How to Make a Business Visible Online

Online Visibility Plan for a start-up X

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Kuluttajat ovat siirtyneet viimeisen 20 vuoden aikana internetin käyttöön, minkä vuoksi markkinointi on muuttunut perinteisestä massamediasta markkinointiin internetissä. Tänä päivänä, internetistä on muodostunut kaikkien aikojen suurin markkinointialusta. Yrityksille internet-markkinoinnissa piilee monia mahdollisuuksia, sillä se mahdollistaa kaksisuuntaisen dialogin yrityksen ja asiakkaiden välillä, sekä antaa markkinoijien tavoittaa suuria määriä kuluttajia reaaliajassa.

Tässä opinnäytetyössä tarkoituksena on ymmärtää näitä olemassa olevia internet-markkinoinnin mahdollisuuksia. Jotta voidaan selvittää, kuinka niitä voi hyödyntää yrityksen liiketoiminnassa, tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on tuottaa toimintasuunnitelma aloittelevalle tapahtumajärjestykseen keskittyneelle yritykselle. Testaamalla ja arvioimalla teoriaa käytännön kautta voidaan saada tarkempia tuloksia ja vastauksia. Jotta voidaan muuttaa case-yrityksen nykyistä tilannetta, tässä työssä käytetään tutkimuksellista otetta, kohtaamalla käytännön tilanteet systemaattisesti teoreettisen ja perustellun tiedon avulla.

Aloittelevalle yritykselle kysymykseen "kuinka saada yritys näkyville verkossa" on vastattava ensin. Tutkimusongelmaa lähdetään käsittelemään ensin teorian avulla, käsitteellistämällä internet-markkinointi 2000-luvulla, ja sitten verkkonäkyvyyssuunnitelmalla case-yritykselle, perustuen aiempaan kirjallisuuteen ja valittuihin paloihin markkinoinnin teoriasta, alan ammattilaisten lausunnoista sekä kilpailijoiden toiminnasta.

Internetin tuomien mahdollisuuksien hyödyntäminen, sekä niiden käyttöönotto case-yrityksessä on tuottanut positiivisia tuloksia verkkonäkyvyyttä, myynnin kasvua ja yhteydenottoja koskien. Yhdistämällä tehokkaasti hakukoneoptimoinnin, sosiaalisen median, ja sisällön tuotannon, voidaan vaikuttavasti täyttää kuluttajien muuttuneet odotukset koskien vaivatonta tiedon löytämistä, kuluttamista, sekä netissä jakamista.

Avainsanat	Internet-markkinointi, kehittämissuunnitelma, verkkonäkyvyys, hakukoneoptimointi, sosiaalinen media, sisältömarkkinointi
Sivut	45 sivua, joista lähteitä 5 sivua

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ABSTRACT

As consumers have moved their presence to the internet, marketing has changed over the past 20 years from traditional mass media to online marketing. Today, half of our global population are internet users, which has made the internet the biggest existing marketing platform. There are many possibilities hiding in online marketing for businesses, as it enables a two-way dialogue between companies and their customers, and gives marketers a possibility to reach masses of people in real time.

In this thesis the aim is to get an understanding of these existing possibilities of online marketing for businesses. To figure out how a business can take advantage of them, the goal of this thesis is to produce an online visibility plan for an event planning start-up. This enables testing and evaluating the theory in practice to get more accurate results. Research based development is used in this thesis to change the current situation of the case company, by systematically answering questions and problems with theoretical and justifiable information.

For a start-up business, the question to be answered first is "how to make a business visible online". This problem is approached from two perspectives, first with theory by conceptualizing online marketing in the 21st century, and then with an online visibility plan for the case company, based on previous literature and best practices from marketing theories, influencers and competitors. In the end, the findings are analyzed to get an idea on how to increase business online visibility.

Taking business advantage of the internet and implementing the online marketing best practices to the case company have resulted positively regarding online visibility and the increase of sales and inquiries. With effectively integrating search engine optimization (SEO), social media and content actions, one can efficiently fulfill the new customer expectations for ease of discovery, consumption and sharing online.

Keywords online marketing, development plan, online visibility, increasing engagement, SEO, social media, content marketing

Pages 45 pages including references 5 pages

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The world has witnessed a vast growth of technology, social media and the online world since the internet was born in the 1990s. As most of the consumers have slowly but surely shifted their presence to the internet in the past 20 years, their way of seeing the world, feeling connected and making purchases has changed.

From the beginning of the internet, businesses have taken advantage of its laying possibilities. Since then, traditional one-way mass media has been replaced with online marketing, also referred as internet marketing, or online advertising. Today, in 2016, half of our global population are internet users, which has made the internet the biggest marketing platform existing. There are many possibilities hiding in online marketing, as it enables a two-way dialogue between companies and their customers and gives marketers a possibility to reach masses of people in real time.

Unfortunately, some companies could not adapt to the digital change. For example, magazines went horribly down in flames in 2007, as they watched print readership decrease and the number of online readers go up. Still they didn't provide new business formulas to meet the new customer needs, leading to massive losses in readership and cuts in staff. Already in 2008, subscriber numbers went down in Time (-17.57%), Playboy (-10.04%) and Glamour (-13.24%). (Harden & Heyman, 2009, 5.)

In 2016, there are companies who not only survived the change, they led it forward even faster. These companies were able to adapt to consumers' new needs, behaviors, and expectations brought by the internet. For example, Google was born over 20 years ago, and already in 2012, over 90% of people using the internet worldwide relied on search engines to find information online. About 83% of them uses Google as a search engine. (BlueHost 2012) Facebook today is ten times larger than the biggest TV channel on the planet (Jan Rezab 2015).

The author has made 3 development plans for companies in her 2 year marketing career, and has noticed a need for *how* to improve online actions, instead of *what* to improve online. Considering the needs of entrepreneurs, in this thesis the author looks for the possibilities laying in online marketing based in theory, answering the *what* to improve, and then tests them in practice in her own company, in order to figure out *how* can the possibilities be turned for business advantage. As the case company is a start-up with no office, no online visibility, and their target group is mainly 20-30 year-old digital natives who are tourists and newcomers in Barcelona, the case company can survive and thrive in a competitive field only if they have good online visibility. As the case company's goal is to be a full-scale event planning business in the near future, they have to be able to

reach their full potential target group first. The case company thinks that this will happen by being visible on Google and social media with specific search words, and by producing engaging and quality content. Considering this, this thesis aims to answer "how to increase online visibility", by using a research based development plan as a research type. This means that the theoretical knowledge is supporting the goals arising from real-life problems and questions, but the practical goals are leading the information provided.

2 AIMS AND METHODS

To fully understand the possibilities of the online world for businesses, and to improve the case company's current online situation in practice, a research based development plan will be carried out. This is usually done when questions and problems arise from practical, real-life situations that need answering. Where basic research aims to build theory, applied research like this thesis solves these previously mentioned specific, practical problems by using the theoretical information as a supporting help. This way a research based development plan combines practical development actions with theoretical approach, but the practical problems and questions are leading the information provided in order to reach for change. (Rantanen, T. & Toikko, T. 2009, 14-19.)

As the case-company is an event planning start-up which aims to be visible online, the main research question in this thesis is:

- How to make a start-up business visible online?

Basic research would only answer to *what* and *why*, but with a research based development approach the *how*-questions can also be addressed (Rantanen & Toikko 2009, 19). As online visibility shortly means that as many people as possible are seeing and getting to know your company online, a tool is needed to reach these people. This tool is online marketing, which in a nutshell means everything that a business does online to catch the attention of potential customers. Considering this, to answer the main research questions, the supporting questions are addressed as well:

- What is online marketing in the 21st century?
- How to implement online marketing in practice to use internet for business advantage?

As the figure one shows, the primary research question, "How to make a business visible online", will be addressed from two complementary per-
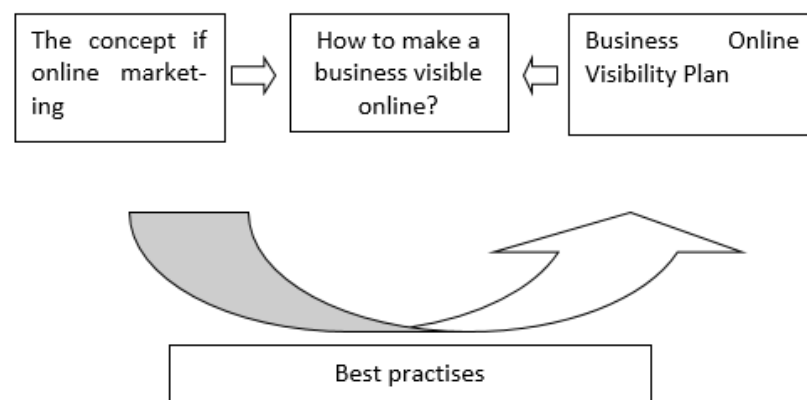

Figure 1: The structure of the thesis

spectives. In the first phase, online marketing in the 21st century is conceptualized based on theory. In the second phase, the research question will be answered with an online visibility plan for the author's own company, based on literature and the best practices from marketing theories, influencers, and competitors.

On a bigger scale, the structure of this thesis can also be described with a common structure to a research based development plan. First in this thesis, online marketing is addressed and the theory works as a base of the whole work. From the theory on online marketing, the suitable parts will be chosen considering the case company's starting point and needs. Then, one-by-one, the specific parts of online marketing will be addressed more deeply in the online visibility plan and immediately put to practice. After, the results will be analyzed to give a direction to the next piece of theory and part of the online visibility plan. This way, this thesis has a typical systematic process for a research based development plan. It is often described as a spiral model (Rantanen & Toikko 2009, 66-67), see figure 2. The spiral model works in continuous cycles, where in this case, on part of online marketing will be addressed and planned first, like in the first part in the figure two. Then the theory will be put to practice and after evaluated, in order to build the next "cycle" on top of the knowledge of the previous one. There are many benefits with testing and analyzing the theory in practice, and building always the second phase on top of the previous learnings. Not only are the results more accurate and useful for the case company, when tackling the practical problems immediately on the way, but this development plan could easily be continued as a second study as well.
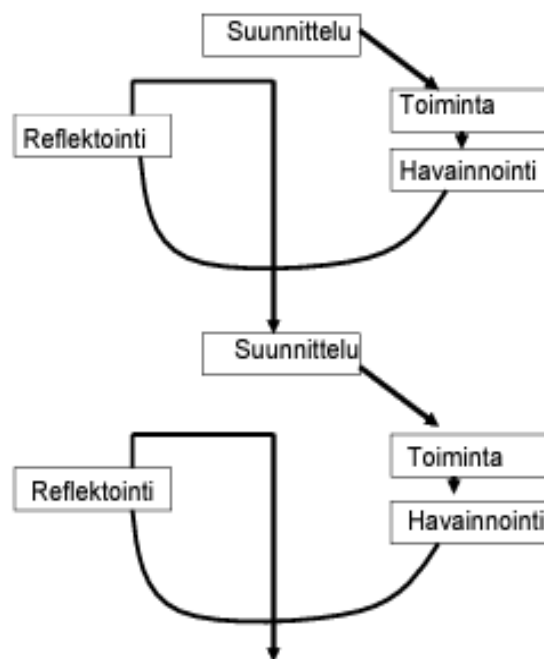

Figure 2: Rantanen & Toikko. 2009. Toimintatutkimuksen spiraalimalli. Tutkimuksellinen kehitystoiminta. Tampere University Press.

