly or monthly, depending on the campaign itself and the overall length.

**Primary indicators** are used by the board of directors. Focal point is on converted leads and total cost per lead. Board of directors are interested in the numbers and cost flow during a campaign. (Pulizzi 2011) Content marketing is measured as a part of a process, the value of content itself can not be measured effectively. Value is personal and different for every consumer.

### 4.4 Offline or online?

Distribution channel of content is an important decision. There is online advertising, print

advertising and direct marketing advertising. Online advertising has seen a huge spur of growth since the shift to digital world. Most businesses choose a mix of online and offline channels to advertise. An important factor to keep in mind is changing the message to fit the selected channel and the audience.

Decrease in readership of the traditional media sources has limited the use of printed media. Print media advertising is still a strong advertising tool for reaching large quantity of masses. B2B companies use specialty journals and business publications to advertise in order to reach this target customer. B2B print media advertising is aimed at the decision makers of a company and therefore it can not be deemed as invaluable. (Hutt & Speh 2012)

B2B direct mailing is effective when the audience has been clearly identified and communication message is effective. Nowadays direct mail which has been addressed to an individual, is a rare occurrence. Although a direct message for an undefined niche or a person will be will viewed as spam.

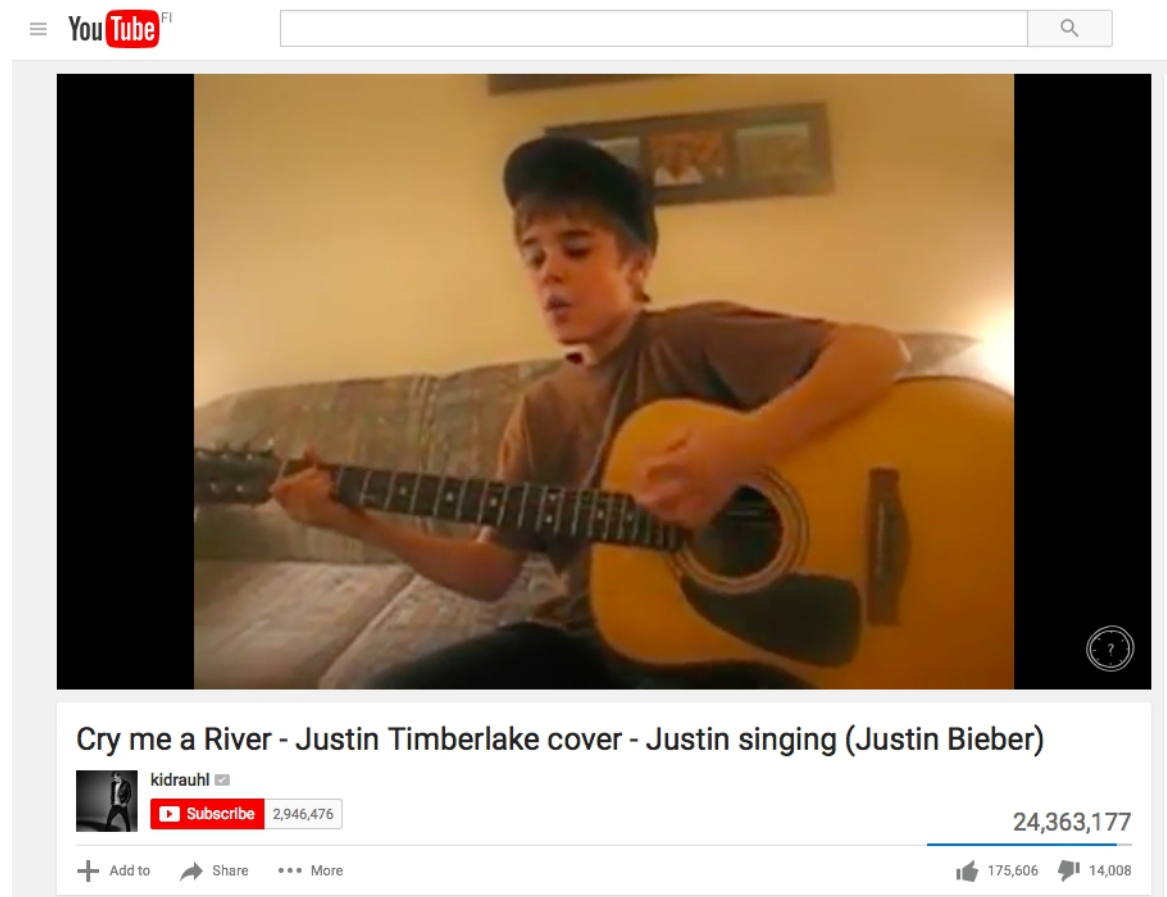
Evolution of communication has forced B2B businesses to enter a new world of communication. Staying only offline is not possible anymore, it is deemed untrustworthy. Website has become the first business card a company delivers, social media has become the human touch point for any business to reach out and engage. (Mangold 2009)

#### **4.5 Earned or unpaid?**

In the world of marketing communication, a concept of earned or paid media must be considered. Which one of the two is a better choice for a company to convey their message?

Earned media goes hand in hand with content marketing. Earned media is born from trust amongst content consumers. Sharing this content and engaging a conversation over the topic generates a bond. Earned media reaches loyal customers cost efficiently and their own networks on their own terms. This is the reason why so many “low-cost content” miracles have spiraled into virality so rapidly.

Justin Bieber with a current net worth of officially over 200 million is an excellent example of the power that today's content consumer possesses. Who knew what would happen after this?



Picture 4. Kidrauhl going viral. KidRauhl – channel name originated from “Lord Rauhl”, his fathers known nickname. (Youtube.com 2007)

Earned media is popular with content consumers because it has a sense of honesty that cannot be achieved through bought or paid channels. There is no set formula to creating “excellent content” and converting it into trust and more sales. Content marketing is a game of trial and error if you do not know your customers problems and needs. In case these problems are clear, content marketing is the easiest way to boost sales. Paid media does not generate as much trust as earned media. Built in doubt steps in with the first consummation of any content if it reads “Sponsored”. (Mangold 2009)

Paid media is essentially traditional advertising. Business pay to reach a certain audience,

size of the wallet matters. Paid media does not care to segment their marketing based on your personal needs, traditional advertising want sit all.

Another difference between the two approaches is that advertising uses more of a sales oriented language. Content marketing language does not emphasize focus on grammar and perfection. (Besik 2014) Typos, errors and simply admitting personal mistakes is a big part of communication with authenticity.

