



# Facebook Marketing Plan

Company: Language Alive! English School

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| <p>Abstract:</p> <p>Language Alive! is a start-up in language education with good methodology, which can create a new way of learning English in Vietnam. However, the fees to run marketing activities are high, the cost per lead is very expensive according to the statistic numbers given by the school. Besides, the current marketing strategy does not seem to be effective; not many people know anything about the school or realize the benefit from the new methodology; therefore, they do not have any intention to put Language Alive! into their consideration list. This thesis works on this problem and finds a new strategy for Language Alive to have more effective marketing strategy. The marketing plan focuses on marketing activities on Facebook (mostly branding), instead of short-term product promotions only (as what are being run) because customers are in lack of acknowledgement about the school brand and Facebook is the most effective channel so far for marketing activities. Therefore, the research questions of this thesis are the effectiveness of current marketing plan and the way to create a practical marketing plan. To answer the questions, qualitative research is used with both primary and secondary data. Knowledge can be obtained through books and internet, information about the school is provided by the manager, and objective opinion about learning language and about the school is collected through surveys and observation. The theoretical framework bases on the knowledge about online marketing, Facebook marketing, content marketing, branding and models to create a marketing plan. The current marketing plan and company situation will be analyzed to have a deeper insight into the problem. Then the industry, the market and target segment are also analyzed to understand from the big picture to a more specific angle. The result of the thesis is the change in content posted on Facebook, with tactical plan, workforce and workflow to carry out the strategy. Measurement is also recommended. Other channels such as landing page and blog are not considered due to the scope of study.</p> |   |
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## List of Abbreviations

| <b>Abbrieviation</b> | <b>Explanation</b>                              |
|----------------------|---|
| AYP                  | Awake Your Power                                |
| CPL                  | Cost Per Lead                                   |
| CTA                  | Call To Action                                  |
| LA!                  | Language Alive!                                 |
| SEO                  | Search Engine Optimization                      |
| SMS                  | Short Message Service                           |
| TAT                  | Talking About This                              |
| USP                  | Unique Selling Point/Unique Selling Proposition |
| WOM                  | Word Of Mouth                                   |

## Glossary

| <b>Term</b> | <b>Definition</b>  |
|-------------|--|
| Lead        | A prospective consumer of a product or service, created when an individual or business shows interest and provides contact information. (Investopedia) |
| Preview     | A kind of workshop hold three times per week by Language Alive! to persuade leads from many sources register for the courses.                          |
| TAT         | The number of any activity related to the page and its posts within seven days which can show the interest and engagement of Facebook users.           |

## Exchange rate

1 EUR = 25,155.38 VND (XE Currency Converter)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the topic

Language Alive! is an English school in Vietnam which is a subsidiary of Breakthrough Power Corporation – an education institute and was founded in 2014.

The current way of finding a student to enroll in a course here is holding Preview. Leads for the Preview are generated through different sources but mainly from Facebook. Marketing department is responsible for this activity. After the Preview, Sale department will follow up and close the leads into students.

“Facebook is the dominant social media property in the world” (Treadaway, Chris, and Smith, Mari, 2012, 13); therefore, Facebook marketing is a new strategy, especially for low-cost marketing plan of the start-ups. The current Facebook marketing strategy of the school is to give values (such as tips to learn English, entertaining videos, new vocabulary, useful grammar, etc.) to build strong community on the fanpage with the aim of making use of them when the number of follower is huge enough. Thus, it looks like a self-English-learning fanpage, not so much as a normal fanpage of a language school; people can rarely find post giving any information about Language Alive!. As running ads to register for Preview, the company still has to pay fee to reach target audience. Most of those who register for the Preview are not the followers on fanpage, which increases the marketing cost and decrease the understanding about the school. Besides, the building community strategy cannot raise the awareness of the methodology of Language Alive!. As a consequence, the quality of the leads is low due to the lack of acknowledgment about the school.

According to the document sent by the school, about 50% of those who register will confirm to go to the Preview, 20% of those who have confirmed will actually go to the Preview and only 3% of the attendants will register to study. The rate is too low whilst the cost to run the ad is too expensive.



The new strategy of the school is to change Facebook marketing strategy in order to lower the cost of marketing activities in the long term by increasing the leads' quality, and reducing the cost per lead.

## **1.2 Research aim**

The aim of the thesis is to create a new marketing strategy on Facebook for the school. In order to do that, the statistics and existing materials of the school will be used, combined with empirical data from surveys and interviews to analyze the current marketing status and recommend appropriate strategy on Facebook in detail. The target of the plan and the measurement are also considered in the plan based on the current performance.

## **1.3 Research questions**

The thesis focuses on creating a new marketing strategy on Facebook based on the analysis of the current status of marketing and the knowledge about the influence of decision in learning English; therefore, the research questions are:

- What is the new Marketing strategy and short-term Facebook marketing plan?
- How effective is the current Marketing strategy?

The main question is “What is the new marketing strategy and short-term Facebook marketing plan?”. The sub-questions: “How effective is the current marketing strategy?” provides a deeper insight into the performance of Language Alive! and consumer behavior in language education sector in order to provide a new practical marketing plan.

## **1.4 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis follows IMRD model for scientific reports, which stands for Introduction, Methods, Result, and Discussion.

The introduction includes the background and motivation of the thesis. From this perspective, the aim and research questions are raised in order to set the expected result.

The methods part mentions the methodology of research approach, data collection and analysis. Finally, the demarcation of the thesis is set to know the scope of study.

The result discusses the findings of this thesis, combining the literature review and the empirical data to design the new plan. The literature review offers the theories for the framework of the research, while empirical data gives proper insights into the reality of the case. The theories will be presented in a separated chapter; the empirical data will be analyzed with specific contexts to build the plan in another chapter.

In the end of the thesis, the discussion and conclusion are presented. The discussion summarizes and evaluates the findings and suggests implementation of the marketing plan. In this part, the demarcation and possibilities are also assessed and evaluated for proper recommendation. The conclusion sums up what was mentioned in the thesis and finalizes the decision of the study.

The sources support for the thesis is listed on the reference part. The survey questions can be found in the appendices.

## **2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **2.1 Materials and methods**

This thesis uses both primary and secondary data:

- **Primary data:**
  - Surveys and interviews to assess the effectiveness of the current marketing plan will be conducted with the online leads and students in the school. Research by online survey for reference in making decision to study will be conducted with normal Vietnamese people to ensure the significance.
  - Internal formation about Language Alive! such as the company structure, the working philosophy, facilities and resources,... will be self-synthesized through observation during the working time at the school.

- Published information about Language Alive! will be taken from different social media channels (fanpage, website, blog,...) combined with company description sent by the school and personal evaluation.
- **Secondary data:**
  - Knowledge about Facebook Marketing, Creating Marketing Plan and Content Marketing, Branding,... will be obtained through textbooks and internet.
  - Knowledge about Language Alive! English School including company description, current Marketing Strategy, Products, Target Customers, and Statistics to prove the effectiveness will be provided by the company itself.
  - Statistics about the current Facebook Marketing Plan on fanpage Language Alive! and the supporting fanpage will be collected through the monthly reports of the last quarter of 2016 (October, November, December) and sent by AHA Agency.

Base knowledge about marketing, branding, Facebook, etc. will be used as framework to build the plan. The information about Language Alive! and statistics from the surveys and interviews will be used to assess current effectiveness of the marketing plan and figure out the problems. Knowledge from Content Marketing and survey from Vietnamese people will be used to build the details plan of Facebook plan.

## **2.2 Data collection**

Data related to the school itself such as Marketing strategy, product description, key responsibilities for each position, customer insights,... will be sent by email. The data from Facebook will be collected by monthly reports from AHA Agency. The surveys and interviews with students will be conducted with the help of Teaching Assistants in the class; they will send the surveys or ask the students and send the records back by email. The interview with the staffs from different departments in Language Alive! will be self-conducted. The interview with online leads will be conducted by Marketing Collaborators in the Calling Sessions to confirm attendance at the Previews. Surveys for

trend in decision making will be created by Google form and conducted through posts on both personal Facebook and Facebook groups.

Information about the industry, the market and market segment will be provided by the author to the extent of knowledge. In the state of lacking reliable articles and unified information, the analysis will be based on humble observation and personal viewpoint of the author.

### **2.3 Data analysis and interpretation**

To answer the sub-question (“How effective is the current marketing strategy?): data from the company will be sent to analyze. The answer from students can be used to assess the effectiveness of the current Marketing Plan that can generate qualified leads with high opportunity to be closed into Language Alive!’s students and the usefulness of the fanpage that can offers posts with satisfying content. Besides, the interviews with leads before participating in the Preview, which is being conducted by the school, will be used to assess the criteria that attract leads to Language Alive! The answers will be grouped into main ideas to draw the general data and evaluate the importance of each factor.

To answer the main question (“What is the new marketing strategy and short-term plan?”): all literature review will be used as reference to build the most appropriate general plan. Data from the surveys, interviews and from the school will be used as special competencies of Language Alive! to build the content of the plan in detail.

### **2.4 Limitations**

This thesis focuses on strategy to increase the leads both in quantity and quality through Facebook marketing only. Data from literature review can be used in different cases. However, data from the school, surveys and interviews can only be used for the purpose of this thesis.

### **3 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **3.1 Traditional marketing vs. Online marketing**

Philip Kotler (2005, pg. 6) has defined marketing as “a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others”.

The marketing mix used for marketing strategy includes 4Ps: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion (Philip Kotler, 2005, pg.33). These tactical tools are carried out together in order to create values for customers, build and retain the intimate relationship with them to gain benefit and success in return. Although there are four elements in the marketing mix, marketing nowadays puts more emphasis on the last P: Promotion. In the world full of information, it is not the best products that withstand until the end and win the trust of the consumers but it is the battle of the brands that first catch the attention of the consumers or are able to give a lot of important information and approach the perception of the consumers (Alries & Jack Trout, 2013). Therefore, this thesis only focuses on promotional activities of the marketing mix.

According to Jim Blythe (2005), promotional tools can be sale promotions; advertising such as print media, and campaigns; and PR activities such as press release, media events, word of mouth, sponsorship and broadcasts. Traditional marketing truly brings value to both sides; however, the costs are high; the scale is usually large; the time bound is quite long because of the difficulty in approaching the target customers.

Besides, along with the development of the Internet, the activities of social media cover the potential markets; therefore, online marketing were born to increase the effectiveness in marketing, save the costs and help the firms approach target customers. Nowadays, when Internet and social network become an integral part of daily life, the business needs to follow the trend to catch the opportunity.

“Online marketing refers to a set of powerful tools and methodologies used for promoting products and services through the Internet.” (Techopedia). Online marketing includes different online activities in order to market the products to the potential custom-

ers through online channels. There are several popular online marketing tools (Enuy, 2016):

- Website/Landing page
- SEO
- Blogs/Forum marketing
- Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Youtube, LinedIn,...)
- Google Adwords
- SMS marketing
- Email marketing
- Affiliate marketing

Among the mentioned channels, beside Google, which was said by Mashable (2015) to have got over 100 billion reaches a month (Hubspot, 2016), Facebook is a potential social media channel to approach since Pew Research Center said that 72% of adult internet users use Facebook (Hubspot, 2016).

### **3.2 Facebook marketing**

The simplest way to understand the term “Facebook marketing” is to link the definition of traditional marketing to what takes place on Facebook, which means the marketing activities that happen through Facebook. Therefore, Facebook marketing is searching for the needs and wants of the customers, trying to reach the end users through Facebook and using the company’s products to satisfy their demands in order to increase the benefit as long as the terms on Facebook are strictly followed. (Trung Duc, 2013)

Facebook marketing activities can be illustrated as the following figure:

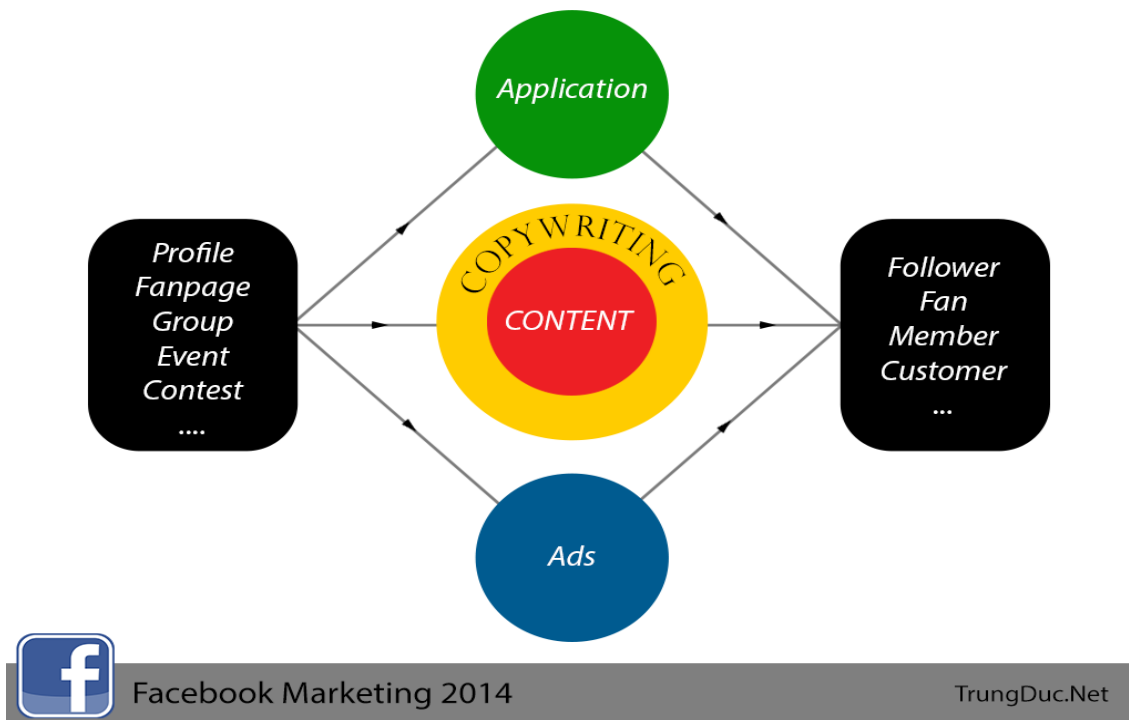


Figure 1. Diagram about Facebook Marketing 2013 - 2014 (Trung Duc, 2013)

Facebook marketing starts from Facebook marketers (from the left side), using Facebook marketing strategies to reach Facebook users (from the right side) and ends the process. The purpose is aim at the conversion rate, which means normal Facebook users will engage into the activities operated by Facebook marketers to become a part of the community created by Facebook marketers.