The key to a successful marketing plan is to start with a structure to research and analyzing the company's current situation. According to Wynne (2012, 3) the basic digital marketing strategy template includes:

1. Situation analysis
2. Audience
3. Channels
4. Objectives
5. Action plan
6. Budget
7. Measurement

Based on Wynne's suggestions and other previous studies, the online visibility plan in this thesis will be carried out on the foundations of Wynne's 7-stage structure. A SWOT and competitors are introduced in the beginning to give an understanding of the decisions made for the case company. After, in every stage of the online visibility plan, specific theories will be presented and after, the best practises are implemented to practise. Every stage builds up from the latter one, like in the spiral model.

3   ONLINE MARKETING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

"Marketer's new biggest goal has become to create customer satisfaction."
– James Coyle

The population of our planet in 2016 is reaching 7 and a half billion people, and as the figure 2 states, from which almost 50% are internet users (Internet Live Stats, 2016). By 2017, there will be more internet traffic than all prior internet years combined. 40% of global internet users, or more than 1 billion people, have bought products or goods online. 4 out of 5 consumers use a Smartphone to shop and 40% of shoppers consult 3 or more online channels in the shopping process before making a purchase. (Internet Stats & Facts for 2016, 2016.)

Internet has changed the behavior of people and that way the world of marketing. The internet has opened many new ways for marketers to identify, and persuade customers. As internet allows marketers to reach masses of people in real time, it makes advertising more affordable, efficient, effective, and full of more opportunities than ever. (Coyle, James R. 2002.)

And this is what online marketing, also referred as internet marketing or online advertising, is about. It refers to any tool, strategy, or method of getting the company name out to the public on the internet. The figure three introduces types of online marketing. These types can take many different forms, and some strategies focus on subtle messages rather than clear-cut advertisements. (What is Online Marketing, 2013)
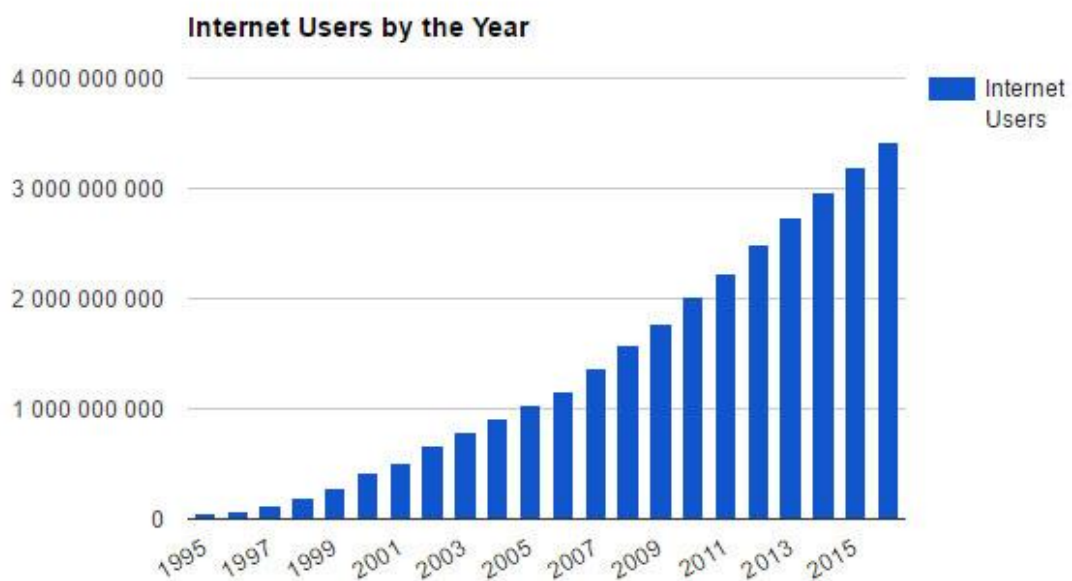

Figure 3: Internet live stats. Internet users. Referenced 15.11.2016. http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/

The difference between the traditional, one-way interruption marketing, and online marketing is that through smartphones, laptops, iPads and even smart watches, the internet is accessible for the consumer everywhere, all the time (Coyle 2002, x-xiii). This provides companies the possibility for two-way dialogue with the customers and will bring the customers closer to the company (Heikkinen 2015). But as the amount of information online is unimaginable, consumers have the power, and the difficulty, of choice. Consumers are definitely taking advantage of their new power and freedom created by the internet, for example by spending more money to satisfy their immediate needs. Primarily, the power of word-of-mouth marketing is bigger than ever. When there is too much information, consumers are trusting their friends' recommendations, shares and reviews more than ever. Marketers can harness this powerful phenomenon by giving consumers the ability to share. This said, marketer's new biggest goal has become to create customer satisfaction, which could also be called engagement. (Coyle 2002, x-xiii.)

With engagement, potential prospects are turned to customers, customers to loyal consumers and loyal consumers to brand advocates. Customers tend to engage with brands they like, understand, value, and they feel connected to. If website visitors find the brand unclear, same as competitors', untrustworthy, or irrelevant to their needs, the brand is probably not receiving high levels of engagement. (Mamta 2012.)

Figure 4: Mamta Paul. Types of online marketing. References 16.10.2016.http://du-rofy.com/types-of-online-marketing/

The figure four shows all the sub-categories of online marketing. From all the online marketing types presented in the figure four, there are three main ones what comes to those more subtle messages and creating engagement online. These three types of online marketing are social media, search engine optimization (later SEO) and content marketing. In addition to engaging and being subtle in marketing, having limited resources as a start-up calls for content, optimization and clever social promotion. (Odden 2012, 158.)

Littering the internet with random keywords, status updates, far-fetched blog posts or tweets alone is not engagement, and it certainly does not create the kind of experience that the customers are looking for in order to buy, be loyal, or advocate (Odden 2012, 12). That said, to take control of overall business online actions and effectively building online visibility, a marketing plan needs to be carried out – as the common saying goes, "planning is half of the work".

In the next chapter, the three types of online marketing, which are social media, search engine optimization, and content marketing will be introduced and implemented to practise one by one. As social media is not a new concept for the author nor the audience, it will only be introduced lightly and mainly put to test in practice in order to share the best practices found with others. The main weight on this work instead, is on search engine optimization, which is a deeper and more technical knowledge on how to be visible online.

4 ONLINE VISIBILITY PLAN FOR THE CASE COMPANY

4.1 Background & Preplan

"It's pretty difficult to score if you don't have goals." – Odden Lee

In this part the goal is to understand and evaluate the company's current situation – the point where everything starts. The case company started the business with only promoting other events and nightclubs with word-of-mouth and friends – the case startup had no online visibility whatso-ever. In the beginning of this thesis, the case company had only a freshly set up Facebook page. They are aiming to be a full-scale event planning business next summer, but to go there, they have to be able to reach their target group and all the potential customers.

4.1.1 Goals & Targets

According to Odden, (2012, 44.) before deciding online marketing goals, the first step is to think about how they can support the company's bigger picture, that is, the overall business goals. Such as:

- Elevate brand perception
- Establish thought leadership
- Drive customer engagement
- Provide better customer service
- Increase customer retention
- Build a bigger referral network

The next step is to understand the current performance and efforts to acquire and retain customers online. Online marketing plan that includes SEO, social media and content marketing also has to include key performance indicators, which are measurable values to know how the key objectives are being reached. (Odden, 2012, 42.) For example:

- Search visibility
- Social mentions
- Web page links
- Social shares
- Social links
- Visitors on website or other channels
- Blog, newsletter or channel subscribers, fans, friends or followers
- Comments and other types of engagement

Now, to tie marketing goals to overall business goals, it is important to look at each business goal, wheter its focus is on revenue, retention or service and then decide how that translates to online actions. The online goals may be split in categories, like engagement, revenue and cost saving goals.

Odden (2012, 43) continues by stating that alltogether, measurable marketing goals typically include:

- Fulfillment downloads
- Webinar or other online event participation
- Inquiries
- Leads
- Sales
- Referrals
- Brand advocacy

Whatever the goal is, identifying them and the steps to reach them is essential for success. These online goals do not have to be separate from each other. They can work together to achieve even a greater effect on the ability for company to attract, engage and inspire customers to action. (Odden, 2012, 39-41.)

Success to the case company at the moment looks like free seats in the events always taken and mainly, to be able to sell VIP tables and tickets. The goal is to attract new customers and online, this happens by being findable from Google and several online channels. After the customer finds the case company, quality content must be produced in order to customers choose the case company over the competitors. The second phase is to make customer service less time consuming and still efficient and relevant to the customer so that they would stay. As a starting business, it is seen really important to have consistency in everything published and done for sakes of better branding. The case company's overall business goals are:

- Acquiring new customers
- Keeping them with great content and effective customer service
- Drive customer engagement
- Build bigger referral network
- Brand Building
- Having a growing fan base at all times

Case company's online goals
- Being easily findable from Google and social media channels (on specific search terms)
- Information rich website with frequently asked questions where we can share content to other channels
- Consistency on content (what, where, who, how)

Measurable goals for the case company:
- 200 likes on Facebook in the end of the year
- 400 likes on Facebook in the beginning of summer 2017
- 50 Instagram followers in the end of this year

- All free VIP invitations always taken in our events (there's an online booking)
- Post a blogpost once a week
- Get 2 new inquiries per week
- Get us tagged and shared in social media once a week
- Engagement rate 10%
- Reach organically 200 hundred people with every post

4.1.2 SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis is a calculated way to plan and evaluate your businesses strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats in the environment. Before making any business decisions, analyzing the factors influencing them is one of the first steps to success. (Cherunilam & Francis 2009, 10.)