**Consumers trust someone who they relate with; a real blood pumping, mistake making individual.**

Companies use paid media is because it guarantees a better reach than trusting on earned media. Certain number of exposure is delivered, without too much effort resourced into strategic thinking. Companies can engage with a larger range of customers instantly by using paid media. Earned media might reach less people, but these people are the ones who are most dedicated and committed to a brand. (Besik 2014)



Picture 5. Dunkin Donuts paid billboard advertising.

## 5.0 RESEARCH METHOD

Chapter 5.0 of thesis will demonstrate research methods and theory used to support the final conclusion. Problem research methods were chosen based on which methods would produce most added value to theory . Theory context was conducted by collecting secondary information in form of theory, documentation and research.

This new approach to communication called “content marketing” required theory and background information. Primary data in the form of website benchmarking analysis was conducted as a supporting example for the secondary research.

Topic was selected based on the needs of commissioning company. Tampere Trade Fairs stated that there was a need of improvement in the communication between Subcontracting trade fair and all of its English speaking clientele. Currently only information touch point available for this target segment is Subcontracting trade fair website.

subcontractingtradefair.com is the only commercially available touchpoint between all potential english speaking exhibitors, customers, investors and potential partners who are interested in Subcontracting trade fair itself. As the only touchpoint between the two the, stf.com holds a centric position within the marketing communication strategy.

Qualitative research which is supported by secondary data method was chosen based on the topic itself. Quantitative research method would have lacked the personal touch that qualitative research gives to result. Qualitative research in its nature is one to create new theory and concepts. Quantitative research is an excellent tool on validating existing data. (Patton 2002)

## **5.1 Benchmarking**

“Regardless of industry, benchmarking is a process in which learning from successful peers happens systematically.” (Halepete & Park 2006)

This research applied benchmarking as a research method tool. Benchmarking is the act of measuring the quality of an organization's policies, products, programs or strategies. Benchmarking is the physical process of comparing real life metrics, processes and other performance metrics to industry's best practices by peers. This strategy develops new ideas and creates processes on how to improve the process parts that are lacking. Benchmarking is used to measure a certain performance by utilizing a pre-selected indicator, most commonly measured metrics are usually involved with time and cost.

## **5.2 Benchmarking practices**

Benchmarking method can either be internal or external. Internal benchmarking refers to a comparison process of an organizations own projects against each other. Internal benchmarks can often be the starting point for quantitative process examination. When benchmarking externally, organization seek a project or another best practice business for the comparison process. (Halepete & Park 2006) External benchmarks are generally considered to provide a greater advantage out of the two. Internal benchmarking can be useful when no external benchmarks are available for use. This case might occur if an industry is a new one and direct competitors are farce.

External benchmarks provide the added advantage of having additional knowhow over and about competitors. Without external benchmarks, an organization and its managers may lack an understanding of what is actually happening within the business. (Camp 1989)

Benchmarking can be applied during multiple phases of a process for different purposes. When applied early on, such as at the authorization stage, it can be used for risk management or to identify characteristics that may become future problems. (Halepete &

Park 2006) If benchmarking is conducted during ongoing process, it will aid in guiding final decisions of a project and reflect on future decisions.

Post-project benchmarking is used for lessons learned and feedback that can be used to establish benchmarks for future comparisons. Most organizations begin with post-project comparisons to resolve a problem that has served in the project or process.

### **5.3 Benchmarking implementation**

Benchmarking processes are not easy to implement, an organization must overcome numerous barriers. Some private sector companies fear that they may lose their competitive advantage by sharing information and others fear exposure of organizational weakness. For some, businesses faith in their own doing is overshadowed by the need of a benchmarking investigation. (Morgan 2012)

Some business are unaware of the value of benchmarking and believe that benchmarking systems do not address their needs. Smaller scale benchmarking, training and pilot runs increase familiarity with the benchmarking process and can help to reduce these barriers.

One of the greatest barriers to benchmarking is a lack of resources. Most organizations are leaner today than in the past. Economical state has forced many business to focus their essential resources to back to the core of a business, whether this resource is allocated to personnel or production costs.

### **5.4 Elimination process**

Benchmarking was conducted between the **websites** of Subcontracting Trade Fair and Slush.org. Due to lack of exploratory examples in content marketing among trade fair competitors, benchmarking was not done with a direct comparison. When benchmarks were chosen it was discovered that none of the closest competitors of Subcontracting Trade Fair possessed all the qualities of content marketing worth benchmarking. Other competitors are not utilizing the full concept of content marketing on their website.

Tampere Trade Fairs personnel took part of the Slush event at Helsinki in 11.-12.11.2015. The concept of Slush and general atmosphere of the event with excellent pre and after marketing was liked.

### **5.5 Benchmarking structure**

Benchmarking topic was selected based on the needs of commissioning company. This need was to improve the communication between Subcontracting trade fair and all english speaking audience.

subcontractingtradefair.com is the only communication platform between the trade show and anyone whose primary operating language is english. As the only available english touchpoint, stf.com maintains a key position within the marketing communication of the trade fair. Website benchmarking process will take under consideration several various aspects starting from design components to statistics that measure the quality of engagement.

Design of the website will be analyzed through the quality of visual images, colors, theme repetition throughout the site and an overall look. These aspects have a substantial influence on the content that is placed on the website. Website design is the context and reflection of all overall content. (Fariborz & Hassanzadeh 2013)

Statistical matters reveal more insights about the true everyday value of a website. Statistics do not lie about visitor numbers, bounce rates or general user data. Numbers may not be the most accurate way of measuring return on investment, but they do give an inclination and an overall status.

Navigation and usability is a big part of content today. Offering content on mobile is a necessity. Fast downloading and limited number of extra clicks have become the norm of today, expectancy level has risen.

Even though navigation and website layout are vital in order to provide the right context, engagement aspects is a key metric to be looked for during the benchmarking process.

Theoretical framework has demonstrated that successful content is empowered by engagement, therefore emphasizes of the benchmarking case is on the engagement aspects detectable on the websites. (Fariborz & Hassanzadeh 2013)

## **6.0 ENGAGING WEBSITE**

Website analysis might seem old fashioned and the wrong thing to focus on in this era of social media. Unfortunately for some businesses the importance of this basic necessity for communication has been sidetracked by other needs. In the case of subcontractingtradefair.com this has happened. Even on the first look the current website platform has fallen severely behind on even the basics of technological advances. The website is more than likely causing financial loss in its current state.

Website is the first place you go to when initial interest is born, first place to look at, a place where trust building begins. This is the place where a business tries to understand and grasp who actually is this business? Website is the first greeting handshake, thus its importance is invaluable.