### 3.2.1 General concepts

#### 3.2.1.1 Facebook marketer

Facebook marketers are those who use publishers such as profile, group, fanpage, event, or contest to promote for personal image, increase the effectiveness of business activities, branding, and build community for later benefit. (Trung Duc, 2013)

#### 3.2.1.2 Facebook user

Facebook users are those who use Facebook for personal, leisure or professional purposes. Nevertheless, to Facebook marketers, Facebook users are those who directly interact with the publishers to become followers, fans, members and finally turn into customers. (Trung Duc, 2013)

### 3.2.1.3 EdgeRank

In order to attract Facebook users, Facebook marketers need to make sure that the posts appear on the News Feed of the users. Thus, the strategy for Facebook marketing has to consider the chance of being seen of the posts, which is related to EdgeRank. Facebook EdgeRank 1.0 is used to define when and where the posts appear on News Feed.



Figure 2. Facebook EdgeRank 1.0 (Fbadvance, 2012)

According to Fbadvance, the first three variables for EdgeRank algorithm are Affinity, Weight and Decay. The Affinity refers to the close-knit relationship between the user and the edge creator; the Weight is the TAT numbers (like/comment/share or other interactive activities) the post has; and the Decay illustrates the preference on new posts.

Recently, in 2016, Facebook has changed EdgeRank algorithm. Because more and more people join social network and make friends, thousands of news appear on News Feed everyday. Each user needs to choose about the most important posts to read to avoid wasting time; Facebook will help them to decide it. The current EdgeRank algorithm is illustrated by the following figure:



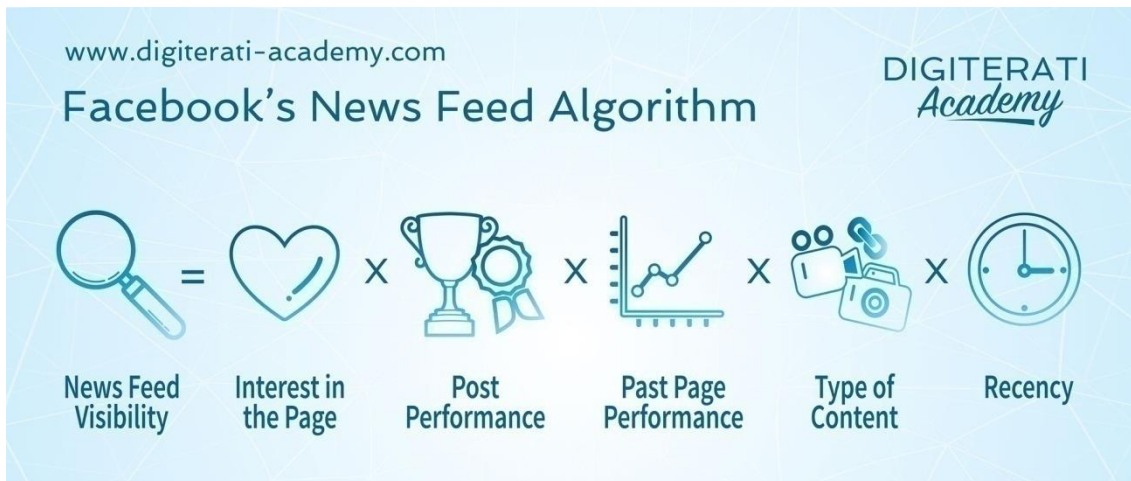


Figure 3. Facebook EdgeRank Algorithm (Marie Page, 2016)

Marie Page (2016) explained that the chance a post from a publisher appears on News Feed of a user depends on 5 elements:

- **Interest:** this element is measure by the interaction a user has with a publisher. Post form regularly interacted publishers will have higher possibility to be shown on News Feed. Moreover, best friends and relatives are more preferred.
- **Post performance:** the higher the TAT number of a post is, the better chance it will appear on News Feed. Facebook offers opportunity for the publishers that have effective posts.
- **Past page performance:** the profile and influential of a page is measured to rank the possibility to show on News Feed. The higher the score is, the better chance a page will have.
- **Type of content:** if a user interacts with some certain types of content, it will be preferred to appear on the News Feed of that user. Besides, Facebook gives higher scores for some certain types of content, especially the influential or “life event” ones.
- **Recency:** this factor is counted by the age of the post. Old posts are less to be seen on the News Feed. Besides, the less busy the New Feed is at the time of posting, the higher chance a post appears on News Feed. In this variable, Last Actor and Story Bumping also affect. When someone interacts with an old post, it will be bumped up to the top of the News Feeds.

### 3.2.2 Facebook marketing strategy

According to Trung Duc (2013), there are three ways to gain the attention and raise the conversion rate in Facebook marketing: using applications, promoting ads and focusing on content of the posts.

#### 3.2.2.1 Applications

The purpose of Facebook apps is diverse due to the target of a fanpage. There are two types of apps that require different effort and also bring different values to both Facebook marketers and Facebook users. (Trung Duc, 2013)

- App quality: as expressed by its name, this type of app has high quality, thus requires great effort from developers and huge investment of time and money. App quality displays on Facebook interface with good design. It can offer values to Facebook users such as gifts, virtual money,... and bring back insights into consumer behaviors to Facebook marketers.
- App low: this type of Facebook app is perfunctorily developed with simple display and easy algorithm. Facebook users will access another interface to play this app. App low offers no real benefit for users; it can be some fun facts about a Facebook profile, prediction about future or viewpoints of a Facebook user. Although it is nonsense, thousands of Facebook users still interact with this app and share it with friends and ask them to try. The reason is because it triggers the curiosity of people. The purpose of app low is to increase the like of a fanpage. Unwittingly, by clicking the link, there is an algorithm to turn it into pressing a like on a set fanpage. Besides, it also takes some information of Facebook users for the purpose of Facebook marketers. Nevertheless, the benefits brought to the Facebook marketer do not last in long term.

#### 3.2.2.2 Ads

Advertising is the most popular way to attract customers to buy products. There is nearly no business page runs without using Facebook ads. There are myriad purposes to run an ad. According to AdExpresso, a fanpage run Facebook ads to increase traffic and leads to websites, sales and leads for products and services, increase likes and engagement for fanpage, install apps for mobile or desktop, and invite visitors for the stores and events.

There are three ways to run Facebook ads:

- Organic ad: this kind of ad is posted on a fanpage without any extra support from Facebook. The chance to appear on users' News Feed depends on natural scores of EdgeRank.
- Paid ad: Facebook marketers will choose target audience that they want to see this post and pay Facebook an amount of money for a specific time bound. Those who have the chosen interests in the profile will have this ad appeared on the News Feed.
- Boosted post: This ad is paid to reach all of those who have already liked the fanpage.

Facebook ads are widely used because this is a flexible strategy. The purpose, the way to run, and the spent money can be fixed anytime depending on the strategy of the business. Besides, it is easier to aim at target audience and measure the effectiveness of an ad.

### 3.2.2.3 Contents

Due to the change of EdgeRank algorithm, the content of the post is emphasized. Sophia (2016) indicates that the types and requirements greatly affect the success of an ad.

There are eight types of Facebook ads:

- Video ad: Facebook now allows users to directly upload video on Facebook, without sharing the link to Youtube. Gif files are also able to be posted. The video should be short and impressive at first to catch the attention and be informative to save the time of Facebook users from reading.
- Photo ad: this is the most traditional way; each post will go with a related photo. The photo should be suitable with the target audience and should be catching in order to get the attention of Facebook users.
- Multi-product ad: there are different images of different products in an ad. Facebook users can choose the most interesting one to look for information. This type of ad helps increase the time of interaction with a post.
- Local ad: this ad focuses on the location of the business to attract foot traffic to the place. Local ad helps attract right customers from a specific location.

- Offer ad: a business can offer discount in this ad. It should go with strong CTA in order to increase the pushing feeling to baffling viewers.
- Event ad: this type of ad gives information about what is going to happen. It is usually paid ad and aims at those who have same interests.
- Retargeting ad: this ad will appear to Facebook users who access to some specific websites. The user IDs of those who access to a website will be recorded in order to be set as target audience.
- Boosted post: as being mentioned above, this ad will appear on the News Feed of those who have liked the fanpage.

In order to ensure the success of Facebook ads, Sophia (2016) also mention 4 requirements:

- Visuality
- Relevancy
- Enticing value proposition
- Clear CTA (call-to-action)

Overall, for different purposes, there are some types of content that fanpages usually publish: product information, discount, contest/mini-game, event, firm information, story/experience sharing, history, comparison, engagement-increasing content.

### **3.3 Content management**

Marketo has come with a research saying that most of people nowadays search for online information before directly contact with the company, either by asking the salesperson or coming to the store. Also, information is searched and considered both online and offline before deciding to buy a product. In marketing, the information customers look for is called content. More clearly, as being defined by Ahava (2013, pg. 6), “Content is information that is organized and arranged in a format. Embedded in that format is information—the solution to someone’s problem or question.”

The content is designed for specific target audience to give them the maximized amount of information they need. Therefore, after the content is created, it will be published to

different channels according to the habits and interests of the target audience to reach the most number of viewers. The process is described by Ahava (2013, pg. 6) as following:

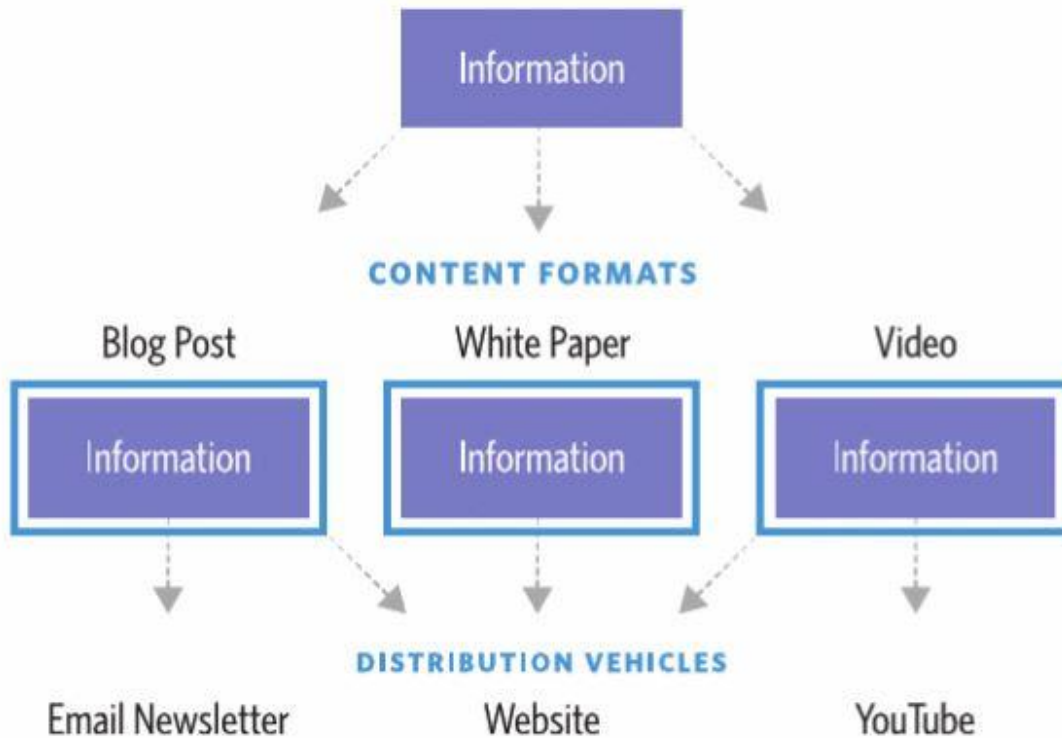


Figure 4. Content: From Information to Distribution (Ahava Leibtag, 2013, p.6)

The content belongs to a firm can be either owned media or earned media. Owned media is the content a firm has by publishing the information, then that firm creates the conversation with customers based on it. Earned media is the content that people around, including consumers, presses, mass media talk about a firm. (Samuel Scott, 2015)

Managing content is to control the conversation between the firms and people or among people about your brand. In order to do so, a firm needs to understand the interaction and know how to combine 3 elements: Branding, Content Strategy, and Content Marketing.

### **3.3.1 Branding**

Ahava (2016, pg. 9) defines brand as “the amalgamation of all the different experiences and encounters a consumer has had with products, salespeople, marketing, advertising, and retail experience”. Tagline, logo, firm’s name are brand attributes, which contribute to the image of a brand. This image only has symbolic meaning; it cannot decide the characteristics of a brand. However, brand attributes are affected by brand communities, “communities formed because of attachment to a product or service” (Ahava, 2013, pg. 11). Experience customers encounter with brand communities leads to their perception of a brand and brand attributes.

A brand is defined by the leader of a firm, with the mission statements and the spirit the company should have, and the value they want to offer. These elements may change overtime due to the situation of the market and the customer needs and wants but the core values must be perpetuated. Hence, it should be clearly stated from the top down in the company, with the agreement of everyone. Training process is needed in order to maintain the consistency within the firm, ensuring that every department is trying their best to deliver the same value to customers. Then, to alleviate cognitive dissonance, research with customers is needed to know whether the strategy works properly and the set values are actually shared and understood. Morgan Chessman (2015) added competitor research to the steps to define a brand by seeking for the differences and making comparison. This is somehow look like a unique selling point that a company needs to find out before launching products.

### **3.3.2 Content strategy**

In order to make sure that customers can fully understand a brand through the content they have found, content strategy is use to reinforce branding. Ahava (2013, pg.15) said that content strategy should be useful, and usable and be a repeatable system.

In terms of useful and usable nature, a good content strategy needs to help the published content matches with the business objectives and help the customers to solve their problems. Generally, content strategy should orient the content towards the way that serves the goals of both sides in a business.

In terms of being a repeatable system, content strategy needs to be a closed loop that happens continuously.



Figure 5. Content Strategy System with Governance as the Center (Ahava Leibtag, 2013, pg. 16)

Content strategy is a non-stop process from planning what to write, who will write it, when to publish the content, where to post and how to measure the effectiveness to adjust another plan, to actually implement each task. The sequence is controlled by the governance in the center to be well-organized both inside and outside a firm. People conducting each task cannot see the big picture to have timely improvisation or critical allocation of tasks, workflow and authority. Also, people expert in any part of the system cannot have general and objective knowledge to check and monitor the created content to ensure the consistency across channels. Good governance will help the whole system operate smoothly.

### **3.3.3 Content marketing**

Marketo has defined content marketing as “the process of creating high-quality, valuable content to attract, inform, and engage an audience, while also promoting the brand itself”. It is a content strategy to use content to market for a firm’s brand, in order to increase brand awareness and reference, become a trusted brand and do marketing with lower cost.

## **3.4 Branding activities**

In the hierarchy of communication effects (Jim Blythe, 2005, pg. 248), the stages start with brand ignorance. Herbert Meyers and Richard Gerstman (2001, pg. 78) said that “Since people cannot see, touch or feel the actual product online, having a strong brand and strong equity, along with high awareness, becomes a key factor to Internet success.”. In short term, it is acceptable to do promotion for the products, giving information about the products only. However, in long term, firms should focus on branding. If a company promotes for product, then they will have to do that for every product from time to time. But if a company promotes for its brand, people will seek for their products. Besides, word of mouth will help to do the marketing activities for that firm, helping reach further with lower cost.