Figure 5: SWOT analysis of the case company's online visibility

Strenghts of the case company's online situation are first of all the owners, young digital natives, who have grown up online, and so are already familiar with different channels, concepts and user behavior. Both owners also have experience in marketing, so producing content is efficient. Owners also speak altogether 5 languages, which in tourist rich Barcelona means they can reach more people and there is never a language wall. Marketing online is really affordable which makes it one of the main strengths of being online as a startup.

Weaknesses are a part of being a startup – limited budget and limited time to put on the company's business as it is not the owner's fulltime job yet.

Opportunities are laying in the case company's really online-active target group and the vast amount of tourists in Barcelona. This means the possibility of potentially reaching huge amounts of people. As the company is targeting girls who are looking for friends, there's a possibility of creating an emotional connection after a while so the girls would stay with the case company's business. As nowadays marketing automation is possible within planning and scheduling posts, using frequently asked questions online so

less time is spent on customer service and with the possibility of tracking your successes and mistakes makes marketing nowadays easier for businesses. The case company has an opportunity to be findable on Google with its company name, Girls' Night Out Barcelona.

The amount of tourists in Barcelona is a threat in addition to being an opportunity – the continually changing people and the case company's target group in Barcelona makes it time consuming to find new customers on daily basis and then keeping them engaged in the channels. Another threat are the multiple competitors, who are 5 years or more ahead of the case company with building a solid online base.

4.1.3 Competitors

Long before an army goes into a battle, information about the opposing threat is being collected and analyzed. The outcome is potentially much more advantageous when the enemy is familiar. In the online world, competition comes in several forms, like search results, advertisements, social recommendations, digital assets and links – anything that catches the customer's attention away from the company's content. (Odden, 2012, 25-27.)

The case company's competitors in Barcelona are companies promoting elegant events and clubs. They have been in the field for so long that they are maybe 5 years ahead in SEO technics and creating unique content. That's why is essential for a starting business like the event planning startup, to find the weaknesses in order to fight for customers. In the figure 6 the case company's 3 toughest competitors and bullet points of their online actions are presented.
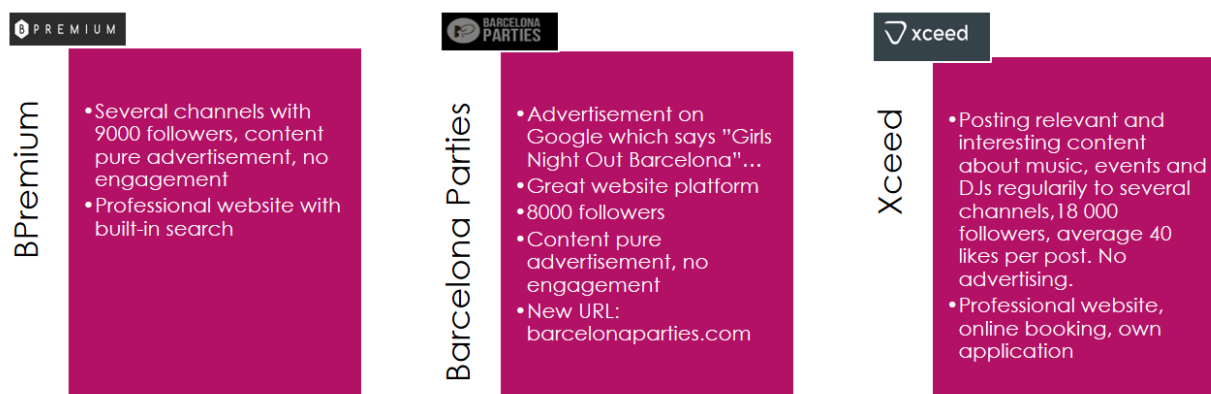
BPremium
- Several channels with 9000 followers, content pure advertisement, no engagement
- Professional website with built-in search

Barcelona Parties
- Advertisement on Google which says "Girls Night Out Barcelona"...
- Great website platform
- 8000 followers
- Content pure advertisement, no engagement
- New URL: barcelonaparties.com

Xceed
- Posting relevant and interesting content about music, events and DJs regularly to several channels, 18 000 followers, average 40 likes per post. No advertising.
- Professional website, online booking, own application

Figure 6: TOP 3 competitors of the case company

The competition is tough between the multiple competitors in Barcelona. The competitors are other big promoters or event organisers targeting young women and students in Barcelona. Most of the competitors have professional, video and picture rich website platforms, with built-in search tools, blogs, and a lot of content. Most of them are findable in several channels, like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and some of them have

even their own applications for smartphones with event feeds. Most of the case company's competitors don't speak English so the language on the websites is poor and might create mistrust.

Even though they all have thousands of followers, the engagement rate is low, only from 0 to 5% which means their audience is not active. This could mean that the audience is either bought or the content is not interesting, relevant and unique enough. The case company's competitor Xceed was the only one with great content and high engagement. Their content was not advertising materials and promotional videos. It was fresh news from the field, presentation of artists, memes, quotes and first of all, community building with discussions and memorable and shareable content.

4.2   Target group

"Everyone is not your customer" – Seth Godin

After knowing the starting point, the customer who starts as a visitor should be understood and evaluated. A clear understanding of the customer will impact all aspects of online visibility, starting from channels and content, all the way down to the tiniest words and expressions used in all the marketing efforts later on. (Wynne 2012, 4.)

Working with personas and organizing common characteristics into a customer profile will help to develop a more relevant and effective approach (Odden, 2012, 66). Creating a persona with location, human needs and behavior will help recognizing the company's dream customer, visitor or a client. In addition to the latter, one can figure out what they do and where they go online to make purchases and decisions. The goal is that when someone sees a ready made persona profile, they must feel like they have met someone real. It is recommended to start creating your dream persona by dividing them for example in the following segments (Wynne 2012, 5-6):

- Age
- Education level
- Income
- Personality
- Relationship status
- Products they buy
- Publications they read
- Where they network, such as Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook

In the beginning as a startup, it is common that a company does not have too much information about their dream customers yet. To collect more data for personas, here are some examples of data sources that can be used. (Odden 2012, 71-73.)

- Surveys of existing customers, prospects and frontline employees
- Web analytics and conversion data
- Social media listening and monitoring tools
- Demographic information from Alexa, Quantcast or DoubleClick Ad Planner
- Blog engagement information from PostRank
- Overall user information from services like Fliptop

The case company's primarily target group is women, digital natives aged 20-30, who are studying or freshly moved to Barcelona. These groups are always looking for friends and something to do. The target group was niched to girls only, because the clubs, events and other places that are promoted and organized, are mostly targeted for girls. Case company also

believes that targeting girls only will make branding and community build-ing is easier.

Scandinavian girls are being targeted for language reasons until case com-pany's website will be in Russian, Spanish and French in addition to English and Finnish. As the nature of the events and clubs promoted are high-end and luxurious-feeling, the dream customer would have manners and a sense of style. Case copany's dream customer is an open-minded traveler, active and a cultural loving socialista who likes to hang out in social media.

In 2016, 68.3 percent of internet users are also using social media. That is 2.34 billion global social media users. The figure seven introduces active users in top 10 social platforms by age to get a deeper idea where the users are spending their time. (Statista 2016.)

The figure nine demonstrates the amount of global monthly active users for top 7 social platforms. The most important thing to note from the figure is that with 1.49 billion users, Facebook itself has more monthly active us-ers than WhatsApp (500 million), Twitter (284 million) and Instagram (200 million)—combined. (Stanley 2016.) Still, teens and young adult users have ranked these channels in the figure 9 "the most important ones" for them in a study, with Instagram 39%, Twitter 24%, Facebook 14%, Snapchat 13% and Tumblr 4%. (Stanley 2016.)
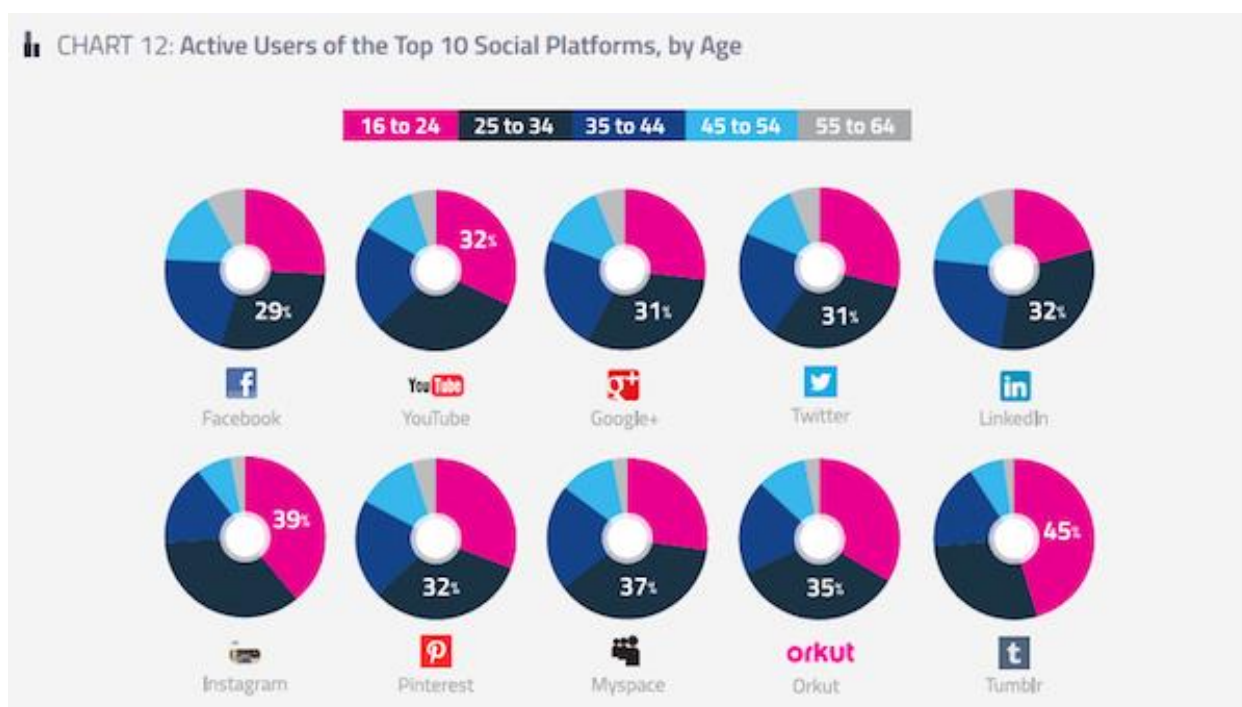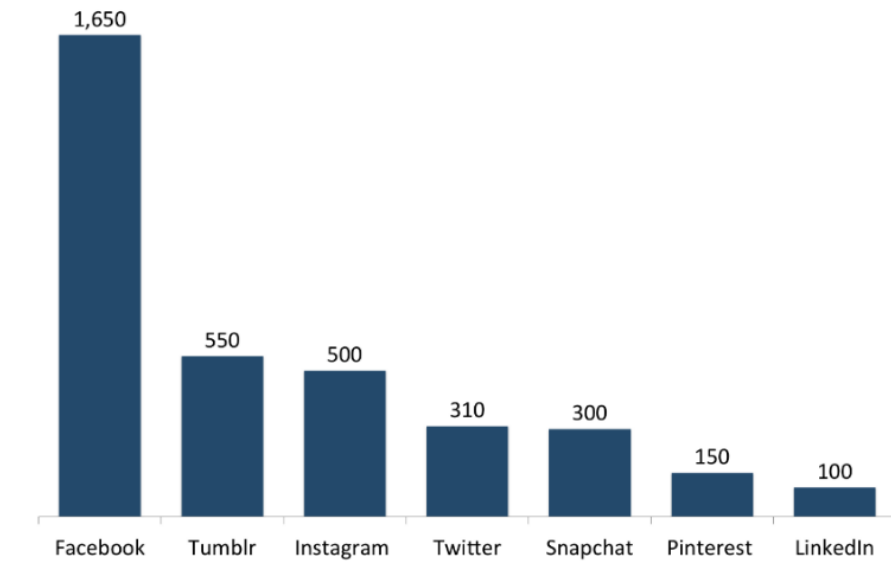