Website analysis is a large concept with several sub categories. Specific sections were chosen in order to produce the best outcome with the current limitations. Layout, text and visual elements were analyzed on a surface level based on immediate key findings. In depth and thorough analysis for each category was left out due to the magnitude of the overall project.

Few benchmarks were presented in a simple one sentence format in order to clarify the results. Due to the quantity of topics and questions, condensed answers were preferred. Short answers provide a simple pool of data which is more stable to analyze. (Halepete & Park 2006)

Website analysis benchmarking was executed with a rather surface touch to numerous angles rather than an in depth one into few. Website is the first touchpoint of a business, it is the business card and introduction of who you are as a business. Several aspects need to be analyzed in the website design analysis.

## 6.1 Statistics and Search Engine Optimization

“Statistical data and numbers do not always express the most accurate data. Numerical data can be inaccurate due to technical glitches, poorly functioning systems or just poorly planned campaigns.” (Davis 2012)

Statistical data also reflects the results of content strategy that has taken place on a website.

### Slush.org

General	
Global rank	44 416 <sup>th</sup>
Daily page views per visitor	3,10
Daily time on site	4 min 11s
Sites with linking	769

Top SEO keywords	
Slush	85,97%
Slush asia	6,22%
Slush startup	2,30%

Used data	
Gender division	Mostly male
Browsing location	Work
Education level	Graduate school

Figure 2. Numerical data and statistics regarding slush.org (Alexa.com 2015)

Statistics of slush.org provide excellent value for both sales and marketing departments. Metrics that define the behavior patterns or a persona of a potential customers directly benefit the planning of communication and sales strategies. Statistical data also reflects the results of content strategy that has taken place on a

website. Additionally, user data will provide valuable insights on what style of design, layout and content strategy should be produced and applied.

Benchmarking analysis can not be completed through numbers but other conclusions can be drawn. Based on the numbers and statistics available, slush.org has been search engine optimized extremely well.

### **subcontractingtradefair.com**

Website analysis tool was used as the source of numerical data for subcontractingtradefair.com. (Alexa.com 2015) Unfortunately online data tools do not provide reliable historical data for websites with the global rank of under 100 000. Unfortunately stf.com was globally ranked as the 12 531 223<sup>th</sup>. Therefore there is no website data of any kind that is of enough quality for analysis of statistics in numbers.

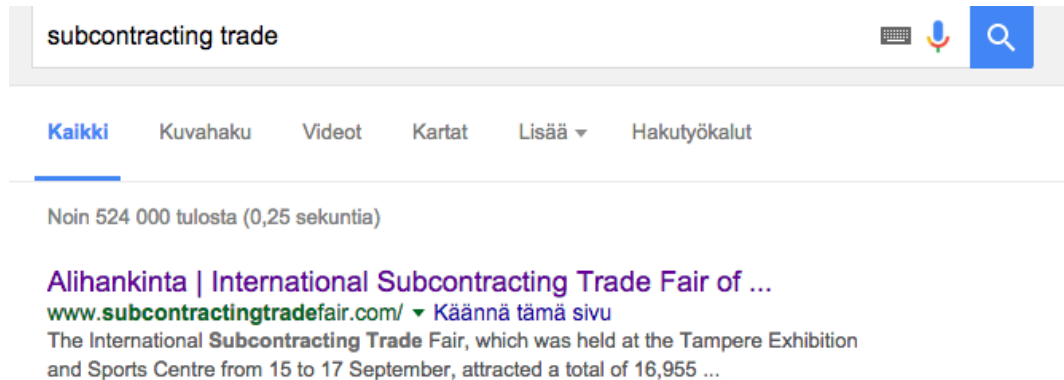
Two cautionary measures were conducted in order to produce some information of value for benchmarking.

Alihankinta.fi was the closest reference for data analysis. Alihankinta website is the Finnish domain version for the Subcontracting Trade Fair. Domain address was used as a cautionary measure for rapid benchmarking in order to produce some website data. Unfortunately Alihankinta.fi was not able to provide any data with real substantial value either. Alihankinta.fi received the global website rank of 3 075 551<sup>th</sup> according to Alexa.com. Reason for lack of website traffic runs deeper than in two separate domains.

A second cautionary measure was a quick search engine optimization look.

“Subcontracting trade” was typed in to google in order to shed some light on the status of search engine optimization conducted on the website. A clear problem was evident within the SEO of the site. SEO of Subcontracting needs to be upgraded and focused on with a heavy hand. First google result and headline of subcontractingtradefair.com begins with “Alihankinta” as presented in picture 6. Search engine optimization of

content plays the leading role within the search engine result race. (Harris 2014)



Picture 6. Screenshot google results.

## 6.2 Accessibility

### Slush.org

- Slush.org is mobile friendly, all function in terms of navigation and site scalability are fit for mobile.
- Number of clicks has been pushed down, re-downloading of new pages is minimal.
- Site is responsive on click feedback at 2,062 seconds, which is 66% slower than the average. (Alexa.com 2015)
- Clickable items indicate moderately that they actually are clickable.
- Website is cross browser compatible with a possibility for partial HTML and CSS alterations.
- HTTP response status codes are at use correctly: status line “Moved Permanently 301” is functioning correctly between the www and non-www version.

### subcontractingtradefair.com

- Determining accessibility was done through a questionnaire, this provided the most easily comparable answers. Questionnaire in question can be found in the

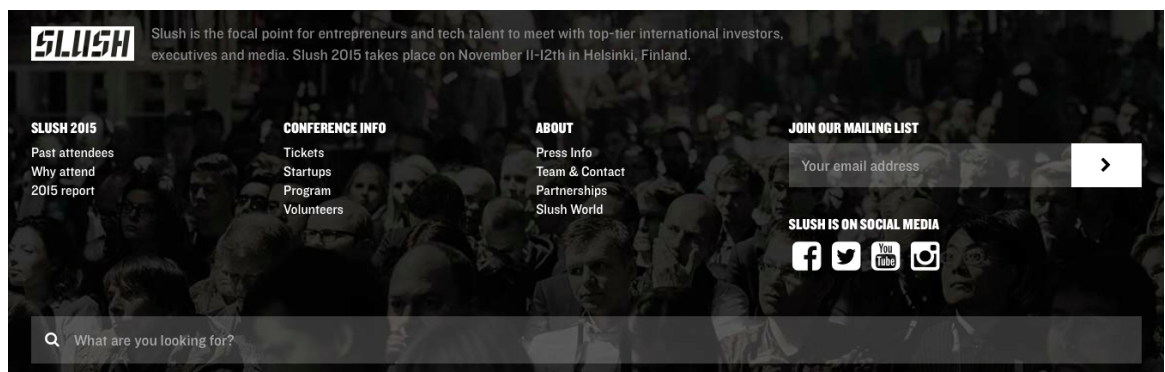
appendix.