There are several benefits for focusing on branding (Mike Schultz, John E. Doerr, & Lee W. Frederiksen, 2013, pg. 83-87):

- Increasing sale effectiveness
- Generating leads
- Generating premium fees
- Helping company beat competitors
- Facilitating repeat business
- Keeping a firm competitive for top talent
- Increasing value of a company

Also, branding is extremely important on social network. It can help to increase the engagement and reach, build trust and generate more qualified online leads. Few Facebook



users interact with the posts from the brand they do not know. They are less willing to spend time to read ads from unknown pages. People without any awareness about a firm can hardly make decision to buy a product because of the insecurity of the product quality.

Branding activities focus on increasing perceived quality with testimonial and word-of-mouth campaign, telling great stories about the brand and emphasizing on customer experience.

### **3.5 Models for marketing plan**

According to Richard F. Gerson (1991), the marketing plan should be started with the business plan to have the big picture of the situation. William M. Luther (2001) offered a deeper insight when planning for marketing activities. The process of planning should start from a fact book, which analyzes the current situation of economics, competition, the business itself and its customers. Then, the planner will zoom into strategic and business plan to focus on business strength and develop positioning statement to decide the way the strengths should be perceived by target customers. After that, the marketing plan now is created, followed by action plans and feedback.

The business plan of Richard F. Gerson (1991, pg. 7) includes the following main parts:

1. Executive summary
2. Company analysis
3. Industry analysis
4. Market analysis
5. Strategic analysis
6. Management analysis
7. Financial analysis

To go deeper into marketing sector, the author suggests the marketing plan as following (Richard F. Gerson, 1991, pg. 42):

1. Executive summary
2. Market analysis/situational analysis
3. Market segment procedures/customer analysis
4. Marketing mix: strategies and tactics

5. Promotional mix
6. Marketing results
7. Marketing support documents

Karen A. Brown and Nancy Lea Hyer (2009) suggested the business case should follow these steps:

1. Executive summary
2. Project driver(s), underlying problems, opportunities or mandates
3. Underlying causes
4. Goal
5. Options for achieving the goal
6. Assessment of optionsfor achieving the goal
7. Conclusion

Patricia and Marseille (2006, pg. 28) offered the content for a marketing plan as following:

1. Introduction
2. Target market description
3. Current market description
4. Opportunity and issue analysis
5. Marketing goals and objectives
6. Marketing strategies
7. Marketing tactic/action plan
8. Implementation and control
9. Summary
10. Appendixes

The structures of the plans are somehow similar between different models; the ways to approach start from the big picture and narrow down to the current problem or situation. From the suggested models, adjusted to be suitable with the structure of the thesis and the company's situation, the marketing plan is this paper will have this content:

1. Situational analysis

2. Industry and market analysis
3. Market segment analysis
4. Suggested strategies
5. Implementation and control

## **4 LANGUAGE ALIVE! ENGLISH SCHOOL**

### **4.1 About Language Alive! English school**

#### **4.1.1 Short description**

Language Alive! is an English School in Vietnam which is a subsidiary of Breakthrough Power Corporation – an education institute. It was founded in 2014 with the hope to help Vietnamese students develop more comprehensive skills to be well-prepared for the future.

Language Alive! offers five levels of learning English, which are built upon two types of textbooks: “Q: Skill for Success” series and “Lessons for IELTS”. Besides, Language Alive! applies S.P.E.R.M method in teaching and learning:

- *Spiritual*: learn English with joy, overcoming the scare of speaking English.
- *Physical*: use body language while communicating in English, learning English through actions.
- *Emotional Related*: use language to build relationship and connect people.
- *Mental*: improve critical thinking skill and ability to use vocabulary with English.

Moreover, Language Alive! also focuses on project-based learning method and teach students to learn through logical deduction and practical experiences. Only by doing can students remember and re-apply the knowledge into daily life.

Language Alive! has simple logo with only two colors. Blue represents for the reason: young generation use their heads to lead actions to accomplish goals. Orange represents for the feelings and love: young generation pursue their goals with passion.

# LANGUAGE *Alive!*

*Figure 6. Language Alive! Logo*

The slogan of Language Alive! is “Bring language back to life” which is also the vision and mission of the school. Language is for daily life communication, not for tests. The company expects to deliver this message to every Vietnamese student to help them learn English with all of their passion.

To support for marketing activities, Language Alive! now has the following main channel:

- Fanpage: <https://www.facebook.com/lacenter/>
- Landing page: <http://la.edu.vn/>
- Blog: <http://blog.la.edu.vn/>

## **4.1.2 Vision and mission**

It has been mentioned in the description part on Facebook homepage of Language Alive! about the vision and mission.

- Vision: As being described by its name, Language Alive! aims at bringing language back to life with interesting, lively and practical lesson. Language Alive! believes in natural learning whereby students absorb English by constantly using it. Students will not only learn English, but also do English, speak English and live English. In order to do so, Language Alive! plans to be one of the best Project-based Learning School in Vietnam.
- Mission: learning English at Language Alive! must have:
  - Natural learning: The most effective and instinctive way for human to learn a language is to start with Listening, then move on to shamelessly attempting Speaking; then to Reading, Grammar and finally to Writing.
  - The use of Language: Language is for communication, discovering life, making friends and connecting people, not just for test.

- Step-by-Step progress: Student will develop self-motivation and confidence for English through measuring and seeing their daily, weekly change and growth, thus loving the language!

## **4.2 About Language Alive! Fanpage**

Since the target customers of Language Alive! are under-graduated and post-graduate university students, the school's fanpage is the main channel to be used for marketing; it can reach most of the potential students.

During the first two years of operation, the purpose of the fanpage is to raise the awareness of the existence of a new English center and build the community in which English learners can gather to learn new tips and share knowledge. To achieve the purpose, the target TAT of a month is 70,000 as being decided by the head of Language Alive! school.

According to the agreement between Language Alive! and AHA Agency, there are three types of content posted on fanpage with following purposes:

- Video (re-up from other sources, link from Youtube, promotion clips from Language Alive!): the videos re-up are recently viral ones in order to increase the comments tagging friends so that more people will know the fanpage.
- Link (link to Blog LA!): to keep the fanpage being recognized and remembered by follower.
- Photo (learning tips): the longer the tips are, the higher chance followers will share the post on their walls and increase the chance of being aware of.

AHA Agency has decided the schedule for posts is normally as following:

- 6 am: share link (Blog LA!, Youtube, other sources)
- 8 am: learning tips (photos designed by LA!/clips from other sources)
- 10 pm: learning tips (photos designed by LA!/Blog LA!)

Language Alive! is the fanpage of a language school that has the top number of likes in Vietnam and is still on the grow.

Ads run for Preview is always hidden from the wall; they are only paid to reach to target customers. The pinned post on the top of the page remains for several months and has best content measured over time; it generates about 2% the number of total leads.

## **4.3 Company status in the last quarter 2016**

### **4.3.1 The current marketing plan**

The current Marketing plan states that Language Alive! uses both online and offline marketing plan to support business activity. Marketing department is responsible for planning and monitoring both strategies but outsource online activities to an agency.

Online marketing activities include using Facebook, blog, landing page to build community for English learners, increase the traffic, give information about the courses and generate leads to register for the workshop (which is called the Preview) and aim at the target that they will register directly for the courses.

The landing page is used mainly to provide information about the courses and the teachers. The school's blog is used to write the learning tips in learning English for daily usage as well as achieving certificates. The fanpage is the most active channel, which is used to share tips or entertaining clips related to English, share the links to blog and landing page, and run ads to generate enough leads for the Preview. The link to register for the Preview is also shared on the blog and landing page. Language Alive! also has the fanpage of the mother company (Awake Your Power: [www.facebook.com/AwakePower](http://www.facebook.com/AwakePower)) to support in running ads. Besides, the link to register directly for personal consultancy to attend the official course is also available in all channels.

Offline marketing activities include delivering forms at the workshops of other business to introduce about Language Alive!, calling to inform and confirm the attendance for the Preview, hold Previews three times/week and run English Speaking Club for customer-care purpose.

The Preview at Language Alive! has four sections: a trial class, a motivational speech about learning English and its necessity, an placement test and personal consult with

appropriate advice for learning path. In the first two parts, some lessons are taught in the special way and motivational speech is given so that the attendees can somehow understand what they need to prepare for the future and what they will get from the courses in Language Alive!. Then the attendees have a placement test with teachers which is a short conversation to test the English level and then receive personal consultancy from the course consultants to know the starting point and how Language Alive! can help them to fulfill their needs. The leads are closed in this stage into students of the school.

The marketing flow can be described as following:

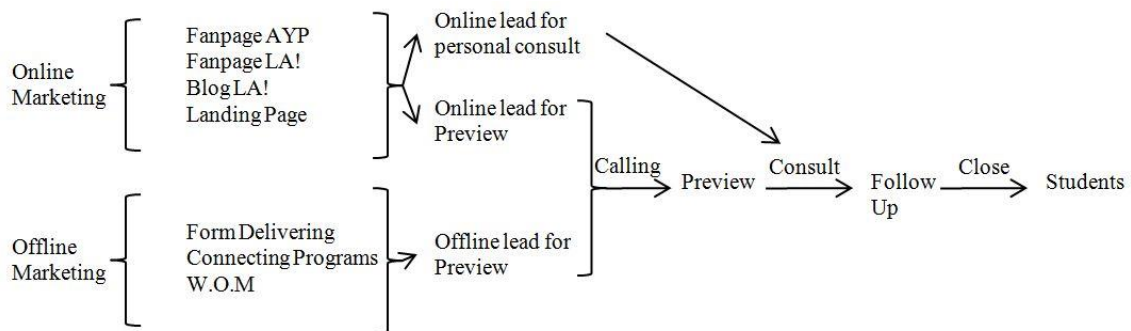


Figure 7. The Marketing Flow Made by the Author

## 4.3.2 Measurement

### 4.3.2.1 Online posts

Posts on Facebook are categorized into two types: customer care and advertisement. According to the data given by the Marketing Executive of the school and AHA Agency, the posts can be described and analyzed as following:

- Customer care

The purpose of this type of post is to build the community on fanpage. Facebook users seeing this type of post will follow the fanpage if they find it interesting and believe it can give them great values. The more followers, the higher chance Language Alive! generates online leads without spending money on running ads.

The measurement for this type of post is by monthly TAT and Facebook user engagement. These numbers measure the attractiveness of a post that catches the attention of followers and creates the eager to interact with that post.

The following table is the numbers recorded in the last quarter of 2016:

| Month        | Type          | Post Time             | Quantity   | Engaged Users  | TAT           | Purpose on User Actions         |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Oct</b>   | Video         | 6AM/8AM               | 15         | 576970         | 91683         | Watch Video/Comment/Tag friends |
|              | Link          | 10PM                  | 38         | 16707          | 6000          | Share                           |
|              | Photo         | 4AM/6AM/8AM/10PM      | 45         | 74807          | 30539         | Share/Tag friends               |
|              | <b>Total:</b> |                       | <b>98</b>  | <b>668484</b>  | <b>128222</b> |                                 |
| <b>Nov</b>   | Video         | 6AM/8AM               | 20         | 261889         | 51424         | Watch Video/Comment/Tag friends |
|              | Link          | 10PM                  | 32         | 12242          | 4044          | Share                           |
|              | Photo         | 4AM/6AM/8AM/10PM      | 42         | 84577          | 33454         | Share/Tag friends               |
|              | <b>Total:</b> |                       | <b>94</b>  | <b>358708</b>  | <b>88922</b>  |                                 |
| <b>Dec</b>   | Video         | 6AM/8AM               | 14         | 57151          | 8724          | Watch Video/Comment/Tag friends |
|              | Link          | 10PM                  | 13         | 25243          | 5957          | Share                           |
|              | Photo         | 4AM/6AM/8AM/10AM/10PM | 50         | 71261          | 24631         | Share/Tag friends               |
|              | <b>Total:</b> |                       | <b>77</b>  | <b>153655</b>  | <b>39312</b>  |                                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |               |                       | <b>269</b> | <b>1180847</b> | <b>256456</b> |                                 |

Table 1. Engagement and TAT Measurement of Fanpage Posts in the Last Quarter 2016 (AHA Agency)

- Facebook paid ads

In order to generate online leads, Language Alive! has to spend money on running ads for a period of time until there are enough leads to register for the Preview.

The measurement for this type of post is by the cost per lead (CPL) and the number of leads that can be closed to students.

The money spent on running ads and the number of leads generated in the last three months of 2016 are as following:



|     | TOTAL LEAD | Organic lead | Paid lead | Lead AYP | Lead LA! | TOTAL SPEND | Spent AYP | Spend LA!  | CPL AYP | CPL LA! | CPL    | Cost per Paid Lead |
|-----|------------|--------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|------------|---------|---------|--------|--------------------|
| Oct | 668        | 200          | 468       | 220      | 448      | 15,461,150  | 2,802,195 | 12,658,955 | 12,737  | 28,257  | 23,145 | 33,037             |
| Nov | 582        | 140          | 442       | 333      | 249      | 8,257,686   | 4,519,477 | 3,738,209  | 13,572  | 15,013  | 14,188 | 18,683             |
| Dec | 773        | 284          | 489       | 505      | 268      | 9,280,200   | 5,283,022 | 3,947,178  | 10,461  | 14,728  | 11,161 | 17,643             |

Table 2. Information of Online Leads in the Last Quarter of Language Alive! Fanpage in 2016 (AHA Agency)

Meanwhile, the percentage of participation in the Preview and the percentage of the closed leads compared to the number of online leads in the last quarter of 2016 are considered low.

|             | % of Participation | % of Closed Leads |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Fanpage LA! | 16,26%             | 2,44%             |
| Fanpage AYP | 17,86%             | 2,38%             |

Table 3. Quality of Online Leads According to Sources from the Fanpages (AHA Agency)

These numbers can show the ineffectiveness when running ads on fanpage Language Alive!. The fact that more paid ads are run does not lead to the increase in the number of lead. The quality of leads from fanpage Language Alive! are only slightly higher than those on fanpage AYP. Thus, Language Alive! should aim at developing its own fanpage as an independent one with high productivity.

#### 4.3.2.2 Surveys

- From the students
  - Respondents: 30
  - Questions: Attached in appendices.
  - Qualified quantity: 30

The survey was conducted with the students studying at Language Alive! to see how effective the fanpage is to affect their learning decision.