Figure 7: Global Web Index. Active users of the Top 10 Social Platforms, by Age. Referenced 20.7.2016. http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/304927/file-462418234-pdf/Content_Market-ing/GWI_Social_January_2014_Summary.pdf?submissionGuid=f790bb19-0d98-4796-9a56-84a465d6460b

**Global Monthly Active Users For Top Social Platforms**
2016, Millions

Source: Company Releases, BI Intelligence Estimates

BI INTELLIGENCE

Figure 9: Business Insider. Global monthly active users on top social platforms. Referenced 20.7.2016. http://www.businessinsider.com/social-media-engagement-statistics-2013-12?IR=T

After all, there's basically two forces leading social media. According to many studies, Facebook and Instagram are dominating the social networking landscape by active users, engagement and the time spent on the channels. Considering the popularity and users in all of these channels, Facebook has been chosen to be the case company's main channel. It is also ideal for easily planning and promoting events. The supporting channels in the beginning are Instagram and Snapchat. In the next chapter, these three channels will be introduced to get a deeper idea on how they work and how to use them for business advantage. From the figure 8, the idea of Facebook and Instagram, the most popular social sharing sites, can be already figured out.
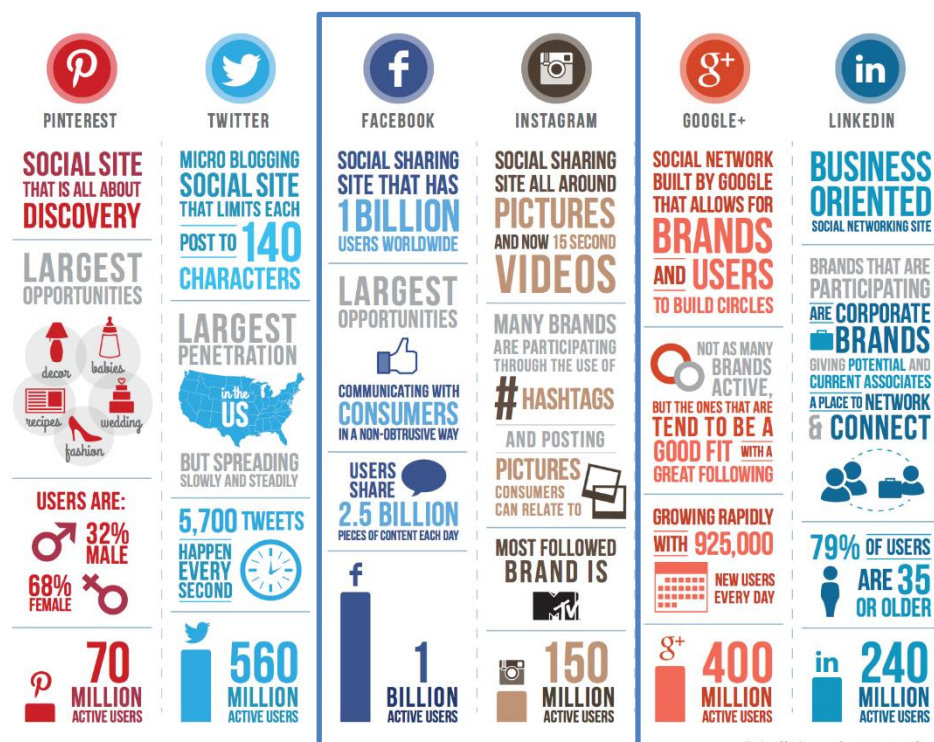
Figure 8: Precision Marketing Group. Choosing social media channels for your business. Referenced 16.7.2016. https://www.precisionmarketinggroup.com/blog/choosing-social-media-channels-for-your-business

4.3   Channels

"Facebook is 10x larger than the biggest TV channel on the planet." – Jan Resab

40% of shoppers consult 3 or more channels in the shopping process before making a purchase. That is a huge increase from 10% in 2002 and this shows the importance of having online presence not only in one place, but in as many places as possible. (Internet Stats & Facts for 2016, 2016.)

Consulting social media channels to decide what to shop is not the only reason why they are so popular. Customers connect with brands on social networks because (Odden 2012, 162):
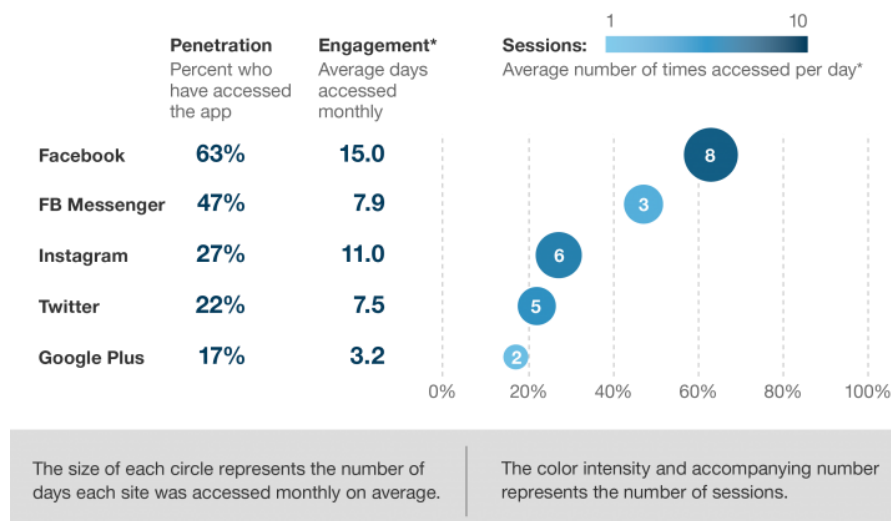
- They are looking for deals or discounts
- They love the brand and want to follow it
- They want to keep up with brand news
- They noticed someone else following the brand/company
- Others have recommended it
- It was mentioned in an article
- They have professional interest
- The company's posts are entertaining

Social networks can create awareness, build brand confidence and influence purchase, referrals and advocacy. For effective online marketing, it is important to promote a diversity of content which is suitable for the target audience, across the channels. (Odden 2012, 40, 130.)

4.3.1   Facebook

On average, 1.18 billion people log onto Facebook daily, which represents a 17% increase year over year. The idea of Facebook is to give people the power to share, connect with like-minded and make the world more open and connected. (Facebook Newsroom 2016.) Facebook is highly engaging, as the figure ten suggests that Facebook dominates the social landscape with young adults using it 8 times per day on average, compared to 2-6 times on other channels like Google Plus or Instagram.

Figure 10: Smart Insights. Facebook dominates the social landscape. Referenced 5.9.2016.
http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-
social-media-research/attachment/12d969c8-2608-4bb0-bb7d-75b796848d0f-1/

The benefits of Facebook for business are countless. It makes reaching a specific target group with basically no money possible. One can also use free insights to know more about page visitors, engagement, and post performances to get even more information about the audience. (Scott Ayres 2015.)

Odden (2012, 165) describes that Facebook is giving companies an opportunity to:

- Facilitate one-to-one, one-to-many or many-to-many conversations
- Build connections and relationships with individuals
- Listen to what brand fans are interested in
- Create and cross-promote shareable content
- Offer promotions and special offers
- Interact with current and potential customers

4.3.2   Instagram

30% of internet users are now on Instagram (Global Web Index 2015), so it has now 400 million active users, from which 75% are outside of US (Smith 2016). Over 60% of users log in daily, making it the second most engaged network after Facebook (Mander 2015). 90 percent of Instagram users are younger than 35 (Science Daily 2015). It is good to note that what the latest study by Elliot (2014) found that Instagram content generates 58 times more engagement per follower than Facebook, and 120 times more than Twitter.

For businesses, Instagram is about showcasing your business story in a rich visual context (Facebook Business 2016). Instagram is a photo and video sharing platform, with a goal to let users experience their friends', idols' and favorite brands' moments in real time. At Instagram, they believe in a more connected world through photos. (Instagram 2016.)