- Website is cross browser compatible with a possibility for partial HTML and CSS alterations.
- Site is responsive on click feedback at 0,1 seconds.
- HTTP response status codes are at use correctly: status line “Moved Permanently 301” is functioning correctly between the www and non-www version. <sup>1</sup>
- Site is not mobile or tablet friendly: website does not scale on mobile, overly difficult to adjust with fingers.
- Several clicks to locate information and continuous reloading of pages.

### 6.3 Navigation

#### Slush.org

- Same domain for different languages, no separation.
- Website is easy to navigate with a clear call to action to each page. As a visitor you are never lost; chat (Picture 7), contact information, most popular pages within the sites and a search feature is also there.



Picture 7. Screenshot of slush.org website.

1. HTTP 301: A permanent redirect which directly communicates with search engines to transfer all indexing properties to the pre-determined target.

### **subcontractingtradefair.com**

- Different domains for different languages, no integration between the two sites.
- Navigation is not intuitive and foresee actions.
- Locating information takes unnecessary time and effort, too much excess.
- Internal “search” bar lacks in quality of results.
- Site is lacking a clear call of action in the overall image.
- Information needs to be searched from tabs and texts even when site is not used for the first time.

## **6.4 Design**

### **Slush.org**

Website is visual and engaging. Slush enforces every communicated message with a visual affirmation. Speakers have high quality images with a repetitive theme, seminar pages have photos of actual events, party site has video content and cross channel integration. Copywriting is condense and informative. Text bodies are not cluttering the website. Information is valid and updated.

Clever language structure. First page is only in english to cater for everyone needs. Only when clicking through deeper to the site the language shifts based on your preferences. “Why attend” is written in finish because target audience is mainly Finnish and conveying a consumer in their native language is easier than on another one. In case your native language is not finish, “in English” button is clearly visible.

Design of the site is aesthetically appealing, color theme is dark and cool. All the colors used are harmonious and logically related, spots of colors are used in strategic places. This same harmony and logic continues with all the visuals. Photos and videos are following a similar theme, setting or a background. There is a connective feature in all visual aspects. This connective feature is not the exactly alike in every section of the site, theme transforms and continues naturally.

Website design scales extremely well in Mobile and tablet. Desktop site theme continues unaltered with a mobile device. Same world of atmosphere, showstopping emotion and

user friendliness. Site loads quickly, is appealing to the eye and gives back with its design and content.

Several illustrations in photos or videos. Website design lets you look behind the curtains of the event. With visual content only; site clearly demonstrates what has happened before Slush, what will happen during and after the event. All visualization is high quality. All images and videos seem professional, nothing looks home made, this gives the image of high quality with a touch of luxury.

### **subcontractingtradefair.com**

Design of the website seems outdated. No interaction or visual play. Call of action for this site and all pages within seems to serve as an information platform. All practical information you need about logistics, schedules, program, sales, floor plans and trade fairs in general can be found on this site.

*Quality content is present but content volume is somewhat minimal, even though it is of real quality when displayed.* Even though video interviews are a good source of content, volume in production is so minimal that the actual website does not provide real life value for work in terms of videos. Statistics of the website traffics support this statement.

Illustrations in form of photos and videos lack in numbers. What happens in the actual event is not clearly and easily presented. Even though Subcontracting itself has updated every year, website gives the impression that there has been no advances what so ever within the recent years.

Image bank is difficult to reach and poor to operate. Video plugins should be embedded in the website with more subtleness. There is a lack of visual stimuli among the website, a clear statement of how Subcontracting is productized is missing. Site does not offer clear pricing or segment possibilities of participation in an effective made, an effort of contact from the customer side must be made.

## 6.5 Engagement

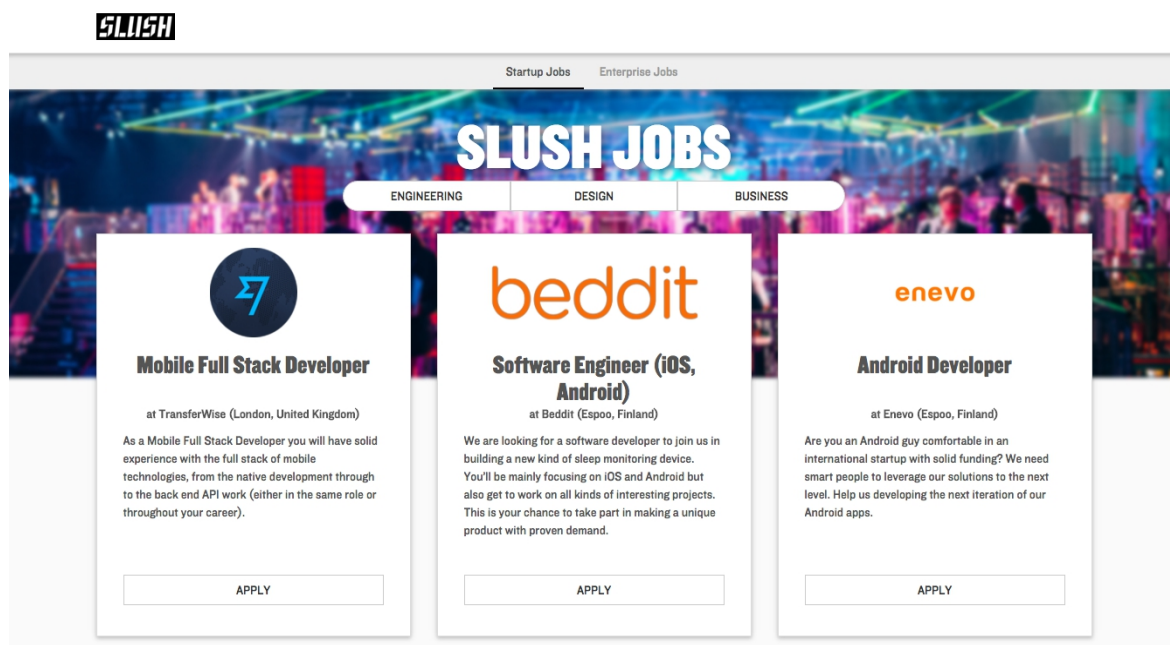
### Slush.org

Website is a visual experience with pictures, videos and an on going theme. Human engagement factor is visible on the website. Main focus is on all the visitors, not on technical matters or logistics. Slush.org builds an image of an engaged experience with benefits for your personal life and business.