The questionnaire papers were printed and given to teaching assistants to issue to students after class. Surprisingly, nearly half of the current students know Language Alive! through Awake Your Power fanpage, since this is a famous fanpage with huge followers and high-quality content. Paid ads on fanpage Language Alive! stand for second position with only 19.40%, slightly more than

leads from “Word of Mouth” campaign and connecting programs. “Word of Mouth” campaign is a long-term marketing plan in which students invite friends or relatives to enroll for a course here to receive discount and gifts for all. Connecting programs mean other institutes of the parent company give scholarship to study at Language Alive! for students to boost self-development. Blog and landing page of Language Alive! are only the channel to keep followers stay up-to-date with information from the school. (Figure 9)

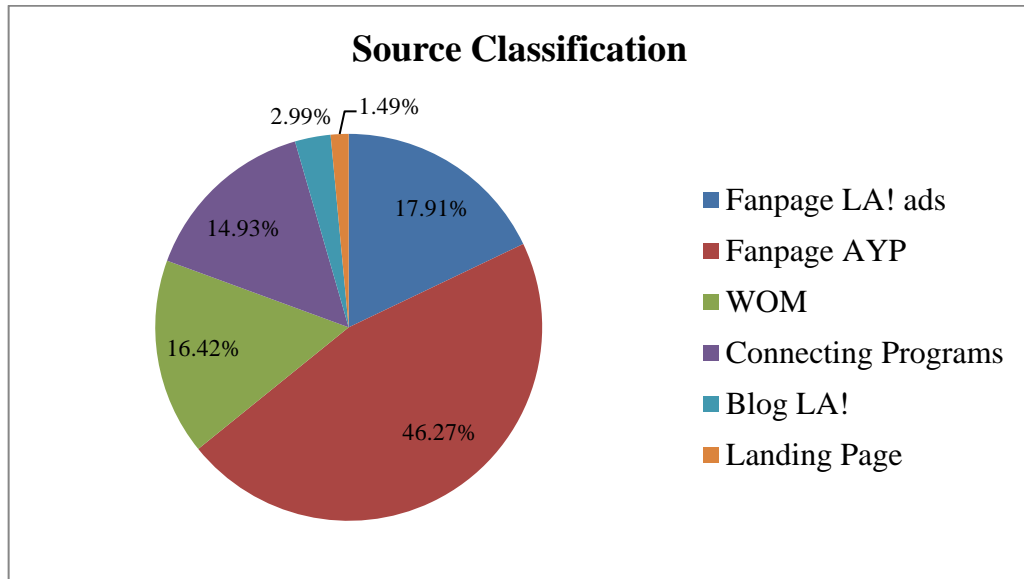


Figure 8. Source Classification

Despite of the rich content of the fanpage, only 14.93% actually read the news, tips and advices everyday. Nearly half of the participants do not care about those posts and about 37.31% have not read any post of the fanpage at all. (Figure 10)

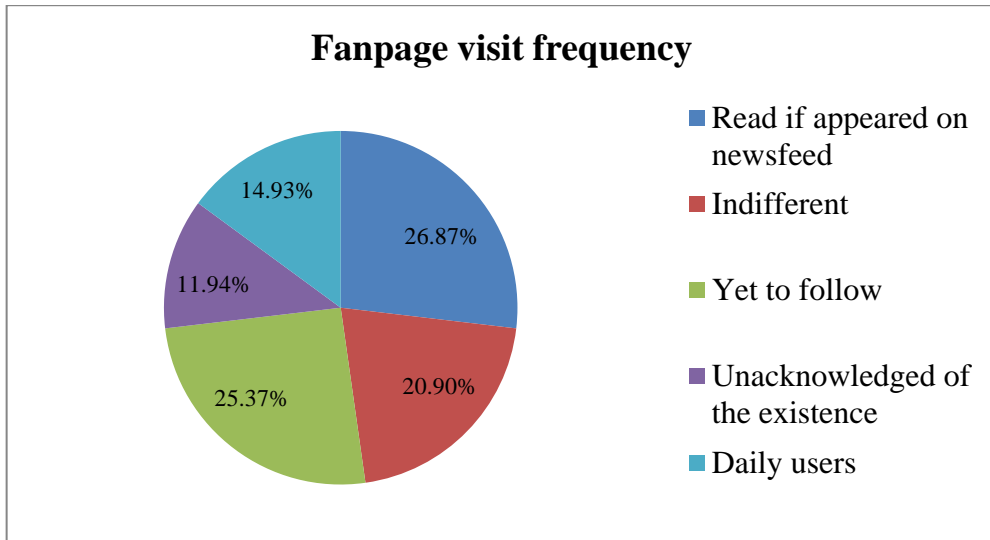


Figure 9. Fanpage Visit Frequency

Many students even admitted that posting with the densely frequency has led to the opposite effect, creating the feeling of exhaust following and reading the posts. Gradually, they become indifferent and uninterested in the fanpage. They rarely click “see more” unless they find the headline catching and appealing.

Clearly, neither Language Alive! nor the school’s students receive much benefit from the fanpage.

- From the online leads
  - Respondents: 230
  - Questions: Attached in appendices.
  - Qualified quantity: 141

|                           | Preview<br>17/12 | Preview<br>24/12 | Preview<br>27/12 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Registration              | 90               | 61               | 79               |
| Confirmation              | 48               | 36               | 33               |
| Cancelation               | 10               | 3                | 13               |
| Change date<br>of Preview | 7                | 6                | 11               |
| No answer                 | 25               | 16               | 22               |

Table 4. Result of Calling for Confirmation for 3 Previews Synthesized by The Author

The average percentage of cancellation is 11%, 23% of which rejected because they live in another city and 7% of which said that they were not interested.

Amongst those who confirmed to attend, 94% first heard of Language Alive! and mostly did not want to find the breakthrough in English learning method but look for something engaging. They did not have high energy to try and they were not ready to seek for a commitment to improve English.

As can be seen from the measurement above, the useful content cannot help the school benefit from the community online. Language Alive! still have to spend a lot of money to run ads for online leads. The CPL is too high but the quality of the leads is low; the paid ads also attract irrelevant leads; the return rate is only less than 3%. Nevertheless, the followers on fanpage have no intention to find a place to learn English. Language Alive! need to change in order to have higher qualified followers, more prestige and reduce the CPL.

## **5 THE FACEBOOK MARKETING PLAN**

### **5.1 Situational analysis**

#### **5.1.1 Company history and products offering**

The company is founded to fulfill the needs of learning English of Vietnamese students in university in the integration of Vietnam into the world. In the situation that the students have wrong ways in learning English which make them fed up with or scared of English, Language Alive! hopes to offer them the right philosophy and create dynamic environment for best learning. The school expects to be the right place for “lost” students to find the way back to English.

Being a new language center compared to others that have been founded for up to 20 years, plus the neoteric philosophy and the appropriate target customers (students who did not have the chance for right approach to English), Language Alive! has reasonable price for the courses:

Since the school focus on practical learning, it offers an additional course with personal tutor for those who are too weak and need support with basic knowledge and 5 main courses with the following content:

- L-intro (24 classes): Elementary level – basic listening and speaking, getting to know about the phonetic,...
- L1 (42 classes): Pre-intermediate level – building conversation, delivering speech, good communicating skill,...
- L2 (20 classes): Intermediate level – critical thinking skill, discussing skill, public speaking skill, teamwork,...
- L3 (4 classes): Upper-intermediate level – problem solving skill, project planning and management, teamwork,...
- L4 (no class opened yet because of the quality of students): Advanced level – learn how to negotiate, discuss, rhetoric and prepare for business-like situations, projects, event management, teamwork,...

The classes are taught in the evening, either at 5:30pm – 7:00pm or 7:15pm – 8:45pm. This is the most convenient time for university students and staffs to attend. The fee is also reasonable: 3,800,000 – 3,900,000 VNĐ/10 weeks, which is quite low compared to other language centers.

There are usually about 10 courses opened at the same time during peak time (summer) and 6 courses at the hard time (holidays).

## **5.1.2 Resources**

### *5.1.2.1 Human resources*

The organization structure is as following:

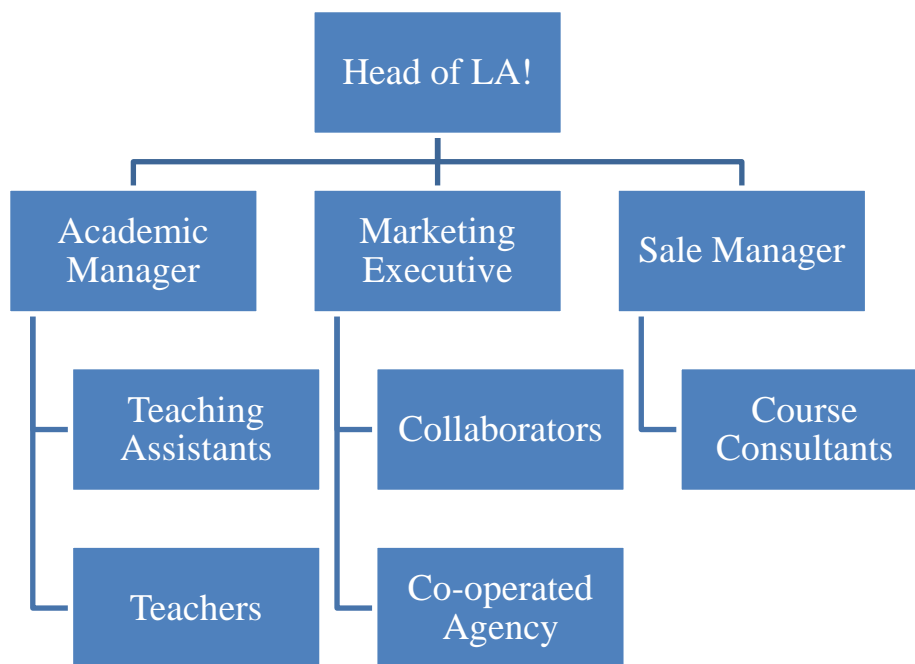


Figure 10. Language Alive! Organization Structure Made by The Author

According to the key responsibilities from the recruitment ads for different departments, combined with personal observation, the key traits of staff in Language Alive! can be described below:

- Academic team: the Academic Manager is also the head of the school. There are 8 teaching assistants and 7 teachers (including Vietnamese and native teachers).
  - The teaching assistants have good accent, have passion in supporting people, have profound knowledge and are always enthusiastic, patient, and proactive. They are responsible for coordinate teacher with students, provide personal support for students and ensure the quality of the class both in the content and the facilities.
  - The teachers have great passion in English and teaching, standard accent, dynamic, friendly and supportive, have up-to-date mind and are always creative to deliver interesting and easy-to-understand lessons.
- Marketing team: the Marketing Executive is in charge of the 20-collaborator team including members who help to hold Preview and run English Speaking Club. Besides, she also works with the agency that supports LA!'s fanpage, setting up the target and following up.

- The collaborators are mostly responsible for offline marketing. They are highly dedicated, willing and open-minded. They have can-do attitude and always try their best to complete all of the tasks even without the requirement for monetary benefit because their biggest desire is working experience.
- The agency has intimate relationship with the school due to the mutual relationship with the mother company. Their strength is copywriting and content management skill; the employees are dynamic, willing and hardworking. However, AHA is not an agency with strong potential and broad scope of work due to the limitation in their ability, financial status and human resource.
- Sale team: there are 7 course consultants in the team who help to contact the students, give valuable information and careful instructions and follow up potential leads. They are also responsible for up-selling current students and taking care of their personal problems.

#### 5.1.2.2 Facilities

- Rooms: there are only 2 small campuses. Both are near the center of the city; therefore it is easier for the students to attend the classes. However, the infrastructure of one campus has severely degraded; the other one has to be shared with other two organizations and mostly only be used for holding Preview. Language Alive! is planning on building a new one in 2017.
- Equipment: Language Alive! tries to facilitate good equipments for learning purpose. However, there are not always enough tools used for teaching; markers are always in lack.
- Lesson plans: the school specially focuses on the lesson plans. Because Language Alive! follows the new philosophy of learning English, it does not have an official curriculum from famous English to teach and cannot offer international certificate; it is a combination of different documents that are re-compiled by the academic team. However, the students are bound to speak English fluently and confidently after one or two courses with the school.

### 5.1.2.3 Finance

The budget for monthly marketing activities of LA each month is as following:

| <b>Categories</b>    | <b>Detail</b>                        | <b>Budget</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Salary               | Marketing Collaborators              | 7,000,000     |
| Marketing Activities | Cooperated agency (Generating leads) | 13,000,000    |
|                      | Other events                         | 10,000,000    |

*Table 5. Budget for Monthly Marketing Activity of Language Alive! Summarized by the Author*

Events are held occasionally several times each year but not fixed; therefore this budget can be saved for later usage if there is any excess in a month.

### 5.1.3 The school key values

There are two surveys conducted in order to have a deeper insight into what students think of Language Alive! as well as the value the school can give. The final set values of Language Alive! can be drawn from the compared result.

- Part 1: The satisfaction of current students for Language Alive!
  - Respondents: 80
  - Questions: Attached in appendices.
  - Qualified quantity: 67

This is the continued part of the survey below mentioned in the measurement of the current marketing plan. It is less time-consuming when asking students to do one survey for two purposes.

After some lessons in Language Alive!, about 91.04% students stated that they had received equal or more values than what they expected. Amongst the values the students gain, dynamic learning environment is mentioned 97.01%. Coming up next is very supportive teaching staff, who are always willing to help students to improve, spend time to sit and chat on request and available all day to answer any question; 89.55% vote for this criteria. The next value is comfortable English speaking environment, accounting for 74.63%, which students can confi-



dently communicate in English without the fear of making mistake or being laughed at. In Language Alive! courses, by pushing on communication, close relationship with classmates and teaching assistant will happen; 70.15% students are satisfied with having good friends after the course. The last good point of the course is that students become more self-consciousness and highly disciplined thanks to the motivational speech integrated in the lessons. However, only 10.45% can see this change in studying behavior. (Figure 12)

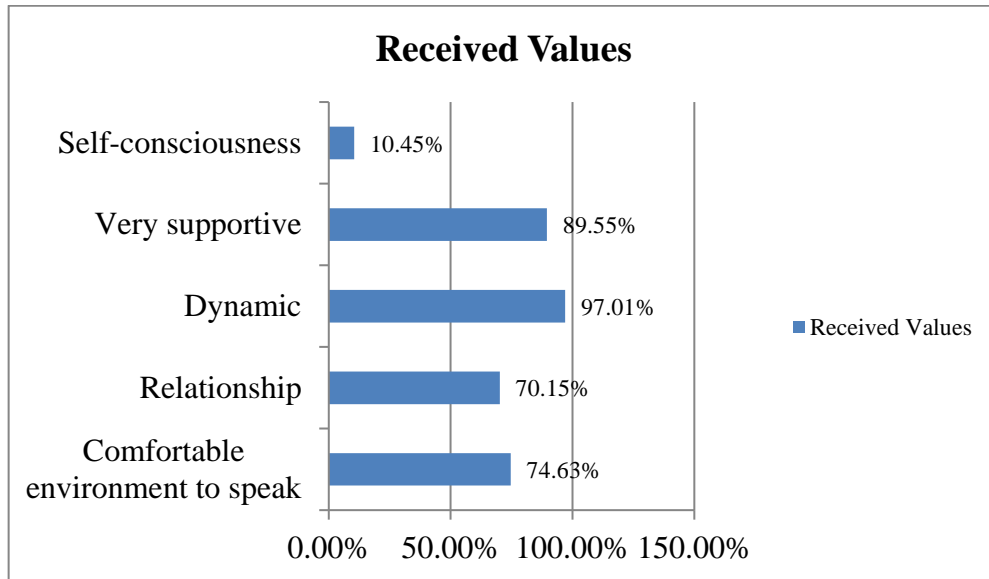


Figure 11. The Values Students Received After The Course

- Part 2: Main values Language Alive! can give the students
  - Respondents: 30
  - Questions: Attached in appendices.
  - Qualified quantity: 30

As this interview was conducted directly with Language Alive!’s employees, all the answers are qualified. More than half of the participants are from Marketing Department (Figure 13), since this research is used for marketing purpose.