This visuality works, as humans are highly visual creatures. According to Jonathan Long (2016), people remember 80% of what they see, 20% of what they read and 10% of what they hear. It took quite long to read the sentence and understand it, right? Here's why:
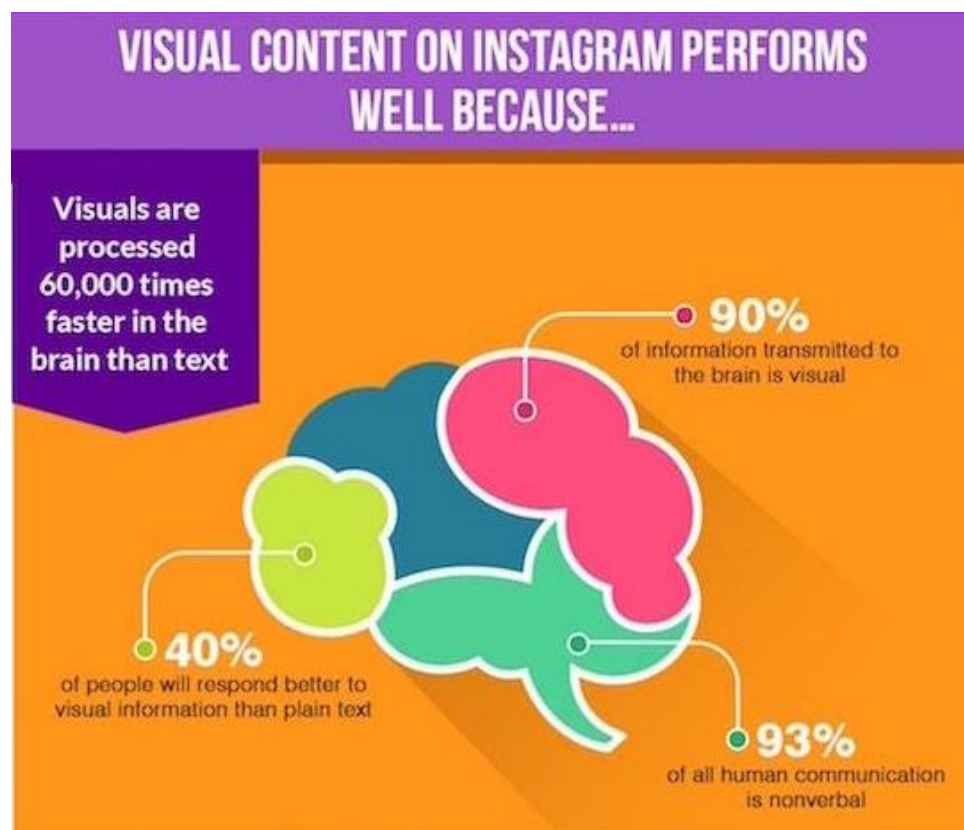

Figure 11. The Huffington Post. The Benefits of Marketing Your Business on Instagram (Infographic). Referenced 20.8.2016. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jonathan-long/the-benefits-of-marketing_b_11154342.html

Scholl (2015) describes that, on Instagram, in addition to beautiful pictures, businesses can attract user attention with:

- catchy texts below their photos
- arranging competitions
- adding a short description to profiles
- share unique promo codes for followers
- promote coming events and sales, and so much more.

Unique features that make this platform so highly engaging, are for example hastags, which are like little keywords on Instagram and it is studied that post with at least one hastag gain 12.6% more engagement. Posts that have a geotag, a location where the photo is taken, together with hastags in them, get 41 likes in average which is 10% more than the average likes per any photo. Posts that include another "@mention" gain 56% more engagement. (Simply Measured 2014.)

4.3.3 Snapchat

Snapchat has 100 million active users with 400 million snaps sent every day. and 70% of its users are female versus 30% male from which the core users are 13-24 year-olds. Over 150 million people now use Snapchat to watch 10 billion videos every day. (Freier 2015.) For a savvy social media marketer, that should read as 10 billion daily opportunities to build awareness of your brand (Parker 2016). Like visualized in the picture 1, the biggest opportunity for a startup laying in Snapchat is that only 1% of advertisers are currently using it. Compare to almost all of the marketers being in Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.
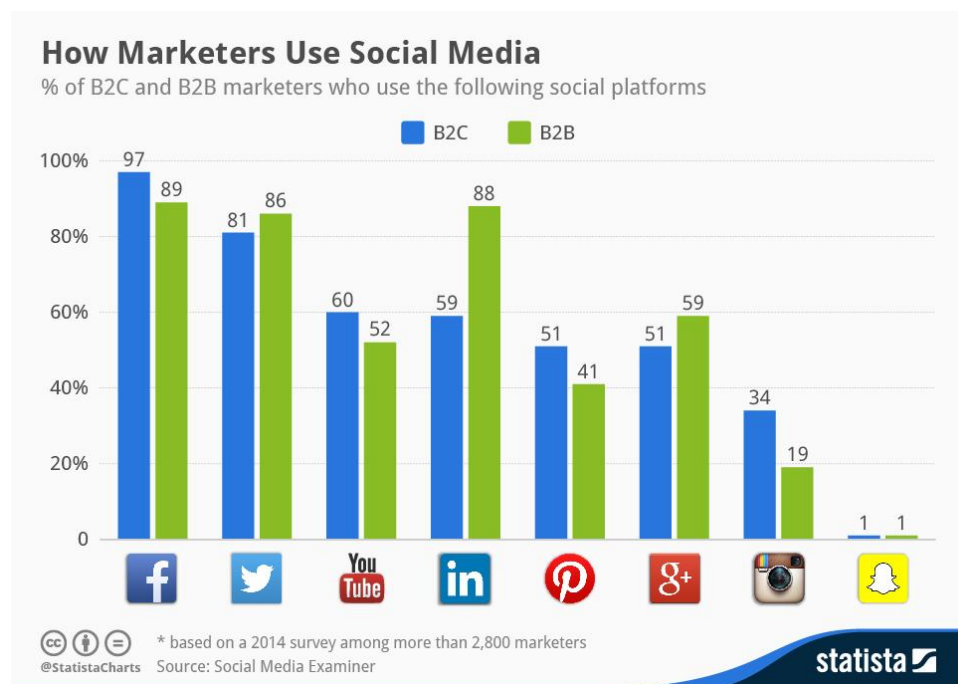
Picture 1: Statista. How Marketers Use Social Media. Referenced 22.11.2016. https://www.statista.com/chart/2289/how-marketers-use-social-media/

According to Buidon (2016), 13 to 34-year-olds love Snapchat because of three factors:

- **Perspective.** Snaps provide users and their friends a more personal way to show how they see the world.
- **Real-time stories**. Snapchat stories are raw, updated in real-time, and can only be viewed within 24 hours.
- **Self-expression**. Through snaps, users can show the world who they are in the exact moment.

A person or brand on Snapchat can send photos and videos—called Snaps—to their friends and followers. These Snaps can then be viewed for up to 10 seconds before they disappear. Colorful filters, face-swapping effects, messaging, and other unique and playful functions have made this app wildly successful among people of all ages. (Parker 2016.) Snapchat claims that its ads generated greater emotional response and twice as much intent to purchase. The idea of Snapchat is visual storytelling, like in

Instagram, but here is the catch: Snapchat Stories are images and short videos that last for 24 hours. Users tend to share the best stories with their friends regardless of origin, so businesses have the same opportunity as private persons to get shared and create buzz with creative stories. (Parker 2016.) Because of the temporary, Snapchat has a personal, exclusive, and a highly engaging vibe to it.

Buidon (2016) guides what you can give to your audience through Snapchat actions as a business:

- **Live event coverage**. Build audience participation before organizing an event and then give the audience a direct access to special events to keep them updated wherever they are.

- **Create buzz.** Tease the audience about new products or services to build curiosity and participation around them.

- **Keep content fun and engaging**. Considering the age of core Snapchatters, the content has to be appropriate for the general audience. Be professional, yet still fun and engaging. Be creative and give the type of entertainment the audience is looking for. Get inspiration from the Snaps of popular brands and personalities like CNN, CoverGirl, Amazon, BirchBox, MLS, Steve Aoki, and Food Network.

- **Give a sneak peek behind the scenes**. These creative storytelling Snaps help to create a more personal connection between the company, the brand, and the audience. This will help building a strong following. Give the audience a look at what goes inside the company behind the curtains such as normal work days, parties, or meetings.

- **Share Snaps on other social media**. Because Snapchat does not have a public feed like Instagram, it will be better to share screenshots of Snaps to other pre-existing social media accounts to build up the audience. If something exciting is happening in the company, the followers can be informed on other channels and then encouraged to follow Snapchat to see more.

- **Host exclusive giveaways or offer incentives**. These classical types of offers can give real traffic and engagement. A company can offer promo codes, discount coupons, and other incentives and ask fans to view, like, share, retweet, or participate for a chance to win something big.

4.4 Search engine optimization

"Whatever can be searched, can be optimized." – Odden Lee

Over 90% of people using the internet rely on search engines to find information online. About 83% of people worldwide are using Google as a search engine. Over 94% of the people who use Google, only click results on the first page. 63% of these clikers click only the first top 3 results. These clickers are the best converting ones. (BlueHost 2012.)

Search engines use software programs, called spiders, bots or crawlers, to scan through every website that exists on the internet. These programs are picking up the tiniest details from the sites to provide a complex of links, pages, keywords, descriptions, pictures, and more. (Wynne 2012, 12.) This crawling effort of the spiders is meant to produce not only the right information for searchers when they are typing on Google, but also the best user experience (Odden 2012, 36).

Search engine optimization (later SEO), comes to help in in here. Like someone optimizes presentations and school tasks so that everyone would understand the subject's keypoints and ideas, SEO does the same by making a website searchable and browsable for search engines (Beck 2014). The picture 2 reflects how Google produces search results. The paid ads can be seen on the right side and on top of the page. Organic results are in the middle, after the marked, paid ones. SEO done right means that a website ranks high in organic results, maybe even the earlier mentioned top 3, in searches done by a potential customer (Heinonen 2016).
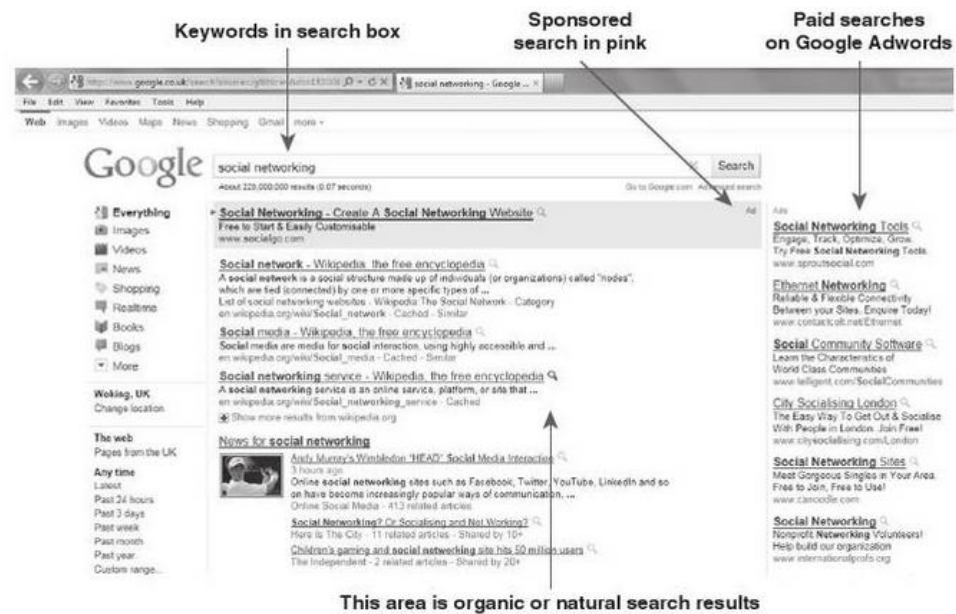

Picture 2: Paula Wynne. 2012. How Google produces search results.