Slush.org engages the site users with content that gives real life value for both start ups taking part and site visitor. Businesses who are taking a part of slush event offer jobs for the site users. This is a constant and ongoing reason to visit slush site even for those not interested in the event itself.

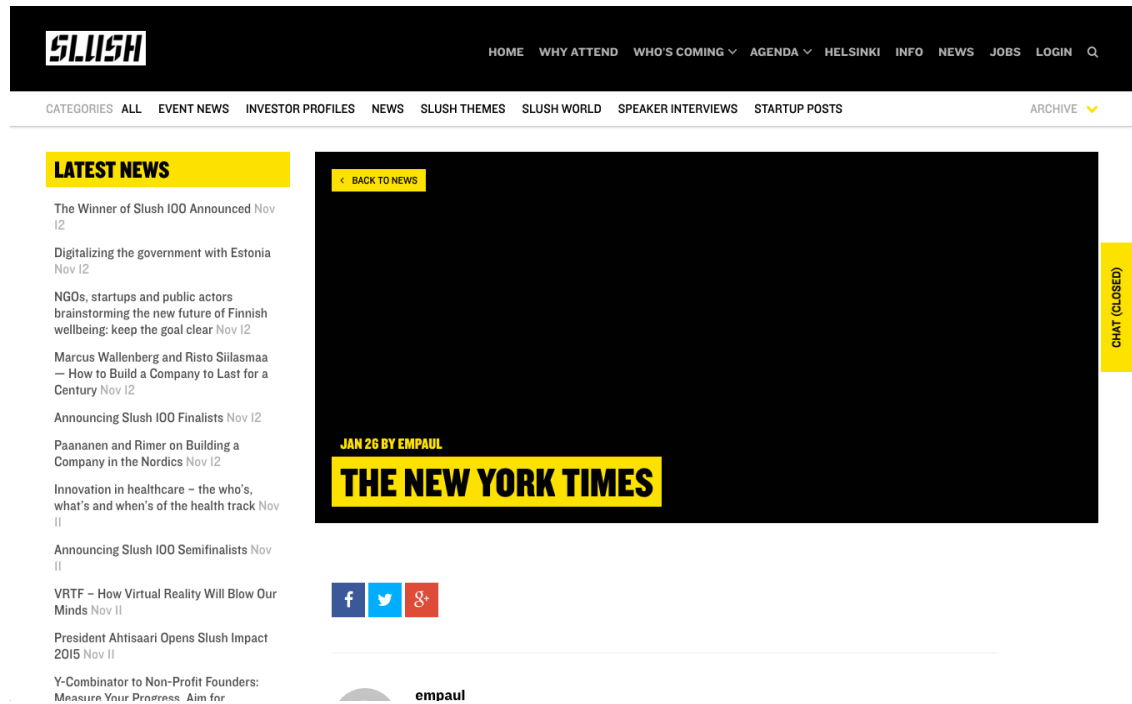
**During the most traumatic recession in recent memory, increasing work efficiency while decreasing unemployment provides an unbeatable advantage which transforms lives and converts into word of mouth marketing.**

Slush treats site visitors as equals by hiring straight form the pool of their consumers. Slush engages both communities and individuals by creating a touchpoint for recruitment within their own content driven environment. (Picture 8.)



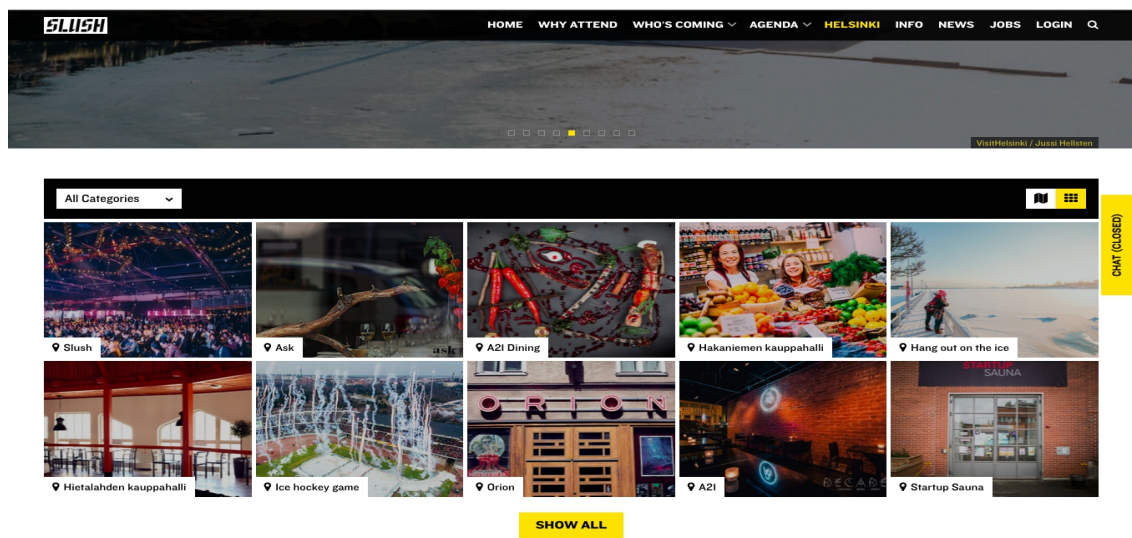
Picture 8. Screenshot of slush.org website.

Slush has created an environment worth spending personal free time in. (Picture 9.) Information about the industry, video content, jobs and profiles give real time value for students, thesis writers, individuals, start ups, small and large business.