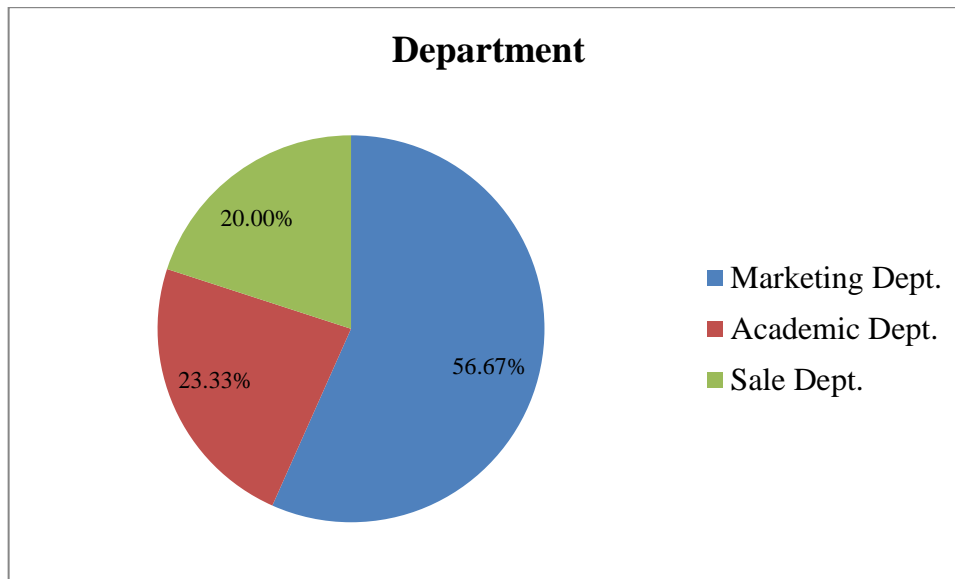


Figure 12. Which Department Do You Belong to?

As all questions are open questions, the adjectives describing the values are variable. However, it can be grouped into groups that express the same meaning.

83.33% of the staff think Language Alive! has energetic environment in which students can step out of the comfort zone and be more dynamic to fully enjoy themselves. 56.67% believe Language Alive! can bring interesting experiences with outdoor activities, camping, holding events, planning for small projects,... so that students can learn through doing. 43.33% feel that Language Alive! is family-like, which means students come to class not only for lessons but also for close-knit relationships. By being through experiences, participating in team activities and sharing knowledge, students usually have intimate friends after the courses. Creativeness, speaking environment, youthfulness and other comments are also mentioned; however, they are not considered as main values that a customer should know about the school. (Figure 14)

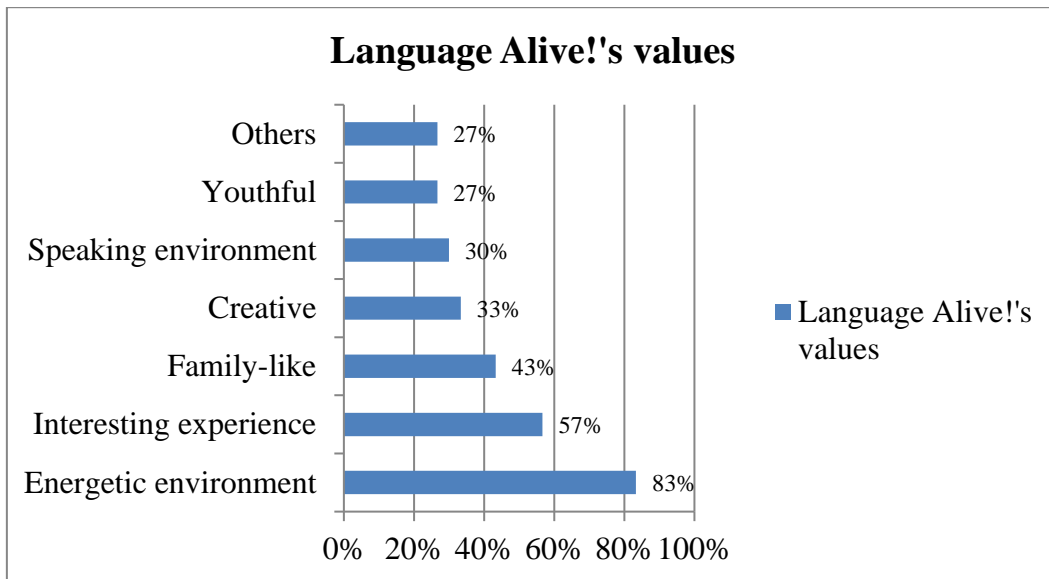


Figure 13. Three Words about Language Alive!

When talking about methodology, 60% of the staff say that this is the natural way of learning, students do not have to try too hard and will not be put under pressure. 53.33% think that this methodology has an extra effect that it can be motivating with the help of teachers and teaching assistants. Students not only have more motivation to learn English but also become more well-manner, have proactive mindset and be willing to experience more. 50.00% think this way of learning is effective; students will learn English faster and better. Other characteristics are also mentioned in Figure 15.

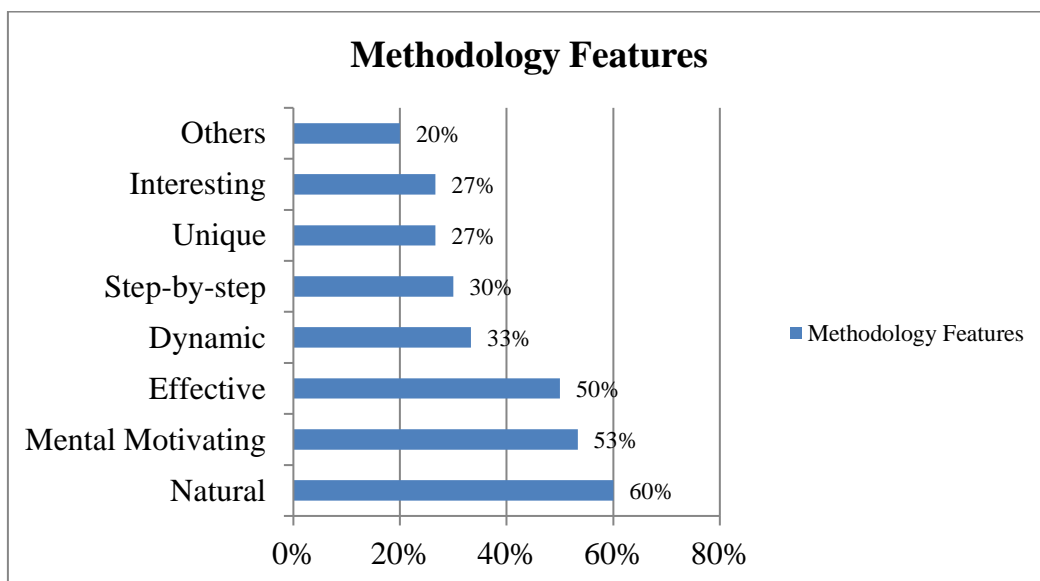


Figure 14. Language Alive's Methodology Features

When learning at Language Alive!, at first, nearly all of the staff admit that students are shy, meek, lazy and lost in future orientation sometimes. Nevertheless, after a 10-week course, the students are more active (90.00%); they are willing to try new things and proactive in learning. They are more friendly (63.33%), which means they are more social, easy to talk with and willing to start a conversation with strangers. Students are believed to have more energy (40.00%); they can handle more tasks with high efficiency and effectiveness. The students also be more creative, confident, closer with friends,... but these are not the main changes of student after a course in Language Alive!. (Figure 16)

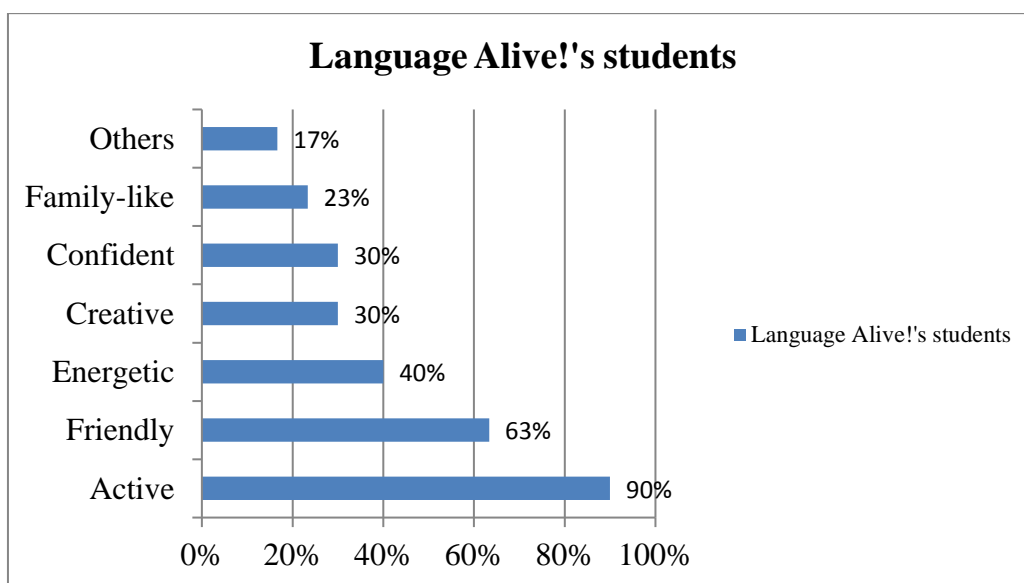


Figure 15. Language Alive!'s Student Characteristics

The two surveys prove that students can actually see the values Language Alive! believe they can deliver. Although there are minor differences in the perceived rank, both sides do have the same set of values that the supply can meet the demand.

Students who are shy and eager to look for a different effective way to learn English can refer Language Alive!. As students are more lazy, they need mental motivation, not coercion, from teachers, which Language Alive!'s methodology can offer. After a course with a dynamic environment, playing in learning, supportive teaching staff, students are more active, confident, self-conscious and have close-knit relationships.

#### **5.1.4 Major competitors**

There are dozens of English Center in Ho Chi Minh City. Some have good quality with many native teachers, reserve the right to use global standard curriculum, and of course, have high price; some have lower quality but have reasonable price so that middle-class family can afford the fee of their children's study; some focus on children under 18; some focus on university students. Generally, English centers in Vietnam are categorized into three big groups according to fame, size and price.

The top English centers are British Council, VUS, ILA, and YOLA. They have been founded for a very long time and have acquired certain fame. The price of these schools are extremely high but they have well-qualified teachers, trustworthy curricula, validated certificates and good infrastructure. They follow traditional way of learning English, which means learning new words, learning grammar, focusing on writing and reading, then developing listening and speaking skills. Because of the fame, they do not have to spend too much money on branding or finding potential customers, and they always have a stable number of students each month.

The middle-sized English centers are Aten, ACET, Equest, Outer Space, Ms. Hoa TOEIC,... They have been founded for quite a long time and are well-recognized by many people. However, they have more reasonable price and not very impressive infrastructure. The curricula they follow are traditional and somehow boring. They also follow traditional ways of marketing. They still have a certain small stable number of students each month.

The small and new English centers are Pasal English, Action English, Step Up English,... They are recently founded in the need of foreign language education. They follow new ways of learning English, trying to combine learning English with other skill-training programs. They have to spend a lot on marketing to compete with other centers in the race of perception as there are plenty of schools in this group but none are well-recognized. Apparently, Language Alive! belongs to this group.

Due to the variety and the huge number of schools in the industry, this thesis only analyses the strengths and weaknesses of some major competitors in the same group of Language Alive!.

| <b>Major Competitors</b> |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Pasal English            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology: Effortless English</li> <li>• Curriculum: focus on speaking and communication.</li> <li>• The center has its methodology based on a new famous method of AJ Hoge; therefore its prestige is higher.</li> <li>• Pasal has campuses both in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city.</li> <li>• 126,147 likes on fanpage (Tiếng Anh Giao Tiếp Pasal: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/PasalEnglish/">https://www.facebook.com/PasalEnglish/</a>).</li> <li>• The content is catching and the visual ads are well designed. The fanpage is used to give values and for testimonial purpose. Pasal spends a lot of money to run ads and public clips.</li> <li>• Pasal also boosts telesales and email marketing. By commenting customers' emails and phone numbers, sale staff will contact for personal consulting.</li> </ul> |
| Action English           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology: learning English + life lessons, Fighting Go</li> <li>• Curriculum: focus on speaking and communication.</li> <li>• Located in Ho Chi Minh City.</li> <li>• 35,471 likes on fanpage (Action English: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/actionenglish.vn/">https://www.facebook.com/actionenglish.vn/</a>).</li> <li>• The fanpage is used for branding purpose which is full of information about the school. The copywriting skill is not good; the content is not interesting.</li> <li>• The courses are meaningful with life lessons; therefore, the center can boost word of mouth strategy.</li> </ul>   |
| Step Up English          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology: natural learning, focus on speaking.</li> <li>• Curriculum: IELTS, TOEIC, learn English again from the beginning.</li> <li>• Located only in Hanoi, the North of Vietnam, but have online courses for those who want to improve speaking</li> </ul>  |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
|           | <p>skills and pronunciation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 149,891 likes on fanpage (Step Up English Center: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/stepupenglishcenter/">https://www.facebook.com/stepupenglishcenter/</a>).</li> <li>• Content on fanpage is not really interesting, visual ads are normal, the schedule for posts are not full. Half of the posts are used for giving values (tips for learning) purpose.</li> <li>• This center uses personal Facebook of the CEO for branding, which is more interactive and reliable.</li> <li>• There are sub-fanpages for each type of curriculum.</li> </ul>  |
| SpeakOnly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology: H.A.N (Hammer A Nail)</li> <li>• Curriculum: focus on speaking, communication and pronunciation. The school also has class for IELTS Speaking and Writing.</li> <li>• Located in Ho Chi Minh City.</li> <li>• 29,720 likes on fanpage (SpeakOnly: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/speakonly/">https://www.facebook.com/speakonly/</a>).</li> <li>• The fanpage focuses on giving tips to study. The center does not post regularly; however, they work hard on the content.</li> <li>• SpeakOnly covers songs to help students learning vocabulary and grammar faster. Some of these clips are viral.</li> <li>• The CEO of this center uses his Facebook for branding purpose, which is more interactive and reliable.</li> </ul> |

Table 6. Major Competitor List

The information of each language school is shown on its fanpage or website. The assumption about the competitors including the categorized groups, their characteristics and the major competitors was made by the author after analyzing the information.