In 2014 64% of all web traffic came from organic search, compared to 2% from social, 6% from paid search, 12% direct and 15% from other referral sources. There is even a name for this phenomenon, called 'Google's Golden Triangle'. From the picture 3, you can see Google's search page and how searchers eyes are catching a triangle shaped pattern on the screen when evaluating the search results. The Golden Triangle includes the top three organic search results. (Wynne, 2012, 16.) Considering these facts, in this thesis and action plan, the focus is only on organic results.

To get company's link to Google's Golden Triangle, the website must have some specific features and factors that the search engines' algorythms can scan and evaluate (Search Engine Land 2011). This is what SEO technically is about. As Ratcliff (2016) describes it, building a strong site architecture and providing clear navigation is important in order for search engines to crawl the site easily. SEO will more importantly provide visitors a better experience and encourage them to repeat visits, as they have found exactly what they were looking for (Ratcliff 2016).

These specific search engine friendly features and factors are normally put in two categories, technical on-page factors and promotional off-page actions. On-page factors are changeable on site, that happen behind the scenes from a customer. For example, deciding unique keywords, producing quality content and creating catchy titles to the site. Promotional off-page factors, few to mention, are link building and marketing in social media. (Ratcliff 2016.)
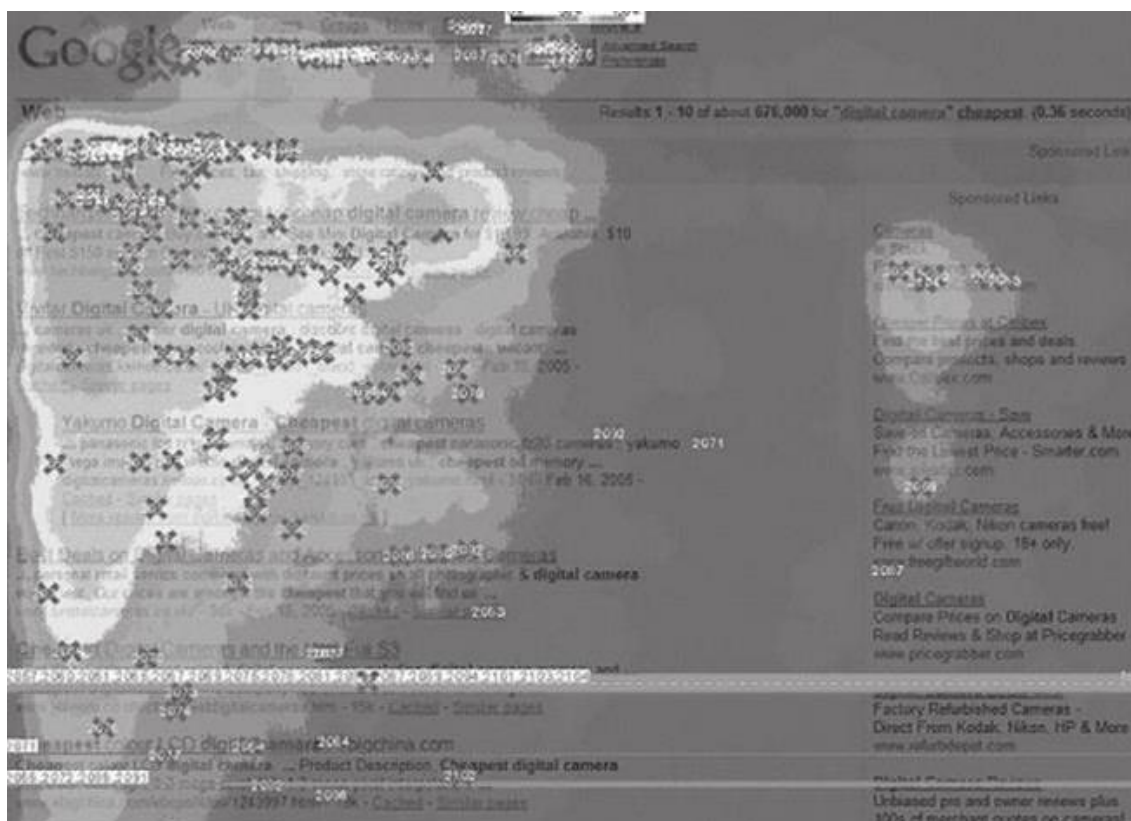
Picture 3: Paula Wynne. 2012. Golden Triangle.

As Odden (2012, 30-34) mentions in his book, optimizing as a whole can be done in several, mixed ways:

- Good (unique) keywords
- Linking your page to as many sites and channels as possible
- Content: quality, text, images
- Titles, descriptions, headlines
- Social signals
- Page speed

Search engine optimization can improve the visibility of all different types of documents and media, like website, images, video, webinars, infographics, PDF files, and Microsoft Office documents etc. A consistent approach to titling, creating content, image captions, video descriptions, and links will create confidence for the reader in the subject matter and inspire sales. By optimizing all the content, more indirect money will be made by having more candidates in the hiring pipeline, more customer service problems automatically solved online than in person, and more inquiries, leads and sales. Website's current traffic and performance can be reviewed with Google Analytics and the site's SEO readiness overviewed from a tool like Alexa Site Audit. (Odden 2012, 128-130.)

4.4.1   Keywords

Keywords are the most essential ingredient to ensure a site will be visible and indexed on search engines. They are the items search engines look for in order to rank your website – without them the site will not be found. Therefore planning them and using them effectively in your content is the uttermost important. (Wynne 2012, 26.)

In other words, keywords are words you want your site to rank for, when searchers start typing on Google. But instead of a business name, the potential customer will look for information, product or a service. That said, SEO is not about writing a company name everywhere, it is about the customers' search preferences. (Heinonen 2016.)

That is why everyone cannot be pleased. To build a search-engine friendly site, the first step is to research the unique and focused keywords to suit the site and customers (Wynne 2012, 20). Google AdWords Keyword tool in the figure 11 can help to clarify whether the assumptions about keyword phrases are on target in terms of popularity and competitiveness. It shows the amount of average monthly searches and competition for specific word or combinations of words. (Odden 2012, 28.)

Keyword ideas					About this data ⑦
+ Add keywords	Download ▼	Estimate search traffic		Sorted by Relevance ▼	Views ▼
☐ Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches	Local Search Trends	
☐ baseball cards		1,500,000	36		
☐ baseball card		823,000	36		
☐ buy baseball cards		6,600	-	-	
☐ selling baseball cards		4,400	-	-	
☐ sell baseball cards		14,800	-	-	
☐ topps baseball card		90,500	-	-	
☐ cheap baseball cards		1,900	-	-	
☐ topps baseball cards		165,000	-	-	
☐ baseball sports cards		450,000	-	-	
☐ baseball trading cards		22,200	-	-	
☐ sports cards		3,350,000	22		
☐ baseball trading card		8,100	-	-	
☐ naxcom		2,400	-	-	
☐ baseball trivia		18,100	-	-	
☐ baseball card boxes		9,900	-	-	
☐ vintage baseball cards		12,100	-	-	
☐ ichiro suzuki rookie card		720	-	-	
☐ upper deck u		4,400	-	-	
☐ baseball player		450,000	46		
☐ baseball players		301,000	28		
☐ signed baseball		135,000	-	-	
☐ chocolate baseball		2,400	-	-	
☐ world series baseball		165,000	28		
☐ baseball memorabilia		90,500	-	-	
☐ baseball candy		5,400	-	-	

(2) The Google AdWords Keyword Tool can help you find relevant keywords on your site and the volume of those keywords.

Figure 12: Google. Offer quality content and services. Referenced 12.12.2016. http://www.onlineseoana-lyzer.com/blog/files/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf

The more the decide keywords appear in the content the better. But do remember, as quoted from Dave Naylor, "my rule of thumb is to build a web for a user, not a spider." Too much focus on SEO but not content, and the readers will be confused, resulting to higher bounce rates and poor conversion rates. Too little focus on keywords mean that however good the content is, no one will find it. Great SEO implementation balances keyword usage with creative and interesting writing that educates, influences and inspires to action. (Odden 2012, 129.)

According to Heinonen (2016), after finding the unique and relevant keywords for the business and customers, it is essential that they appear in the content produced, for example in the following places:

- Text
- pictures
- URLs
- descriptions

- videos
- blogs
- headlines

4.4.2   Linking

Link building is important as search engines like Google trust websites with lots of high-quality links referring to the site (Wynne 2012, 10). The most valuable links for search engines come from sites that are trusted by their users, the industry they operate in, and other websites. Getting an authority site like this to link to a page is commonly seen as a vote of confidence. The more quality links, and the higher quality content produced, the more likely the site will become an authority too. The incoming links can be tracked with tools like Majestic SEO or Open Site Explorer. (Ratcliff 2016.)

In addition to incoming links, an easily navigable, clearly searchable site with relevant internal linking is needed. This keeps visitors on the webpage and hungry to explore further. In short, text used to link from one page to another should give the readers an idea of what they will find on the destination page. (Odden, 2012, 185.) Linking internally between pages on a site gives the audience further reading options. This can help to reduce bounce rate and strengthen the relevancy and authority of the site's links and pages. (Ratcliff 2016.)

Like any other link, domain name and page URLs (figure 12) should all be short and simple, from which users and search engines would already by a glance get the idea what the page is about without even opening the link (Heinonen 2016).
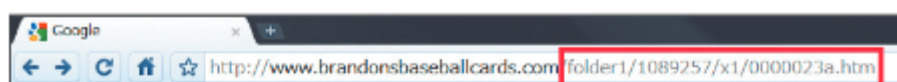
(1) A URL to a page on our baseball card site that a user might have a hard time with.

(2) The highlighted words above could inform a user or search engine what the target page is about before following the link.