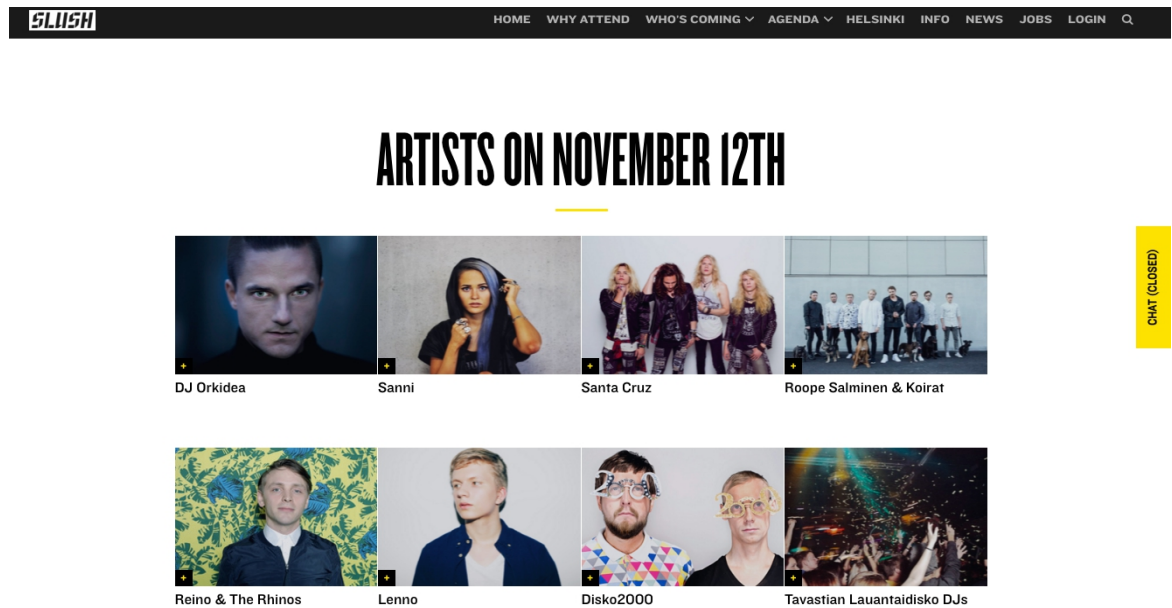
Picture 9. Screenshot of slush.org website.

Slush also brings an undeniable human aspect of personal gain within the website. It does not only offer content for work and education purposes. It also provides added value for leisure. Site delivers insights about Helsinki, restaurant foods and many more categories.



Picture 10. Screenshot of slush.org website.

All seminar days end with a massive evening event. Vital party details with preview clips of performers are displayed at the event page. (Picture 11.) Picture Site bravely breaks the norm of traditional B2B website communication models. Results are speaking for themselves.



Picture 11. Screenshot of slush.org website.

### **subcontractingtradefair.com**

Engagement level on the site is low. Call of action for this site is to be the source of researched tactical information about Subcontracting. All information you need about logistics, schedules and trade fairs in general can be found on this site. With a clever website layout majority of this information could be presented in just a few downloadable pages.

Engaging, truly value adding content is available at the site. Videos that provide excellent insights straight from the industry leaders. Unfortunately this content is limited in volume and outweighed by the technical difficulties on the site.

## 6.6 Engaging purchase funnel

Slush has created a truly engaging purchase funnel for their website visitors. Smart productization of Slush.org is eminent but not prominent. Clear categorization of all buyable product offered are stated but not pushed. Purchase funnel is planned well and is clearly detectable in the page “*Why attend?*”

### 1<sup>st</sup> Step of the purchase funnel

Key reasons for personal attendance are presented first. (Picture 12.) Satisfying needs of an individual before stating value for an employee is a simple tactic that works without failure. Personal interest is more powerful. All key information provided with simple statements and visualization.



Picture 12. Screenshot of slush.org website.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Step of the purchase funnel

Reasons for participating as a company, employee or as an investor are presented after meeting the “selfish” needs of a potential visitor. (Picture 13.) It is important to provide concrete statements of business value to those who are simply interested at Slush for business purposes.

# TAKE YOUR TECH COMPANY TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Slush is built for entrepreneurs by entrepreneurs, and it is meant for growth companies of all stages and industries. Whether you are looking for investors, customers, media exposure or mentoring, Slush offers a unique opportunity to get your company within the reach of a global audience.

In 2014, there were over 1,400 tech startups from 74 countries at the event, meeting with investors, media and potential corporate partners in over 3,800 pre-booked meetings.

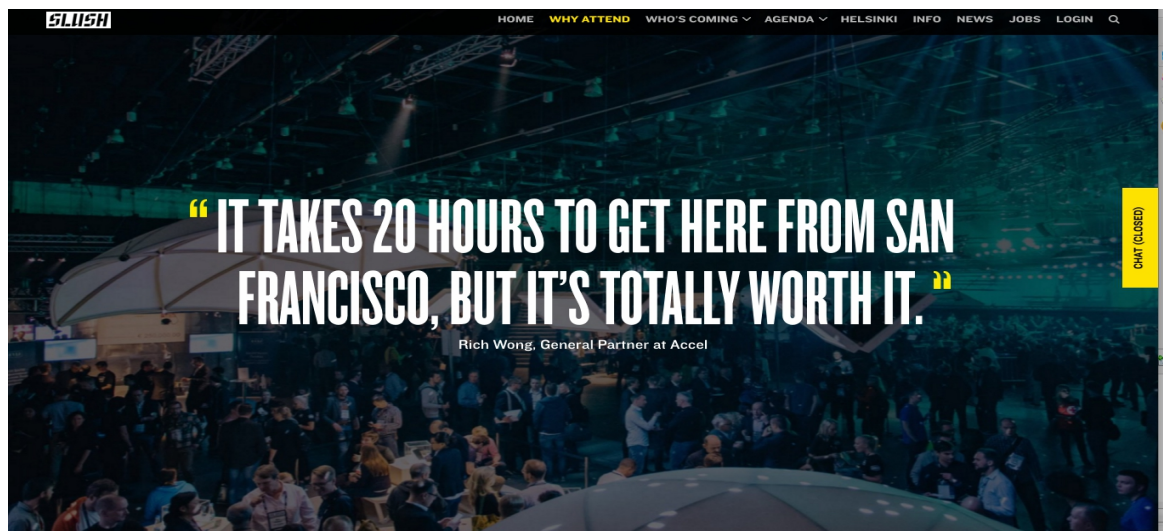
Our offering for startups includes:



Picture 13. Screenshot of slush.org website.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Step of the purchase funnel

Most common excuses are made completely invalid. (Picture 14.) Quilt is a powerful tool and an excellent excuse, *“If they have 20 hours, so must I.”* Direct quote from a well respected, previous attendee is a powerful tool for conveying this message.



Picture 14. Screenshot of slush.org website.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Step of the purchase funnel

Ending with a clear selection of products to choose from. An online chat is available at all times. Online chat remains on stealth-mode, it does not disturb the website experience, but when needed, it is pointed out with an attention drawing pop of color.