### 5.1.5 SWOT Analysis

- **Strengths**

*What advantages does the organization have?*

- Language Alive! can ensure the quality of the teachers. The teaching staff have good accent and proper pronunciation. They are friendly and caring; thus, the students feel free to ask questions and confident to speak out loud even when they make many mistakes.
- Interesting and uncommon curriculum which is combined from remarkable books is another strength of Language Alive!. Moreover, it can be applied into real life which ensures the practical result of studying.
- The staff at school can inspire and motivate the students to study by motivation speech and additional courses.
- Extra benefits learning at Language Alive! such as friends and close-knit relationships, after class care, English club to join to improve faster,...
- Strong fanpage with nearly 200,000 likes.
- A skillful copywriter team that can write posts with excellent and attractive content.

*What can the organization do better than anyone else?*

- The care and motivation from all of the staff.
  - The right methodology.
  - The quality (good accent and pronunciation) of the teaching staff.
  - The commitment about the ability and confidence after graduation.
- ➔ That is the core and real values of the center.

*What is the organization's Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?*

- As mentioned above about the core values of the center, the methodology is considered as the USP, because the result can be hard to measure but the center can emphasize on the correct way to learn in order to fast improve and reach the target in learning. Amongst many methodology, Language Alive! should impress English learners so that when mentioning about communicating in English, they will immediately think about S.P.E.R.M and project-based method.



➔ This is what Language Alive! needs to achieve. Any strategic marketing plan should aim at reinforcing and spreading the USP.

- **Weaknesses**

- The school can hardly fully express the meaning and usefulness of the methodology and curriculum, which leads to the underestimation of the target customers.

- ➔ The content of the online posts and ads should be adjusted and tested to ensure the message delivered.

- The methodology is difficult to understand and follow. The students need to take time to forget traditional ways of learning to get used to the new methodology and see how it works. They normally quit before that point because the students are impatient.

- ➔ Language Alive! has to adjust the students' mindset about the learning path, the result and the negative feeling they might have through marketing and personal consulting.

- Limited facilities constrain the learning process, both in class and after class.

- ➔ The center needs to save money to upgrade the facilities, or else it will form a bad impression about Language Alive!. Moreover, the need to "learn more" is restricted since there is no library or self-study area.

- Language Alive! is always in lack of teachers and teaching assistants.

- ➔ This can be turned into strengths by emphasizing on the high quality request of teaching staff that leads to the shortage.

- There is no reliable standard to measure the output; the center has no assurance if the result is not achieved.

- ➔ Academic team has to work on this problem.

- The fanpage of the center only focuses on giving values, which means sharing the tips to learn English. Followers on fanpage know nothing about the school.
  - ➔ Focus on branding for the school, the curriculum and the teaching staff in the utmost problem.
- Beside images about new vocabulary, sample sentences and grammar, the fanpage is in lack of interesting clips, interactive activities and infographic designs to increase the engagement.
  - ➔ The marketing department needs a plan for these contents.
- **Opportunities**
  - The demand to learn English is on the increase due to the need of highly qualified labor force, the integration and globalization of the country.
  - The low quality of English education of national curriculum at school and the lack of knowledge of high school teachers.
  - The shift in the way of learning and the methodology, the change in the output request and the new combination between English education, soft skills, reality experience and life lessons.
- **Threats**

*What obstacles does the organization face?*

- High competition in the market. The existence of long-lasting centers attracts students who follow traditional education and need reliability. A lot of small and new English centers are opened that can take away the market share. Centers opened by universities gain most of the students because of the prestige and the competitive price.
- Students and their parents still cannot get rid of the traditional way of learning and the result measurement.
- The prejudice about the degrees and certifications still affects the evaluation and the decision making process.

- The saturation of advertisements and the competition in running ads on Facebook requires outstanding and enticing content combined with timely launched ads to attract most Facebook users.

*Could any of the weaknesses seriously threaten the organization?*

- The focus on practical result makes Language Alive! loses a lot of customers who need reliable degrees and certifications.
- New methodology make students feel they do not learn as much as normally at school or other traditional centers.

To sum up the SWOT analysis, the table below will summarize briefly four main keys: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

| <b>SWOT</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly qualified teaching staff;</li> <li>• Interesting curriculum;</li> <li>• Right methodology;</li> <li>• Staff’s attitude and support;</li> <li>• Extra benefits;</li> <li>• Strong fanpage, skillful copywriter.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand in English;</li> <li>• Low quality of national English education curriculum;</li> <li>• Shift in methodology and learning purpose.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in delivering the methodology and curriculum;</li> <li>• Limited facilities;</li> <li>• Lack of teaching staff;</li> <li>• No reliable standard;</li> <li>• No assurance for output;</li> <li>• Fanpage only focuses on giving learning tips (vocabulary, grammar, sample sentences) and uses simple images.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly competitive market;</li> <li>• Constrain from traditional education;</li> <li>• Prejudice about degrees and certifications.</li> </ul>                   |

*Table 7. SWOT Analysis of Language Alive! English School.*

## **5.2 Industry and market analysis**

### **5.2.1 Industry description**

In Vietnam, it is common for students to have extra classes after school; training centers are opened for different purposes:

- Help students achieve high scores;
- Help students avoid being left behind in class;
- Help students to pass entrance exams;
- Help students to gain knowledge and be better at a certain subject.

Education is a big industry and the business of extra-curriculum training centers is an important sector. The different subjects have divided the business into smaller segments according to the need of knowledge.

As English is a compulsory subject at school and be more and more emphasized on, English centers are the place to deliver the knowledge that teachers at school are short of. With flexible and diverse curriculum, English-speaking environment and native teachers' support, English centers are founded to enhance English skills of the Vietnamese.

### **5.2.2 Growth rate and key growth factors**

Education in Vietnam especially focuses on English training; it is a part of the compulsory subjects at school. However, high school teachers are not qualified enough to help students improve in English. Besides, labor market nowadays requires English capability to take the advantage of the opportunities to be hired. Students at any age all want to have a professional English environment so that they can best acquire the knowledge. Therefore, the market for English language schools is on the increase; dozens of centers are founded and many of branches are opened every year to attract as many students as possible. Thus, the growth rate of this business is quite fast. The more prestigious the language school is, the faster it will grow.

As being mentioned above, English training business is affected by the following factors:

- National education policy
- Development of Vietnam (integration, globalization, relationships with other countries,...)
- Family income
- Literacy level

The higher these criteria increase, the more students register to learn a language, especially English.

### **5.2.3 Financial operating characteristics**

There are myriads of expenditures an English center needs to take care of. However, these are two important numbers that can affect the performance of a school:

- Tuition fee: the price of a course should be reasonable enough to reflect the right quality of the course but has to be high enough to cover all of the costs in operating the business.
- Marketing cost: the money spent on marketing activity should be smart enough to maximize the revenue.

### **5.2.4 Market demand and supply**

- Demand:
  - The requirement of IELTS/TOEIC to graduate from universities/colleges.
  - The requirement for employment.
  - The development of economics, leading to the appearance of the joint-venture companies, which requires professional human resources with good English skills.
  - The development of information technology in which data is given in English leads to the increase in language understanding, especially English.

- Higher education level, leading to the perception of the needs of English from the early ages, which boosts the demand of learning English.
- Supply:
  - The existence of long-lasting English centers: VUS, YOLA, ILA, British Council,...
  - The appearance of new English centers, leading to the disorientation in the selection.
  - The introduction of new methodologies: NLP, Effortless English,...
  - The combination of activities (camping, outdoor activities,...) and soft skills in learning English, boosting the effectiveness of studying.

### 5.2.5 Distribution channel and sale approach

English training is a service business with its special characteristics; therefore, there is only one level: directly from service company to end users. However, a language school can use many support channels for sale approach:

- **Workshops, contests, events:** Language Alive! can hold these types of events, such as Camping, Preview, Career Workshop, Speaking Contests for students,...
- **Sponsors for contests:** Many contests contact for sponsorship, Language Alive! can offer vouchers or scholarship, and that organization offers free advertisement in a short period in return.
- **Relationship with English clubs/high school or university principals:** the relationship can help Language Alive to have better chance to hold events at the schools/universities and be more reliable to the students.
- **Word Of Mouth:** promotional package that discount an amount of tuition fee if someone's friend is asked to enroll for a course.
- **Affiliate marketing:** having banners posted on related-topic websites. Nevertheless, this form of marketing is not effective in case of small English center like Language Alive! because people are bombarded with advertisements from English schools. Students are not interested in banners if it is not from famous English centers.

- **Social media marketing:** Social media is the channel that helps to generate leads; mostly use Language Alive! channel as it can reduce the money spent on marketing.

## 5.2.6 Advertisement, public relation and promotional plans

- **Advertisement:** Advertisement and promotional clips, branding clips, testimonial clips,...

Content marketing nowadays need to be more visual. By boosting clips, there is a higher chance that the vital information can be read by potential customers. Music and other effects help to increase the emotion and increase engagement to the clip.

Branding and testimonial are two aspects that Language Alive! has to emphasize in order to increase the prestige and clearly positioning.

- **Public relation (PR):** Preview, English Speaking Club, Workshops,...

The workshops in general are held for three purposes: to raise the awareness of Language Alive!, to help students understand the importance of English in the future and in career and to offer experience of new methodology.

- **Promotional plans:** Through Language Alive! fanpage, landing page, blog, Youtube and supportive communication channel Awake Your Power.

Promotions through social media play an important role in marketing campaign nowadays as they involved people most. This is the digital ego for marketing and thus, they need to be focused and operated efficiency. Especially the school's fanpage, which is the most effective channel that generates most leads and also the channel this thesis focuses on, should be developed in content as well as visual in order to help Language Alive! reach the targets.

- **Newsletter and subscription, database**

The purpose is to follow up potential customers. In detail, customers who register for Preview will have their emails and phone numbers saved in the master file. They will receive tips to study by email and phone call for customer care. The next plan is to have Youtube Channel which potential customers can subscribe for online lessons.

## 5.3 Market segment analysis

### 5.3.1 Target segment criteria

English learners in Vietnam are divided into groups according to age ranges:

- Under 6: Kids attending kindergarten level. The decision to go to an English center relied on parents; they only need a professional English-speaking environment so that the children can have a chance to get to know English and will be more confident in communication. Families in this group are wealthy as they can afford expensive tuition fee from the very early life of their children.
- 6 – 11: students attending elementary level. This group focuses on basic communication. The decision also depends on parents but the children can somehow have some influence. The lessons need to be interesting and interactive so that the children are eager to go to class.
- 12 – 15: students attending lower secondary level. This group focuses on writing and reading skills, including grammatical and lexical knowledge. It is the parents that decide the English center to study but they will ask their children about the quality of the courses and check the result of their children after the tests to make a decision.
- 16 – 18: students attending upper secondary level. This group focuses more on skills to pass the entrance exam tests into university, so they are not really interested in courses from English centers. Only those parents who want their children to go abroad will sign up for courses that prepare for international tests such as SAT, TOEFL, IELTS,... The students now can research and choose which center to go to but the final decision still depends on their parents.
- 19 – 22: students attending tertiary level. This group pays more attention to the practical knowledge when learning English because they need to use English to find jobs and develop their career. Students can make decision themselves based on their needs and the researched information, either on internet or by their own experience.
- 22+: post-graduate students. This group also needs practical skills but they do not have enough time and motivation to study due to the busy working schedule.



Mostly, they sign up for a course when they are required to know proper English to get an opportunity.

The market is then segmented according to the age ranges and the needs. According to age range, there are 3 main segments:

- Kids (under 12): This segment does not have any pressure to study. The kids only want to have fun.
- Adolescents (13 – 18): This segment is extremely busy with studying schedule at school; they are also obsessed with scores and require immediate and evident progress.
- Adults (19+): They are quite lazy and have no pressure unless they are put in an urgent situation. They have other concerns to take care of; therefore, they easily get distracted while learning.

According to the needs, there are three main reasons:

- Studying abroad: English learners need to achieve a required score in some international tests such as SAT, TOEFL, IELTS,... so that they can get admission to schools in other countries. Therefore, they need to train the skills appropriate with the test they take.
- Tests at school in Vietnam: there are a lot of students only learn English so that they can pass the exams at school or win the English national competitions. These students only focus on academic vocabulary and advanced grammar.
- Communication: Most of those who learn English hope they can properly use English and feel confident to communicate with foreigners. This need supports future career and opportunity. However, they are often confused their needs with what they have learned. In most cases, they know more words and have better grammar base, but they still cannot really make use of their knowledge.

In this stage, Language Alive!'s target segment is adults with the need to be able to communicate fluently and confidently in English.

### 5.3.2 Customer characteristics

- **Geography**

Location: the potential customers of Language Alive! live in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Because the school is located in the center of the city, it is easier for the students to attend class from any district.

- **Demographics:** Upper secondary school students, university students, post-graduate students who are exhausted in learning English, need an effective way to learn and look for something practical.

Age: Language Alive! focuses on the adults because they are capable of following the methodology.

Gender: Both male and female.

Income: Because the customers are young adults, they still financially depend on their parents. Some still need to ask for permission to register for the courses. Besides, since the target segments are those who tired of learning English, they are not from the high-class families. In Vietnam, rich families give their children opportunities to learn English from the very early stage and then study abroad; therefore, there is not a high chance of students bad at English but come from families with high income. According to the Vietnam Average Monthly Wages, the average income of a person in Vietnam is 4,933,000 VNĐ/month (2017).

Education: Well-educated, university students, post-graduate or at least have finished upper secondary education.

Occupation: Students, gap year students, post-graduates or white collar staffs,...

Marital Status: Single.

Culture: Vietnam is a dynamic country in which people are bombarded with a lot of advertisements in different ways; therefore, the students are rational whenever making a choice; they will search for information from online sources, ask friends and experience themselves before making a decision. Being affected by

the traditional education during 12 years of studying, students usually look for famous or long-standing centers with tradition ways of learning, which means focusing on lexicons and grammar. Moreover, students need teachers to teach carefully and force them to study hard so that they can have the feeling they have really learned something. Vietnamese students are dynamic, fascinated in new interesting things but easily get bored, feel demotivated and give up. They are also passive in class since they are used to the traditional ways of learning that they have to listen to what is taught and learn by heart. Learning English is always the last thing in the to-do list since students think that English is only used to support for the future but it is not really necessary.

Leisure activities: Vietnamese students are keen on hanging out with friends, attending workshops or dynamic events; they try to stay connected with friends as much as possible. They also love travelling by themselves.