Figure 13: Google. Improve the structure of your URLs. Referenced 12.12.2016. http://www.onlineseoanalyzer.com/blog/files/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf

4.4.3 Titles & descriptions

Page titles are easily findable and scannable by search engines and that is why they should immediately give the idea what the content under it is about, like in linking. Not only for the search engines, but the readers as well for better reading experience. Usually, a technically good title consists of 10-15 words with a keyword and your brand. (Odden 2012, 140.)

Each one of the website pages should have a description as well. It will appear to Google in search results under the title. In addition to a couple of keywords, it should have the keypoints of the content in a nutshell simply because the more compelling and relevant the description, the more likely it will inspire a click to the website. (Beck 2014.) You can see what Page URL, page title, metadescription, and keywords in bold mean in practice in the figure 13.

Figure 14: Google. Search results. Referenced 12.12.2016. http://www.onlineseoana-lyzer.com/blog/files/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf

4.4.4 Page speed

The faster a page loads, the faster Google bots can crawl the site. Considering the amount of content online that has to be crawled by search engines, the faster your site, the more efficient your website is to Google. More importantly, faster page loading gives better experience to the user. The page's speed can be checked for example with Google Page Speed Online. (Odden 2012, 185.) Steven (2016) announces that 40% of web users will abandon a website if it takes longer than 3 seconds to load, and even a single second delay in your website loading time can result in a 7% loss in conversion.

4.4.5 Text

Common content optimization can be applied to almost everything that a company publishes, ranging from web-pages to press releases and from e-books to newsletters. It is recommended to use at least 250 words in every page in order to make it rank well in searches and a person to think and see it is loaded with valuable information. Use exact keywords or keyword phrases about three to five times per 500 words, and remember not to bury the content too deep on a site. Like the first option in the figure 15, otherwise it might be difficult for search engines and people to conveniently find it. (Odden 2012, 132-134.)

Too deep: domainname.com/level1/level2/level3/level4/level5/level6/
Ideal: domainname.com/category1/page1.php

Figure 15: Lee Odden. Site architecture. Referenced 20.11.2016.

4.5   Content

"Content is not the king – it's the kindom" – anonymous

Everything a company publishes is content, like webinars, whitepapers, blogposts, guides, updates etc. As content is digital nowadays, digital is content. Content is the clue that binds digital marketing. (Yu 2015.)

As Moz (2016) gives perspective: for example, search engines and social media exists because of content. The SEO tricks about the linking, keywords etc. that was discussed in the previous chapter, is an attempt to guide Google's bots and Facebook to wrap their digital heads around the complexities of content they are indexing. Every link earned by every marketer points to a piece of content, and the keywords that people type into search engines are an attempt to find – yep – content. (Moz 2016.)

Content marketing is any use of that content to help meet a marketing goal for an organization. Usually the ultimate goal with content marketing is to build a permanent source of traffic, leads, and sales to a company. But as consumers have become numb with traditional one-way interruption marketing, content has stepped into a spotlight as it gives value before customer even gets into a purchase situation. (Heinonen, 2016.) As Odden (2012, 102) sums it, in the end, "the value of content goes beyond attracting leads and sales – to fostering good will, brand value and empowerment of fans to refer products and services they like to others".

According to Interact Media (2011), good content will:

1. Build a site into a trusted authority in the industry
2. Keep visitors coming back often and staying longer
3. Increase conversion rates

To be able to reach the points above, the first rule in content marketing is that it is never about the company, it is always about the consumer. Content has to be what the consumers are looking for, something that will make their lives easier. It has to be the solution to their problems and the answer to their questions - with an ease of discovery. (Intrapromote 2015.) Good content enables consumers to educate and entertain themselves before they make purchase decisions. Good content is anything that adds value to reader's lives, can continue to reinforce the brand and customer relationship, and inspire renewals, upgrades and referrals. These factors aren't "nice to haves" anymore, they're expected. (Odden 2012, 101.)

Previously in this thesis SEO was explained, and how effective organic results are better for reaching customers compared to paid ones, was addressed. Content marketing is the ultimate way to organically get more visibility and provide great user experience. All this basically means that

instead of paying for attention, with organic traffic one can draw and attract the users to a site. It is about making them want to see what the company is about. Content marketing is centered around creation, publishing and promotion and placing these regularly on your landing page (Interact Media 2011). This is what will be discussed further in the next chapter.

4.5.1 Consistency is the key

The two most important factors in good content are frequency and quality. Frequency, or regularity of content shows search engines and customers that a website is well maintained, and quality shows both that the information within is valuable. Producing good content consistently helps a company to establish itself as a thought leader in its industry, as people tend to associate consistency with credibility. (Heinonen 2016.)

It truly matters what you say, how you say it and when you say it, because every publishing of content is a new opportunity for people to find the company through search engines, social media and other people. As Gary V. argues, "your word is always your most valuable asset". Unfortunately, producing quality content is not as simple as littering the web with random updates or far-fetched blogposts - planning is always half of the work. (Interact Media 2011.) Different content calendars and tables are good for efficient planning and implementation of content. The goal of these calendars is to secure a steady stream of fresh content consistently into the future. They also ensure that the content is relevant and suits the needs of content producers, readers and advertisers. (Odden 2012, 103-106.)

For content marketing to be efficient, a lot of content must be produced – but not any type of it. In addition to previously mentioned regularity, good content is interesting, unique, relevant and helpful to your customers. (Interact Media 2011.) A good way to ensure these content factors exist in your company, is to start by finding a unique style with defining what the upcoming overall content consists of. This will make the overall content clear to the company, and this way to the customers as well. (Ylla 2016.) In the picture 4 the case company's content types, also referred as brand territories, are introduced as an example.

Picture 4: Brand territories of the case company

After you have the type of content decided, the can be scheduled, for example like the case company did in the picture 5.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Fresh pic collection of our own from one event, with our quests, to the event page.		**Quote or meme**	**Reviewor a testimonial** once a month	**Blogpost** ➢ Facebook ➢ Instagram	**Photo of the week** from our events (regram) to Instagram and share to Facebook

Kuva 5: A content calendar draft for the case company

The calendar can be done in monthly form as well to ensure the needed long-term regularity. If a company has many different channels, different labels, or no free time to put in planning, Hootsuite is a great tool for planning social media posts ahead.

Key message

When the content style and schedule are ready, it is time to think about business' key messages, the prime communicators of a brand. They are not used like keywords, to be memorized and used in word-for-word, but as guidelines of communication. (Heinonen 2016.) Their meaning is to have consistency in a brand throughout the company, channels and people. When thinking about the key messages, consider the company's mission, vision, values, positioning and statements. (Kent 2016.) It is important to get them right so the customers know exactly what the business is about. Everyone who comes in contact with the key messages decided, should be able to connect deeply with them. Dietz & Silverman (2013) continues by introducing the qualities of key messages:

- It's a full sentence, not a bullet point.
- It's a statement, not a question.
- It's concise and memorable.
- It's confined to one significant point.
- It's affirmative, not negative.

Case company's key messages as an example:
- GNO is an open-minded event planning business.
- GNO believes in the power of friends.
- GNO is an ambassador of equality and girlpower.
- Life is hard, we are adding a little sparkle.
- GNO provides customized fun for you.
- GNO applies Scandinavian work-ethics systematically for better customer experience.
- You might call it Girls Night Out, we call it therapy.

- GNO fosters a culture of friendship in all levels.

4.6 Analyzing and measuring

"What gets measured, gets managed." – Peter Drucker

It is now really important that the goals were set in the beginning so now there is something to analyze and measure. Some online results are difficult to measure as they are qualitative in addition to countable ones. Luckily, there are several ways of measuring online success, depending on the nature of the goals. By measuring efforts, the next marketing round for the future can be planned based on wiser decisions. (Heinonen, 2016.)

Success can be measured based on overall traffic or the quality of individual visits for example on a website. The numbers themselves do not mean much if they are lacking the context – the goals and objectives. For example, a website visitors may have increased in numbers but the time spent on the page per individual is short, so there is place for improving the quality of that traffic in terms of leads, sales and profitability. 10 people interested in a brand are much more valuable than 100 visitors who bounce off after few seconds. (Odden, 2012, 205-210.)

What needs to be measured depends now on the goals set in the beginning, but revenue, engagement, and cost savings can be considered the key areas when analyzing online success. The following are examples of these 3 types of key areas. (Odden, 2012, 202-203.)

Revenue goals:
- Speed of sales cycle
- Referrals
- Transaction value
- Conversions from the community
- New leads
- Cost per lead

Engagement goals:
- Members
- Posts
- Comments
- Inbound links
- Tags, votes, bookmarks, shares
- Post frequency
- referrals

Cost saving goals:
- account turnover
- employee turnover
- hiring and recruiting

- percent of issues revolved online

The easiest way to measure the return of investment of online actions is Google Analytics, HubSpot, Advanced Web Ranking, or other third party tools. Also many social media channels have their own measuring tools, like Facebook Insights, Twitter Analytics, LinkedIn business page statistics, Youtube Insights and Instagram's Iconosquare. (Heinonen, 2016.)

The case company's goals were engagement centered with an aim of getting new leads on the side, and spending less time in customer service. As Facebook is the case company's main channel, its performance was analyzed first with Facebook Insights. It announces that the best time to post for the case company is from Wednesday to Friday mid-night, as seen in the picture 6, with time posted and people reached. The results correlate well with the common user behavior on Facebook, which suggest that on Thursdays and Fridays the engagement is 18% higher than other days. Is good for the case company to keep in mind that 50% of 18-24 year-olds go to Facebook when they wake up. (Zephoria 2016.)

Picture 6: Facebook Insights. Best time to publish for the case company. Referenced 1.12.2016.

Most importantly, from Facebook Insights one can figure out what kind of content works the best in terms of engagement, like the amount of people reached, comments, and likes. In the picture 7, part of the case company's content posted is presented. Here it can be concluded that *pictures* that the case company has taken by itself, not common marketing materials, work the best. Also *pictures* with people tagged in, shared, hastags used in, or quotes seem to pop up from the other content, engagement wise.

On Facebook the case company already has 130 likes without even promoting it. The amount of engagement per picture compared to the amount of likes on the page, it could be said that the engagement is good. Especially compared to competitors, who have thousands of followers but only few likes per post. Few pictures got even shared, which is good for extra visibility, and several inquiries have been gotten through Facebook.

On Instagram the case company reached 30 followers with only 3 pictures posted. The case company also got one inquiry through Instagram, because the pictures were geotagged to the most high-end clubs and restaurants in Barcelona.