CONFERENCE PASS SOLD OUT	EXECUTIVE PASS SOLD OUT	STARTUP PASS SOLD OUT	INVESTOR PASS SOLD OUT
Stage programs Startup demo areas Preparty and after party  <a href="#">Thursday Passes still available!</a>	All Conference Pass features Theme specific opening drinks Access to Engine Room Networking tool Startup data	All Executive Pass features Investor matchmaking Job posting & recruiting Founders' day Slush 100 pitching competition* Seedcamp pitching* Booth at demo area* <small>* Registration ended Oct 9th!</small>	All Executive Pass features Startup matchmaking Startup financing data Access to meeting area Investor day
<a href="#">GET THURSDAY PASS</a>	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT

Picture 15. Screenshot of slush.org website.

This purchase funnel requires no effort from the content consumers side. Pros and cons for entry are thought through. Most most common reasons for not to enter are eliminated which is followed by a clear products are offered categorized based on what you need.

Product view is not visible all year around. (Picture 15.) They are only present a few months before and during the event. Outside of this time the purchase funnel becomes a storyline to convey a message and generate interest.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

To conclude key findings of this thesis, one might say; lead links, paid advertising and social media presence act as the icing of a cake. Infrastructure of an engaging storyline, value architecture and content management make the cake itself. If either one is missing the cake ends up tasteless and boring. That kind of cake will unquestionably be thrown in to the trash at some point.

### 7.1 Key Findings of theoretical framework

Commissioned thesis began from a topic, a real need for improvement in communication between english speaking Subcontracting trade fair attendees and event itself. Website was deemed as the most urgent touchpoint for improvement.

Thesis began with an in depth look in to the trade fair industry, in order to fully understand the business where Tampere Trade Fairs operates. General decline in the industry is notable on a global level. Despite the decline, Subcontracting holds a respected and substantial pool of loyal businesses who attend annually. Tampere Trade Fairs fiscal year of 2015 was profitable with record numbers in attendance.

Theoretical framework about marketing was covered in depth over chapters 3&4, focusing on differences between content marketing and traditional advertising. Theoretical framework showcased the transformation of advertising. Where the journey originally began and how come this need for “true everyday value” has been born. It was discovered that traditional advertising guarantees an easily understandable and guaranteed number of exposure, quality of content consumers aside. Traditional advertising reaches large masses fast, only limitation is the size of your wallet. One of the key findings of thesis was that traditional advertising in print, radio and TV **alone** is not effective in todays consumer oriented society. Factors of engagement and personal value must be the supportive forces present at all times in order to kick start and expedite the process of building genuine trust.

Theory presented the concept of earned and paid media sources and whether to allocate resources in to offline or online media. It was discovered that content marketing goes hand in hand with online sources. Engaging content that provides additional value for work, personal life and leisure are some of the metrics found from successful peers. Earned media focuses on creating relationships between content consumers and the company in question, while focusing on other things than product features. Earned media reaches loyal customers and their own networks on their own terms. Greatest results will be achieved when the two are combined, value adding content is and organically generated earned media.

Regardless if topic is B2B or B2C, communication behavior has changed. In today's era the consumer, whoever they personally are or whom they represent is irrelevant in terms of reached communication. Consumer alone will decide if they have time to listen the message what a company is trying to communicate. Content consumer does not want to be interrupted just to hear a sales pitch. Therefore integration of brand message and content must take place no matter if audience is B2B or B2C.

Measuring content marketing has similar difficulties as measuring effectiveness of social media presence. It is not an easy or clear task. Focusing on metrics that are engagement driven, not quantity driven is the core of measuring content marketing. Statistical data and numbers do not always express the most accurate data. Numerical data can be inaccurate due to technical glitches, poorly functioning systems or just poorly planned campaigns. Focusing on numbers that are generated by users themselves with their own terms will give actual and honest user based statistics.

It was discovered that one of the key metrics for successful content marketing include brand awareness interlaced with problem solution oriented and **honest** engagement with a human touch. Leaving a true trail of existence as a business is the benefit what content marketing offers. In today's era advertising is much less about blasting a message than it is about serving an empowered audience.

Only way to win at content marketing is for the reader to say "this was written

specifically for me.”

## **7.2 Key findings of benchmarking study**

Website of subcontractingtradefair.com is outdated. There is no interaction or visual play, layout and technical matters need serious attention. Lack of mobile availability in the year of 2016 is alarming. stf.com exists to serve as an information platform. Site is lacking truly value adding, engaging features for a content consumer. Quality content is definitely present, articles and copy writing is condense and interesting. Volume of the content produced is not sufficient and deemed extremely minimal, this is supported by the data and statistics of the site. Major problems seem to be website tech and layout oriented, not quality.

Measuring successfulness and reach of stf.com through statistical data in numbers was impossible. Visitor traffic for stf.com was alarmingly low and on a global scale the website was ranked extremely poorly. There was not enough of sufficient data for substantial analysis in order to produce conclusion worthy results.

Slush.org website bravely breaks the norm of a traditional B2B website. Slush.org builds an image of an engaged experience with benefits for your personal life and business. Results are speaking for themselves. Slush does not only offer information about the event, it provides varied content for work, education and travel purposes. Site delivers insights for visitors, start ups and investors on a global and national level.

Human engagement factor is visible on the website through discussion, communication and photos. Website is visually interesting and engaging. Slush enforces every communicated message with a visual affirmation. Speakers have high quality images with a repetitive and continuous theme. Cross channel integration is present throughout the website. Copywriting is condense and informative. Text bodies are not cluttering the website. Information is valid and updated.

### 7.3 Recommendations for Tampere Trade Fairs

Website is the first place you go to when initial interest is born, first place to look at, a place where trust building begins.

World is on mobile and subcontractingtradefair.com is not. Personal and business emails, Facebook and all social media platforms, communication with Whatsapp, calling or text, calendars with important dates, flash lights and calculators, games, videos, learning environments, payment tools, books and purchases can all fit in a pocket. Website is the first handshake a business gives out and in today's world; **this handshake must scale on mobile.**

Websites must download fast, possess a clear navigation and condense into less clicks. A website does not only need to be technically sufficient but it needs to stay visually engaging and somehow stand out from the crowd. Standing out from the crowd and cutting through the massive clutter of information is important, otherwise a business is eaten alive by competitors. Everyone has a website, why not have the best?

Two separate domains for Finnish and English speaking clientele requires unnecessary extra work for personnel and additional monetary resources. This integration of all languages under one domain has become the norm for websites. Currently stf.com is falling severely behind. English domain of subcontractingtradefair.com is extremely long with a high possibility of typos.

Subcontracting website engine optimization needs to be upgraded and focused on with a heavy hand. First google result and headline of subcontractingtradefair.com begins with "Alihankinta". These small matters seem like a lack of attention to detail and require rapid attention.