Buying Influence: The customers sign up for an English course due to the demand of certificates to graduate university or to study abroad. In the age of integration and globalization, not knowing English means giving up most of the chances to work for big companies and earn high salary. Furthermore, in the advance of technology and international news, young generation need English to stay up-to-date with the latest information.

Benefit sought: Confidence, knowledge, ability to communicate, other soft skills supporting future career such as project planning and management, teamwork, public speaking, critical thinking...

Loyalty status: If a language center is qualified and satisfying enough, students will follow until they finish the final course. Or else, they are willing to drop at anytime and look for information in other schools. Besides, if they think a center is good, they may introduce to their friends and relatives or ask them to join with them.

- **Psychographics**

Attitudes: In the process of trying to be mature in life and discover the new horizon. These students are looking for a good job with high salary and are eager with skills that offer them opportunities.

Race/Nationality: There are 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. The proportion is as following: Kinh 86.2%, Tay 1.9%, Tai Ethnic 1.7%, Khmer Krom 1.4%, Hoa 1.1%, Nung 1.1%, Hmong 1% and others 4.1%. However, the national language is Vietnamese; other ethnic groups still have to use Vietnamese for education and communication (Wikipedia, 2016). Except for Kinh, other ethnic groups rarely have any chance to expose to English.

Lifestyle: Busy, dynamic, fast living pace but still keep the habit of procrastination. People easily get busy with small tasks but keep on putting off important ones.

Social Class: Middle or high class since they are the ones who pay attention to English skills to support future career.

Values: Effectiveness, knowledge, good English accent, professionalism, confidence, relationships, sharing, seek value for money, quality conscious,...

Personality: Emotional, lazy, vibrant, passive, indecisive, dependant,...

### **5.3.3 Customer needs and wants**

The survey was conducted to deeply understand what the students need when they sign up for a course:

- Respondents: 115
- Questions: Attached in appendice
- Qualified quantity: 97

The survey was conducted with students living in Ho Chi Minh City. Amongst the qualified quantity, the age groups occupied as following:

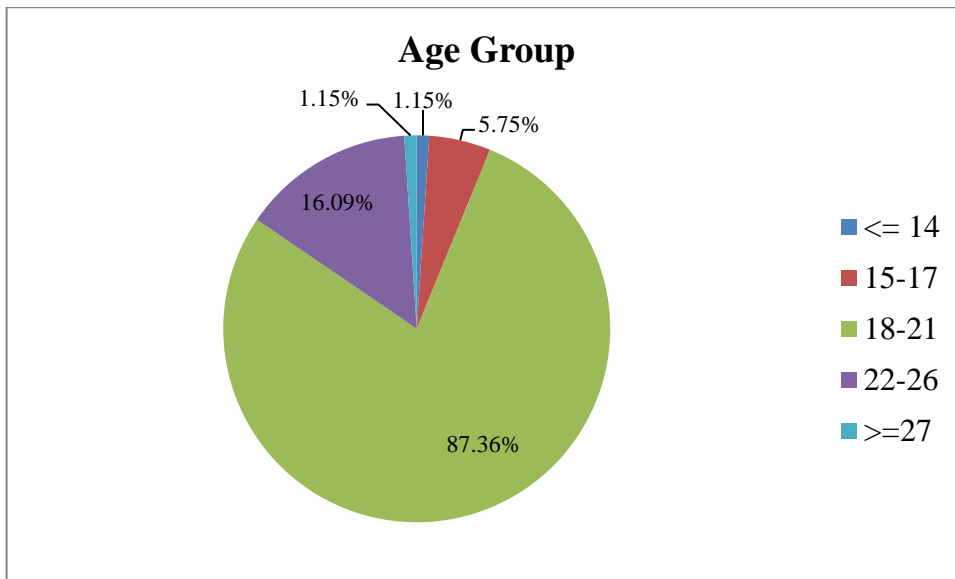


Figure 16. Age Group

Most of the participants are university or college students (93.10%); this is also the potential and target customers of Language Alive!. Young post graduate stands for second position with 11.49%. The rest are high school students accounting for 6.90%. (Figure 18)

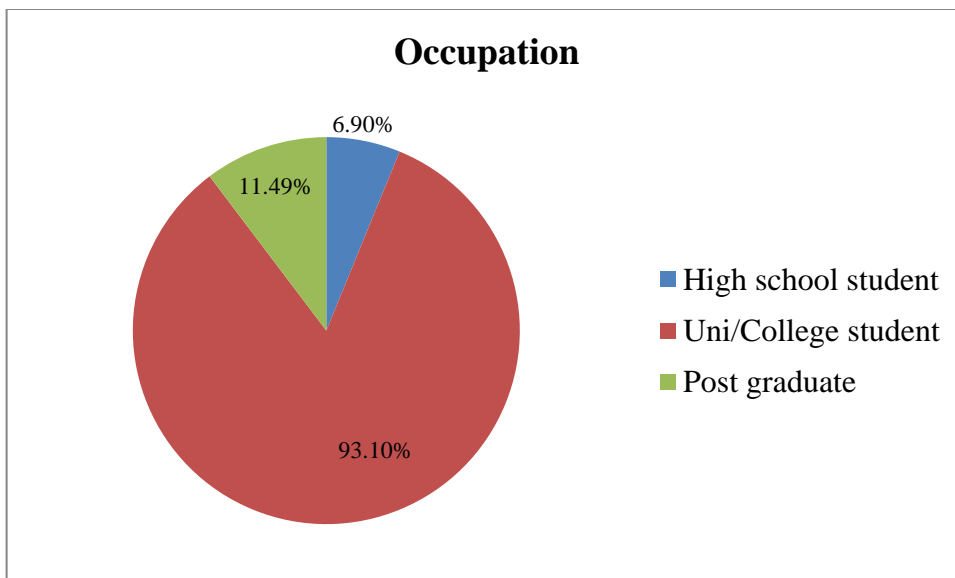


Figure 17. The Occupation of the Participants

When the participants give self-assessment, in general, they are more confident in reading and listening, which are related to passive learning methods: only sit and listen to what is said. Writing is consider as a hard skill to accomplish and listen is a nightmare of the students, since these skills need students to use what they have learned, the

grammar, the vocabulary,..., to turn into the output in order to deliver messages. With that result, 28.87% of the participants have never ever studied at any English school.

Amongst those who have at least once or are still attending classes at an English school, 23.94% has chosen VUS, as this is one of the first English schools with native teachers, high-quality facilities and high prestige. ILA, which was opened only a few years after VUS, stands for second position with 15.49%. This school has positioned itself as a school that has 100% English speaking environment with only native teachers and its target customers are kids or teenagers. VAS takes up 12.68% of the result; this is also a high quality English center but it was established long after VUS. YOLA, which is a center for students who needs certificates mainly for studying abroad purpose, accounts for 9.86%. These schools are the top ones with great prestige along with extremely high price.

Amongst the middle-sized English school, RES, CEFALT take up 4.23% and VATC, DHSP, Semeo, Centre Point take up 2.82% each. The rest are small and new English schools which were mentioned only once and each accounts for 1.41%. (Figure 19)

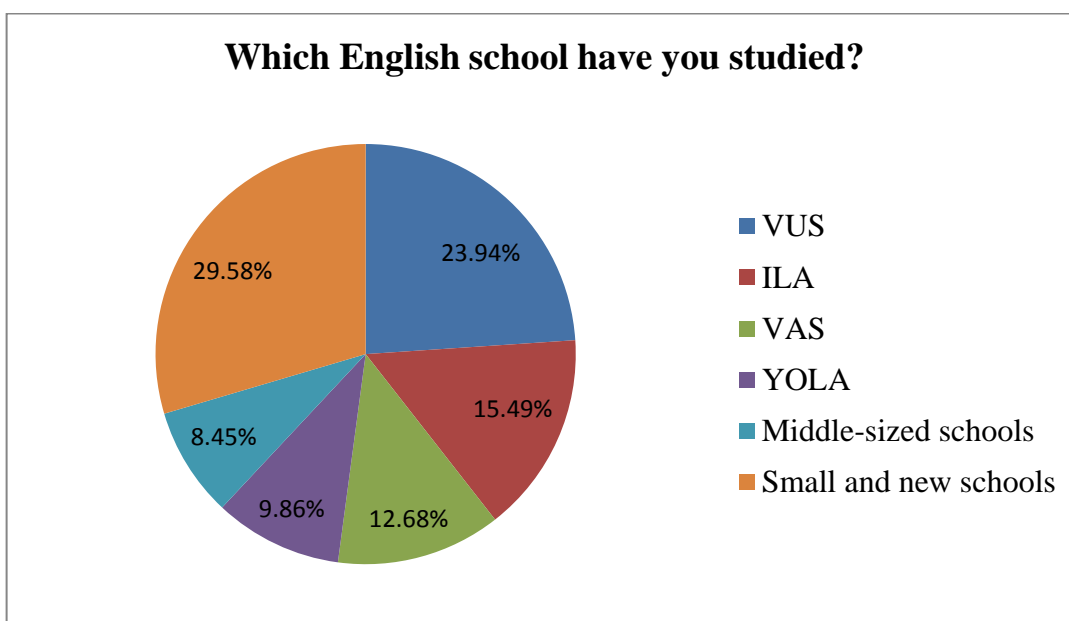


Figure 18. Which English School Have You Studied?

Although English is getting more and more important, students in Vietnam still postpone focusing on this language skill. The question is asked to know when is the triggering time students think they need to improve on English.

The most voted reason is the lack of self-study ability (22.68%). Because of the wrong way in education from the very early stage of life, Vietnamese students are lazy and usually put off the unimportant tasks until they turn into the urgency. Attending class means having someone to force them to study harder. The second reason is when they realize the importance of English (19.59%), such as the chance to have scholarship, the opportunity to get promotion,... The third reason is when they need English to get a job and the fourth one is when they need certificates to submit for graduation or some kinds of admission. Speaking improvement is not considered as one of the top needs since it belongs to self-improvement, which is not affected by external factors. The two last reasons push students to find an English center are when seeing their friends' great improvement and when needing to communicate with native speakers. (Figure 20)

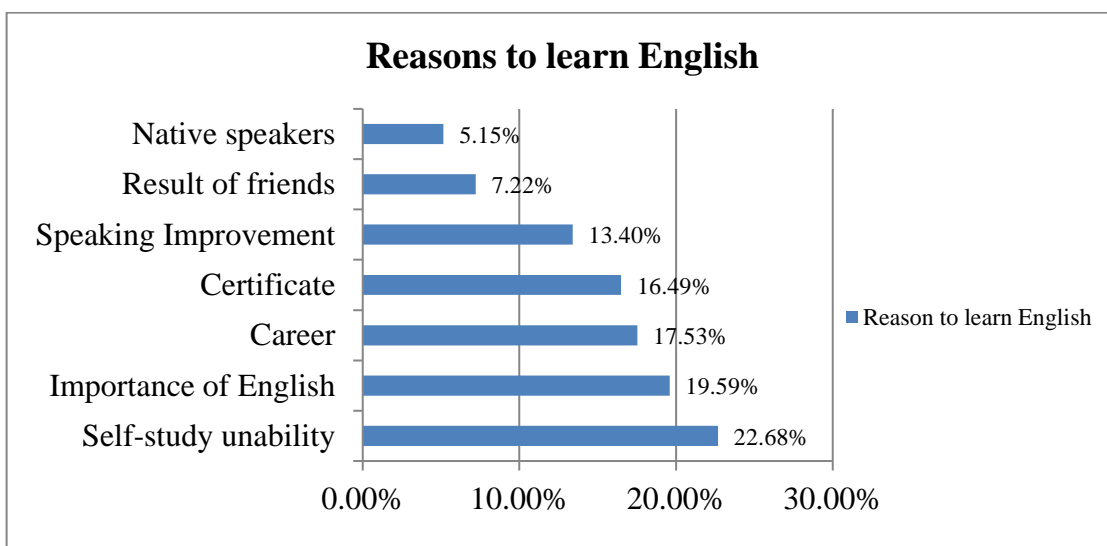


Figure 19. The Reasons a Student Decides to Study in an English School

When being asked about the criteria to choose an English school, the respondents think teacher is the most vital factor (34.02%). Teacher should be excellent with flying color degrees, nice, friendly, pleasant, and have interesting way to deliver knowledge. Secondly, the quality of the school is also important (32.99%). Students need to ensure the improvement after the course and know the money they spend worthwhile. Therefore, price is the third top criteria accounting for 31.96%. As the target customers are university students, most of them are still unemployed and need financial support from parents. They are not willing to choose a school with a too high tuition fee. Methodology, prestige and environment are the three following factors. The methodology has to be affective, the school needs to have good prestige and the environment is fun, dynamic,

100% English speaking and friendly. Facilities, place and practicality is less put into consideration by the participants. However, students still want to have proper facilities: large rooms, new and up-to-date equipments,... The short distance when travelling to school is a good point; it will reduce the number of absent day or the drop rate of the course. Extra skills, the number of student in class and the time of the class can be thought of as an advantage. If students can both be better in English and train other skills such as teamwork, project management, discussion,... they will be more eager to research information about that center to think through. The participants also want to have class with a few students so that they can have more chance to speak and more support from teaching staff. Time is the last criteria students think of. Apparently, they cannot attend classes that take place at the time they are busy. Moreover, they do not like classes which are too short or too long. (Figure 21)

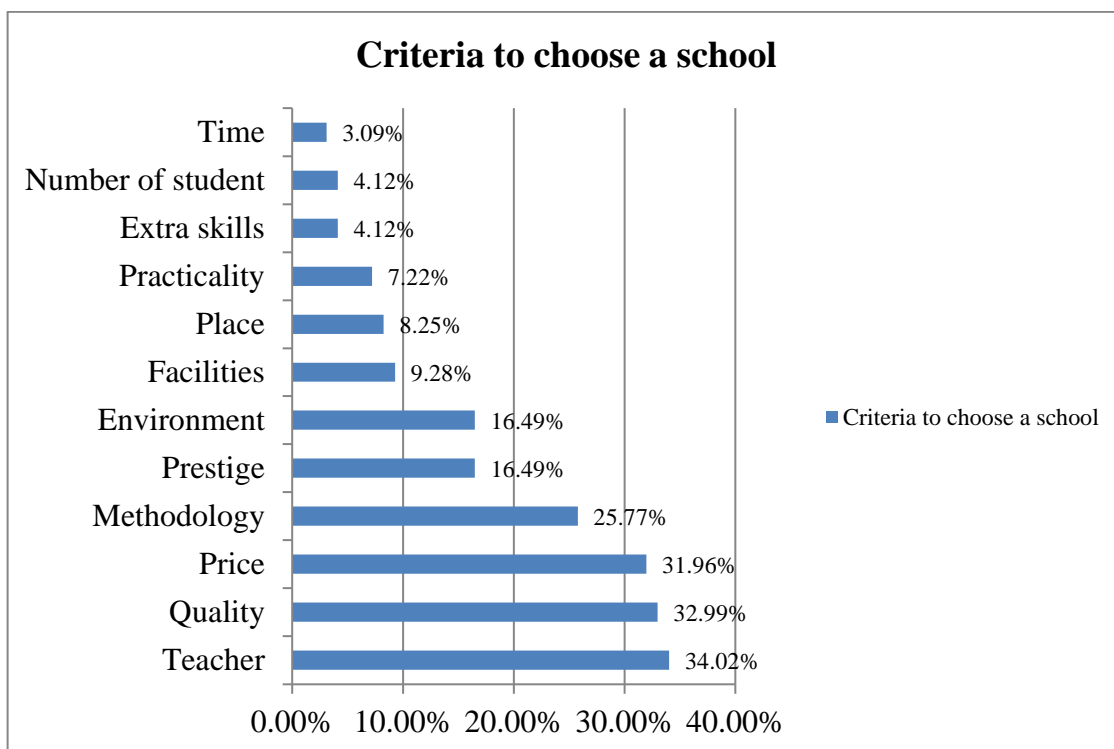


Figure 20. The Criteria to Choose An English School

To sum up, according to this survey, what the customers need are:

- Motivation in learning
- Certificates
- Opportunities in future (education, career,...)