Date		Post			Reach		Engagement	
11/12/2016 2:06 pm		W Ladies Night Tuesdays - Free Entrance Girls' Night Out List	💬	⚠🌐	0		0 0	
11/10/2016 5:29 pm		It really wouldn't. Thanks to our followers and party people. We h	🖿	🌐	118		2 4	
11/08/2016 5:03 pm		Especially on Tuesdays 💖 Join us today for Beauties Night on E	🖿	🌐	120		9 5	
11/06/2016 7:07 pm		Retox Opening Party 🔍🎉🍨#thisisnotasundaybrunch #retoxs	🖿	🌐	112		21 11	
11/04/2016 1:06 pm		#RETOXOPENING #THISISNOTASUNDAYBRUNCH #WHOTEL	🎥	🌐	73		7 3	
11/04/2016 12:33 pm		RETOX Brunch & PARTY ~Girls Night Out List~	💬	⚠🌐	0		0 0	
10/20/2016 11:21 am		W Ladies Night Tuesdays - Free Entrance Girls' Night Out List	💬	⚠🌐	0		0 0	
10/18/2016 2:30 pm		About Tuesdays 😍🍸✨ #cheers	🖿	🌐	265		80 25	
10/17/2016 4:30 pm		Lovely Monday to everyone! 🥺	🖿	🌐	89		2 4	

Picture 7: Analytics from case company's Facebook content.

the most high-end clubs and restaurants in Barcelona. The customers told that this is a standard what they do, when searching promotors to events and clubs in a foreign city. The case company has also received many replies on Instagram stories, as they give immediate "access" to events. Snapchat however, hasn't resulted anything as it is "more difficult" to follow someone, and it is a more personal channel than Instagram, says one of the case company's customers.

Customer service is still time consuming, because the case company couldn't finish their website to the end of this thesis. But after it is done, it is loaded with SEO techniques, and customers will find quality content, frequently asked questions, and clear instructions easily from there. The content calendar and defining brand territories has helped the case company in overall branding, planning, and content producing, making it easier and less time-consuming.

The case company started with no online visibility whatsoever, and the author of this thesis has tried herself to write at the same time as testing everything in practice. What was learned, is that implementing all these things alone to practice is time consuming. It is very simple really, if you don't update, you won't get engagement. Everything is about time and effort put to things and testing what works and what doesn't. Overall the success in case company's opinion has been good, since less work has been done when people can find the case company online themselves, without the case company to have to contact potential customers. This is a good start and a great learning experience. Let's take a look on best practices that the case company gathered by doing on the way – what works and what doesn't:

Case company's best practices online

- **Best time to publish** from Wednesday to Saturday, evenings to noons.
- Content that is not straight advertising or promotion works the best, like **pictures taken the company itself and where people can see the personnel** (the 2 owners of the company) > gives personality and a "face" to the company, brings the brand closer to the user with personality and makes them "seethrough" and trustworthy
- **High-quality pictures and visual content**
- **Tagging** guests and the personnel to the pictures > average 2-3 more people reached plus more likes and even shares
- **Quotes and memes** that speak the values and attitude > builds community and makes the company closer to an opinion leader
- **Answer messages less than 15 minutes**. > responsiveness shows the customers that the company cares and is interested in them
- **Edit event time 30 minutes before it ends** to next week > keep all the people invited
- **If someone likes many of your posts on social media** > message that person if she would like to join an event > they usually do!
- **Like own content only on computer**. Then you can choose the liker to be your personal profile. This way your friends can see that you have liked the company's post > more people reached
- **Geotag.** The case company got inquiries through Instagram because they tagged the pictures to the most high-end clubs in Barcelona. The customers were going through social media and the best clubs, and found them like that for free entrances.
- **Emojis.** They catch attention > possibly more engagement.

As a summary, it can be concluded that the audience is fed up with traditional advertising materials and tricks. As a proof from the tests, what works in the 21st century is being unique, talk as a person, from the heart. Content has to tell a deeper message, affect feelings, entertain, and inspire to bring people together and to us. Our rule has become: inform, interact, inspire. Measuring online actions will definitely make decision making easier in the future. By learning what works and what doesn't is the only way to grow. The old goals and targets still stay in the case company's plan with few additions. The case company wants to try next the effect of videos, cinema graph, gifs, competitions, their own hastag and primarily the effect of the website full of SEO "tricks". The website will be published soon.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In the beginning of this work, the case company had no office, no online visibility, limited resources, and a young, tourist target group to catch. With this setting, it first of all can be concluded that the case company has to be online. What comes to taking business advantage of the internet, and implementing the online marketing best practices to real-life situations, the results were positive; With effectively integrating SEO, social media and content actions, one can efficiently fulfill the customer expectations for ease of discovery, consumption and sharing online. This again has resulted in a better customer experience in the case company and further on, to a converting fan base.

In this part of the thesis, it is explained how the latter was done and what are the findings. In the end, the usability of this research based development plan is evaluated, and further researches on the subject are suggested.

Summary of the thesis structure

The aim of this thesis was to get an understanding of the possibilities for businesses laying in online marketing on the 21st century, and then implement the best practices with specific theories from school courses, marketing influencers, competitors and previous literature to an online visibility plan for the case company. As the case company is a start-up, the main research question in this thesis was to figure out:

- *how* to make a startup business visible online

To answer the main research question, the supporting questions were addressed as well:

- **What is online marketing in the 21st century?**
- **How to implement online marketing in practice to use internet for business advantage?**

In the first phase of the thesis, online marketing in the 21st century was conceptualized based on theory and literature to get a base for the development plan. Then, in the second phase, the development plan was put to practice for the case company, supported by best practices from marketing theories, school courses, influencers and competitors from the field.

First in the action plan, the case company's starting point was mapped by analyzing SWOT and competitors. Then a target group was decided in order to start building online visibility on facts, and to get a direction for the upcoming decisions. When online marketing was conceptualized in the beginning, three parts of it were chosen to be focused on in the development

plan. These three types of online marketing, which are social media, search engine optimization and content marketing, were introduced and put to practice one by one. In the end, the results learned from the theory and through practice were analyzed in order to answer accurately how to make a start-up business visible online.

Answers to research questions

As technology, internet and marketing are not new things anymore, consumers have become familiar, and even fed-up with traditional marketing tricks. Even borders of countries won't matter anymore for the consumers, as the internet is uniting personas and their ideologies, interests and habits. In addition to this, the unimaginable amount of information that is available by the internet for the consumers, they now have the power of choice. This way, internet has brought consumers a new need to feel part of something, to have their way – as fast as possible, and to feel connected and entertained.

This has led to a completely new perspective to all of the marketing actions taken in businesses. Marketers have to work harder than ever to get noticed from all the information online, and they have to attract the consumer by systematically analyzing data on masses of people, and providing them *exactly what they need*. Marketing has changed from traditional interruption marketing to a way, that instead of selling a product or focusing on how great your company is, marketers need to provide value, educate, listen, optimize, and personalize before even trying to sell anything. Luckily, the internet also brought marketers an opportunity for efficient lifestyle selling, community building and ideology promoting. Being an opinion leader, building a connected world and a community online, is fulfilling the consumers' new needs brought by the internet. Companies like Google and Facebook are already doing this, and now they are guiding the way we see the world.

From this perspective online marketing is not merely selling something better – it is about painting a new kind of world in front of the customer's eyes. First, companies need to find the right tools for analyzing data on masses of people with their behavior trends, interests, and personalities. And after, providing them *exactly what they need*. For businesses, 21st century marketing wise is the perfect time to provide answers, solutions and have a real effect on people.

An online visibility plan was put in practice in this thesis to an event planning start-up, in order to see *how* to take advantage of the possibilities in the online world and *how* to fulfill the consumers' new needs. Through analyzing theory, the goal became to build a solid online base with consistent branding, quality content, and opportunities for visibility in search engines and online channels. During implementing best practices from the main categories of online marketing, search engine optimization, social

media and content marketing, it was noticed that without paying or promoting for attention, you *can* actually build a good online visibility base with high customer engagement compared to competitors, make sales and get inquiries. The company got inquiries through Instagram and Facebook, and the fans actually seem to *like the brand* and have taken part to the events held. This has showed that success online is not about empty likes or followers, it is about engagement with the customers by giving them quality solutions and entertainment. With implementing SEO techniques for better visibility, consumers can find a company in the first place. By being active in the right channels, marketers can entertain, educate, give opinions for the customers to share and this way build a community online. Creating good content works as a base for the whole digital world, binds branding and provides the value that the consumers are looking for. In conclusion, with effectively integrating SEO, social media and content actions, one can efficiently fulfill the customer expectations for ease of discovery, consumption and sharing online. This way, a company can build up a converting fan base.

Usability of this research based development plan

Even if the action plan was made specifically for the event planning startup, the plan starts from "a blank canvas", so the tips implemented are basic starters' tips on how to improve online visibility. Compared to learning from theoretically heavy sources, every part and decision in this thesis is collected from that diverse, heavy theory (*what* and *why*) from professional, competitors, literature and influencers, and put to *clear instructions on how.* This way, no deeper skills or knowledge in marketing or internet is needed to test these tips by anyone – just a computer, good patience and 2-4 months time with one person. Every tip used is also free, as the start-up case company had a limited amount of money, and wanted to focus on building a truly useful, organic audience and a fan base, instead of an empty and unnecessary paid one. Considering the facts above, everyone has the same opportunity to try the tips or the whole online visibility plan by themselves. As a conclusion on usability, anyone who wants to bloom online can read this work, and immediately implement tips and tricks to practice, to their own online lives. On the side, one can also easily figure out how to make a profitable online visibility plan, aiming for a converting fan base online.

Suggestions for further research

For the author it took 4 months to implement all these things to practice from 0, writing this thesis at the same time. As further research suggestions, would be interesting to know what kind of resources does it take to put this kind of an online visibility plan to practice, for example with two people, how long does it take, or would the outcomes be the same.

The case company's target group was 20-30-year-old girls, who are digital natives and travelers in Barcelona. It is now proved that most of the digital natives are online, and now it is figured out what they are doing there. On the other hand, the next generation *will not know life without the internet*. They will live *in*, *on* and *with* the internet and its tools 24/7. For this reason, with a help of a similar plan like this, would be also interesting to investigate where online the next generation will spend their time, why are they using the internet for etc.

In this thesis, the online visibility plan base and the information provided within can be used to continue the case company's growth online, and also, to explore more what new things can be done online for business advantage in the continually changing world of web in the 21st century.

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