Subcontracting itself stays updated every year with new tech advances and reputable participants. Mission and vision of Subcontracting is to stay on the cutting edge of

industry know-how. 2016 theme of **digitalization and leadership** does not correlate with the message stf.com communicates to the audience who are debating about participation.

Website does not awaken uncontrollable excitement to take part in this event as a first time, non-Finnish, information seeker. Context and impression provided by the site does not reflect on the physical event that actually takes place. Website layout and design gives the impression that there has been no tech advances of what so ever within the recent 10 years. Updating website layout with an engaging, content filled, and visually interesting environment is the most urgent recommendation by thesis author. Valuable content is present but it is not showcased the way it should be. Layout and visual image is causing financial loss.

#### **7.4 Thesis authors learning**

In the beginning phases of thesis, I had only basic knowledge of what content marketing is and how it correlates with traditional marketing. I had a base understanding of how it should be applied and what aspects to take under consideration, that is it.

The topic itself is of great interest for me as an international business student. During my studies I focused on marketing studies, but that was not the sole focus of my degree, thus there was an ocean of question marks ahead of me.

I was overwhelmed by the amount of information and know-how that was just readily available for me at any time. I immersed myself into the topic, trying to learn as much as possible as fast as I could. In the beginning phases of the thesis writing process I began my working life career at an advertising agency. This pressure of a new job encouraged me to prove my worth and value through learning. I genuinely wanted to learn everything I could, thesis writing process was this opportunity.

I started the learning process by educating myself about content marketing and its nemesis and an accomplice; traditional advertising. I have extended my knowledge on both of these topics and applied it to trade fair industry. Aspects such as online and offline sources and whether media is earned or paid, were some of the new concepts that I was interested in learning more.

To conclude, I know now that I have just taken the initial baby steps towards learning absolutely everything I can about the art of communication.

## 8.0 REFERENCES

- Besik, H. 19 September 2014. Earned or Paid Media? Why You Need Both to Drive Sales. **(Content marketing)**
- Bodnar, K. & Cohen, J. L. 2011. B2B Social Media Book : Become a Marketing Super-star by Generating Leads with Blogging, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Email, and More. Wiley. Hboken. **(Content marketing)**
- Klein, N. 2001. No Logo: no space, no choice, no jobs. Flamingo. London. **(Content and traditional marketing)**
- Kotler, P. 2001. Kotler on marketing how to create, win and dominate markets. Omnia Books Limited. Glasgow. **(Content and traditional marketing)**
- Pulizzi, Joe 2014. Epic content marketing book. **(Content and traditional marketing)**
- Halepete, J., & Park, J. 2006. Competitive e-tailing strategies for fair trade organizations: Benchmarking against successful commercial organizations. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal **(Research methodology)**
- Patton, M.Q. 2002. Qualitative research & evaluations methods. 3rd edition. Sage Publications. California. **(Research methodology)**
- Camp, Robert C. 1989. Benchmarking, The Search for Industry Best Practices That Lead to Superior Performance. Portland, Ore. **(Research methodology)**
- Hutt, Michael, and Thomas Speh. Business marketing management: B2B. Cengage Learning, 2012. **(Preliminary research)**
- Rosson, Philip J., and FH Rolf Seringhaus 1995. "Visitor and exhibitor interaction at industrial trade fairs." **(Trade fairs)**
- Mangold, W. Glynn, and David J. Faulds 2009. "Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. **(Social media)**
- <http://www.jimpinto.com/writings/exhibitionsdecline.html> **(Trade fairs)**
- [http://www.tampereenmessut.fi/tiedotteet/Tampereella\\_tapahtumat\\_vetavat\\_vakea\\_\\_\\_messukonsernille\\_ennatystulos\\_1762.html](http://www.tampereenmessut.fi/tiedotteet/Tampereella_tapahtumat_vetavat_vakea___messukonsernille_ennatystulos_1762.html) **(Trade fairs)**
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhkmJor69n4> - Gary Vaynerchuk 2015. Being a content marketing animal, Online Marketing Rockstars. **(Content marketing)**
- <http://boss.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/02/25/are-trade-shows-a-waste-of-time> **(Trade fairs)**
- <http://www.thedrum.com/news/2013/09/18/dmexco-digital-marketing-dead-proclaims-procter-gambles-global-brand-building> **(Trade fairs)**
- <http://www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/solutions/digital-marketing/pdfs/adobe-digital-distress-survey.pdf> **(Content marketing)**
- <https://vimeo.com/53091245> -The Socrates of San Francisco **(Content marketing)**

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/kidrauhl> (**Preliminary research**)
- Kresse, Hermann 2005. "The importance of associations and institutions in the trade fair industry."Trade show management: planning, implementing and controlling of trade shows, conventions and events” (**Trade fairs**)
- Bista, Sanat Kumar, Surya Nepal, and Cecile Paris 2012. Engagement and Cooperation in Social Networks: Do Benefits and Rewards Help.Trust, Security and Privacy in Computing and Communications, 2012 11th International Conference on. 2012. (**Content marketing**)
- Heitz-Spahn, Sandrine. Cross-channel free-riding consumer behavior in a multichannel environment: An investigation of shopping motives, sociodemographics and product categories. (2013) (**Content marketing**)
- Morgan, Neil A. Marketing and business performance. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 40.1 (2012): (**Content marketing**)
- Rahimnia, Fariborz, and Jaleh Farzaneh Hassanzadeh. "The impact of website content dimension and e-trust on e-marketing effectiveness: The case of Iranian commercial saffron corporations."Information & Management 50.5 (2013): 240-247. (**Website benchmarking**)
- Davis, John A 2012. Measuring Marketing: 110+ Key Metrics Every Marketer Needs.(**Content marketing**)
- Harris, C., and SEO Top Secret. "How to Get Top Ranking on the First Page of Google by Search Engine Optimization (Simple Online Marketing),[Kindle Edition]."Seattle, WA: Amazon Digital Services (2014). (**SEO**)
- Lusch, Robert F., and Stephen L. Vargo. The service-dominant logic of marketing: Dialog, debate, and directions. Routledge, 2014. (**Content marketing**)
- Handley, Ann, and Charles C. Chapman. Content rules: how to create killer blogs, podcasts, videos, ebooks, webinars (and more) that engage customers and ignite your business. Vol. 13. John Wiley & Sons, 2012. (**Content marketing**)
- Camp, Robert C. Benchmarking: the search for industry best practices that lead to superior performance. Milwaukee, Wis: Quality Press; Quality Resources, 1989., 2013. (**Content marketing**)