What the customers want are:

- High quality school (teacher, methodology, prestige)
- Reasonable price
- Environment (fun, creative, 100% English,...)
- Good facilities (rooms, equipments,...)
- Convenient location
- Extra benefit
- Number of student
- Suitable time

In order to respond to the demands of the target customers, Language Alive! should focus on delivering message about the quality and the environment and how the school can help students to achieve what they need with these criteria. Since the price is out of the scope of this thesis and now fixed and can easily be seen on the landing page, there is no need to focus on this factor.

## **5.4 Suggested strategies**

Instead of putting emphasis on the paid ads generating leads, Language Alive! now should prioritize branding posts, building reputation, especially about the quality of the course and the learning environment. By focusing on branding, Language Alive! will gradually raise the awareness and understanding about the school.

### **5.4.1 Marketing objectives**

The goal of the Facebook marketing plan is to increase the revenue by 120% in 2018. Then, the marketing objectives in 2017 are as following:

- Cost per lead AYP: reduce 20%
- Cost per paid lead LA!: reduce 10%
- Organic lead LA!: increase 25%
- Comment ask for information: increase 50%
- Percentage of closed lead: reach 5% of the total number of lead

### 5.4.2 Action plan

Having built a huge community with nearly 200,000 followers, it is high time Language Alive! changed their goal in developing fanpage so that its community can be used to create benefit for the school in return.

To achieve the marketing objectives, Language Alive! should first try to change the belief to affect the needs of the potential customers, then focus on demonstrating their values which can help the customers to fulfill the needs. When the students are still obsessed with the traditional way of study and the pressure of qualification, the core values of Language Alive! cannot meet their needs and the school can never be their consideration.

The detailed plan to accomplish the marketing objectives is illustrated below:

| Purpose                         | Strategy   | Deliverables  | Quantity | HR                           | Posting Time |
|---------------------------------|--|---|----------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Highly qualified teaching staff | Branding teachers/teaching assistants on how friendly and excellent they are -> what students here can benefit from that | Branding <b>clip</b>  | 1/month  | Teaching staff + editor team | 6AM          |
|                                 |  | Funny and easy tips for learning ( <b>clip</b> )                                  | 2/week   | Teaching staff + editor team | 10PM         |
|                                 |  | Online Contest and mini games ( <b>photo</b> )                                    | 1/week   | 1 teacher + Copywriter team  | 8PM          |
| Methodology                     | Letting potential customers know the highlights of the methodology and how they can help stu-                            | Long <b>post</b> about fun and effective activities inside and outside class room | 2/month  | Copywriter team              | 8PM          |
|                                 |  | <b>Photo al-</b>  | 2/month  | Editor team                  | 8PM          |

|                                      |   |   |                 |                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
|                                      | dents.  | <b>bum/Clip</b> about projects student run  |                 |                                      |          |
| Prestige                             | Testimonial and students' progress                                | <b>Clip</b> about students express in English their feelings when learning here               | 2/month         | Editor team                          | 8PM      |
|                                      |   | <b>Post</b> written in English by students about good memories or how they love learning here | 2/month         | Teaching Assistant + Copywriter team | 8PM      |
| Environment                          | Activities that create the ideal environment for learning English | <b>Post</b> for English Speaking Club Activities  | 1/week          | Copywriter team                      | 10PM     |
|                                      |   | <b>Clip</b> about fun part of the club  | 1/month         | Editor team                          | 8PM      |
|                                      |   | Camping ( <b>campaign</b> )   | 2/week (post) + | Copywriter team + Editor team        | 10PM/8PM |
|                                      |   | Workshops ( <b>campaign</b> )   | 1/week (clip),  |                                      |          |
| Other activities ( <b>campaign</b> ) | limited in the time the event takes place                         |   |                 |                                      |          |
| Change belief in what students       | Showing the wrong ways in learning and                            | Inter-view/Reporting <b>clip</b>  | 1/4 months      | Copywriter team + Editor team        | 10PM/8AM |

|      |  |            |               |                                       |              |
|------|--|------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| need | their results  | Viral clip | 1/4month<br>s | Copywriter<br>team + Edi-<br>tor team | 10PM/<br>8AM |
|      | Showing how<br>students around<br>the world learn<br>English |            |               |                                       |              |
|      | Illustrating the<br>importance in<br>English                 |            |               |                                       |              |
|      | Revealing the<br>real values of<br>certificates              |            | 1/4<br>months | Copywriter<br>team + Edi-<br>tor team | 10PM/<br>8AM |

Table 8. Detailed Plan for Facebook Marketing

Because the content of post in the plan no longer focuses on the short-term values (learning tips), the TAT and engagement of users will sharply decline. The measurement will base on the percentage of closed leads over the online leads and the CPL.

The new content will be immediately and continuously reviewed and improved according to the content strategy of Ahava (2013, pg.15) mentioned in the theory part.

### 5.4.3 Budgeting

The proposed salary ranges for each type of deliverable are:

| Category   | Description  | Benefit (VNĐ) |
|------------|--|---------------|
| Album      | Retouch 5-10 pictures                                | 15,000        |
| Image      | Fully design a photo for any campaign, game, contest | 30,000        |
| Short Clip | Less than 2 minutes                                  | 200,000       |
| Long Clip  | 2-4 minutes  | 400,000       |
| Viral Clip | Reach about 200,000 views                            | 1,200,000     |
| Post       | 300-500 words  | 25,000        |
| Edit       | Edit posts from students to be more interesting      | 5,000         |

Table 9. Proposed Salary to the Run Action Plan

With the plan designed above, the estimated budget for the activities in a month is calculated as following:

| Category      | Deliverables |       |            |           |            |      |      | Benefit (VND)    |
|---------------|--------------|-------|------------|-----------|------------|------|------|------------------|
|               | Album        | Image | Short Clip | Long Clip | Viral Clip | Post | Edit |                  |
| Quality       |              | 4     | 1          | 8         |            | 4    |      | 3,620,000        |
| Methodology   | 1            |       | 1          |           |            | 2    |      | 265,000          |
| Prestige      |              |       | 2          |           |            |      | 2    | 410,000          |
| Environment   |              |       | 3          |           |            | 8    |      | 800,000          |
| Change belief |              |       |            |           | 1          |      |      | 1,200,000        |
| <b>SUM</b>    |              |       |            |           |            |      |      | <b>6,295,000</b> |

Table 10. Estimated Salary Budget

## 5.5 Implementation

To run the plan, Language Alive! need a new team with specialized skills and deep understanding about the school. Those who prepare for the content should follow up the activities of the school closely to write the most authentic articles. Hence, it is highly recommended that Language Alive! should have an internal team to execute the new plan.

There are five phases that Language Alive! has to go through before really enter the execution.

- Phase 1: Foundation
  - Time: 1 week.
  - Tasks:
    - Agree on leader
    - Vision and Mission of new team
    - Team's statement of work
  - HR: Online Marketing team leader, AHA Agency, Marketing Executive.
- Phase 2: Recruitment

- Time: 2 weeks
- Tasks:
  - o Plan on recruiting criteria
  - o Plan on timeline
  - o Recruit
- HR: Online Marketing team leader, Marketing Executive.
  
- Phase 3: Training
  - Time: 6 weeks
  - Tasks:
    - o Probation
    - o Training on specialized skills
    - o Feedback and improve
  - HR: Online Marketing team leader, Marketing Executive,
  
- Phase 4: Execution
  - Time: Unlimited
  - Tasks:
    - o Agree on the final action plan and timeline of work
    - o Execute
  - HR: Marketing Executive, Online Marketing team, AHA Agency.
  
- Phase 5: Measurement and Improvement
  - Time: Unlimited (right after execution)
  - Tasks: Feedback on the result and improve
  - HR: Marketing Executive, Online Marketing team.

## **6 DISCUSSION& CONCLUSION**

According to Alries & Jack Trout (2013), if a company cannot go first in an industry, it should go first in a niche market in order to gain most attention and win highest market shares. Language Alive! was founded two years ago, at which time people still follow

traditional way to learn a language and feel fear to death to use that language to communicate, but still not be recognized in English education market. Nowadays, long-lasting English schools have realized the new trend in learning English; new English schools are open with myriad methodologies to learn most effective; it is getting harder for Language Alive! to affirm the brand on the market and win back the recognition they should have had, especially when the competitors are spending too much money for branding.

The surveys and data collected from the school have proved that the current marketing plan is not effective. There is no information about the school on fanpage and those who register for the Preview actually go because of the curiosity they feel for the content of the ad they read. The followers on fanpage somehow are free riders; they follow for learning tips and have no intention to study in a place they know nothing about. Most of the students of Language Alive! rarely read any post on; some even do not know about the existence of the fanpage. Clearly, the fanpage is built neither for current nor future students. Language Alive! should boost activities on branding in order to have more organic leads and be recognized by English learners.

The marketing plan has showed where Language Alive! is standing based on the external reality in the surveys and the internal factors such as the products the school can offer, the resources it has and the competitors it has to face. Moreover, the surveys to confirm on the matching of the value Language Alive! gives and those that students receive. From the findings, SWOT analysis can be drawn up. Education industry and English education market have also been studied comprehensively for a general perspective. However, the analysis mostly bases on the visual reality because there is no reliable source discussing about this topic. Besides, there is no public statistics about the industry as well as the market shares; therefore these external factors are not the vital issues. The surveys were carried out in order to have the most objective insights into the needs and wants of the target customers, thus to deliver the most appropriate values that they are looking for. Then, the final marketing plan is designed with the estimated budget and the plan for execution. The plan only focuses on Facebook marketing because this the most effective channel these days and the main source of leads.

The plan requires Language Alive! to spend more money on salary. The plan is only used for building content of the fanpage, not for running ads; therefore these posts are rarely paid ads. The budget for running ads does not increase.

To sum up, the thesis has met the aims at measuring the effectiveness of the current marketing plan and creating a new plan for Facebook marketing. The new plan changes partly of the content on Facebook, which affects the current status. The result is yet to know, but the TAT and engagement of followers will dramatically fall. The amount of followers may drop but the remaining ones are the qualified.

The plan needs time to run and be adjusted because it leads to a huge change in the working system of Language Alive!: new team, more tasks, more expenditure. Following up is a must to measure the effectiveness and make any change if necessary. Besides, it will get harder when the school has AHA Agency to support marketing activities. It is necessary to reach an agreement between both sides. However, AHA cannot execute the plan because of the lack in resources. Moreover, since the content concentrates on the activities of Language Alive!, the school truly needs a team inside that fully understand the values and the spirit to deliver them entirely. Therefore, both sides need to agree on the plan and expectation; follow up each other closely for support, and review and give feedback regularly are crucial tasks to achieve the goal.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Questionnaire for Language Alive!'s students insights

The purpose of the interview is to define the reason why students chose the school, what benefits they gain after a course and what are the outstanding values that they feel most content with the course in order to run the ad. Besides, the research also wants to know about the effectiveness of Facebook marketing, how it affects the students' behavior in enrolling. The survey was conducted by asking the students one by one during break time in class.

#### Questions:

##### Information questions:

1. What is your name? (Optional)
2. What is your class, teachers and teaching assistant?

##### Motivation Insights:

3. How did you know about Language Alive!?
4. What was your expectation when coming to the Preview?
5. Why did you decide to come to Language Alive?
6. What was your expectation when you register for the course?
7. What are your criteria in choosing a Language School?

##### General Course Assessment:

8. What have you actually got after the course compared to your first expectation?
9. What do you like most about the course?
10. What do you want to improve?

##### Effectiveness of The Fanpage:

11. Do you usually visit our fanpage?
12. If yes, what is your purpose? Which types of post do you usually have a look?
13. According to you, is the fanpage helpful? If yes, in what way?
14. What do you like most about our fanpage?

15. What do you want us to improve the fanpage?

Extra:

16. Do you have any extra comment?

## **Appendix B: Questionnaire for insights of online leads**

Interview 230 online leads through surveys before the Preview in order to know the motivation in participating in the workshop, their spirit and energy, and the level of knowledge about Language Alive! and methodology to know the effectiveness of the advertise posts; whether those posts can attract right leads.

The interview was conducted by the collaborators through the calling to confirm the attendance of the leads. The interview happened in three Previews; there were 230 leads in total, but 63 of them did not answer the phone and 26 cancelled the registration. Thus, the actual responses are 141.

### **Questions:**

1. What are the reasons for your registration?
2. Have you ever heard of Language Alive! before? How much do you know about us?
3. What do you expect in the Preview?

## **Appendix C: Questionnaire about Language Alive!'s core values with the school's staff**

Interview 30 staff and collaborators from different departments of Language Alive! English School to know what their perception is about the values that Language Alive! has and wants to deliver. Therefore, the Language Alive! will know whether all departments offer the same values and whether those values match what students receive.

The questionnaires and answers are recorded in English since this is a language school, anyone must have acceptable English knowledge.

All 5 questions are open questions to ensure the accuracy of the participants' mindset.

### **Questions:**

1. What is your name?
2. Which department do you belong to?
3. Three words appear in your head when you think of Language Alive!?
4. Three words best describe Language Alive!'s methodology?
5. Three words describe Language Alive!'s students?

## Appendix D: Questionnaire about customer needs and wants

Interview 97 participants who are students and post-graduate students about the trends in learning English and customer behavior. The purpose is to know the objective factors that affect the decision in choosing a school.

### Questions:

1. What is your age?

- $\leq 14$
- 15-17
- 18-21
- 22-26
- $\geq 27$

2. What is your occupation?

- High school student
- University/college student
- Post graduate

3. What is your self-assessment of English ability?

|           | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Listening | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Speaking  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Reading   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Writing   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

4. What makes you decide to look for a place to learn English?

5. What affects your choice of choosing a language school?

6. Which language school have you studied?

7. Why did you make that decision?