Developing a Social Media Marketing Strategy, Case ABC4EU

Al-Nasser, Wasim

2017 Laurea

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Developing a Social Media Marketing Strategy, Case ABC4EU

Wasim Al-Nasser
Degree Programme in BIT
Bachelor's Thesis
Month, 2017

Al-Nasser, Wasim

Developing a Social Media Marketing Strategy, Case ABC4EU

Year	2017	Pages	43

The purpose of this project was to develop a social media marketing strategy. The beneficiary is a project called ABC4EU, where my university, Laurea, is a member. The purpose of the social media marketing strategy is to enhance the use of social media networks, and to use them properly to deliver the required message. Another purpose is to figure out the best way to upload pilot videos of the project.

There are several tasks included in this project. Initially I had to do research on the industry and the project. I figured out with the project manager the target audiences and what ABC4Eu would aim to receive from them. Then, I started examining the project's current social media networks, to see the activity and how many followers they have. Then I had to research the best way to reach the target audiences, and how to reach them and use Facebook and Twitter properly. I also did some research about videos, to enhance the pilot videos. Finally, I came up with the end product, which is a strategy in the form of a manual.

There are several knowledge bases used, from studies to articles. As this is not a traditional marketing case, I picked out different great tips from many different sources in order to come up with the best solution for this case.

In the end, the manual contains all the necessary information to enhance the use of Facebook and Twitter, and specifies how to upload the pilot videos to gain more activity. The end product is easy to read and use, and it contains inspiration for posting content and using the social media networks.

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

People travel, and they travel more than before. UN World Tourism Organization estimated that by the year 2012, around 1,035 million tourists had crossed international borders on airplanes. This was a 4% increase from 2011, and 355 % increase from 1980. Travelling can be done for other reasons as well, such as immigration, business, or studying. This means that there is a huge amount of border crossings every year. Therefore, border crossing should be made as effortless and uncomplicated as possible for the travellers. This is what ABC4EU aims to accomplish in this project.

I am supporting the project by developing a social media marketing plan that would enhance the project's current use of social media. I will also point out the best practices to the social media in order to gain more engagement and followers. Another thing I will be doing is developing an upload strategy for the project's pilot videos. This strategy would define how the videos should look like, and what time they would be uploaded on each social media network.

1.1   The Project background

ABC4EU (Automated Border Control Gates for Europe) is an EU wide project that started in January 2014 and is set to last for four years.
The ABC gate analyses the biometric date such as fingerprints or facial pictures from the traveller's travel document. It also checks the verification and the reliability of the travel document. If the result is verified, the traveller is set to continue through the gate.
Currently the ABC system can be used by travellers who hold an EU and Schengen country's ePassport, which is recognizable by a microchip symbol on the passport. One goal this project aims to achieve is to extend the use of these ABC gates to future ePassports and non-Schengen citizens.

The aim of the ABC4EU project is to make border checks more user-friendly and for travellers by adjusting the functionalities of border check automation. Better harmonization and adjustment of these automated gates should enable the traveller to have a better experience when crossing borders, and to encourage the travellers to use these gates at the borders. Enhancing these gates would decrease queuing time, and make the process of crossing a border faster and easier.

1.2 The Project members

ABC4EU is an interdisciplinary project. The project consists of 14 consortium members from 7 different countries. The combination of different views, requirements and limitations enhance the research activities and serves the main purpose of harmonization.

The project is led by Indra Sistemas, S.A from Spain.

The 14 members of the project are:

- Indra Sistemas, S.A
- PricewaterhouseCoopers Torre PwC
- Vision Box – Computer Vision Solutions, S.A.
- Laurea University of Applied Sciences
- Eticas Research and Consulting
- Dermalog Identification Systems GmbH
- Cognitec Systems GmbH
- King Juan Carlos University (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos)
- University of Milan (Universita Degli Studi Di Milano)
- Ministry of Interior of Spain, National Police Force (Ministerio Del Interior, Cuerpo Nacional de Policia)
- Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (Servico de Estrangeiros e Fornteiras)
- Estonian Police and Border Guard Board (Politsei- ja Piirivalveamet)
- Ministry of Internal Affairs of Romania, Directorate for Communication and Information Technology
- Atos

1.3 The problem

The problem here is that the project's social media accounts have too few followers and engagement. The project manager would want to use social media more effectively. Another problem is that there is no strategy for uploading the project's pilot videos. Ideally the videos would be viewed and shared by many people.

2 Thesis Product

The end-product is a strategy in the form of a manual, that contains all the information required for using Facebook and Twitter, and uploading the pilot videos. The manual is in ppt. form, which is easy to open and access by anyone. The manual is 17 pages long, with a clickable table of contents at the beginning. The chapters of the manual are: Goals, Target Audience, Facebook, Twitter, Videos, Social Media Schedule, Related Topics, and Competitions. The manual can be found in Appendix 1.

2.1 Objectives

There are several objectives to this project, in order to reach the end result. First, I have to find the most suitable social media channels to reach the target audiences. The target audiences have

been identified with the project manager, and I need to research the best possible social media networks to reach these target audiences.

Next, the social media channels need improvement on the way they are used. This means improving the frequency of use, what kind of content to share, what makes a good post, what kind of activity to do, and ways of reaching new followers. Also, I need to develop ways on how to deliver information about the project to the target audience within the network itself. The message to be sent to the target audience is basically to inform them about the project, and for the audience to be familiar with the new e-gates and how to use them.

Finally, I need to develop a strategy for uploading the project's pilot videos effectively. This means that I need to figure out how the videos should be like, what social media network to use for uploading, the method of uploading, and the optimal time for uploading the videos. All these need to be done in order to maximize activity from the followers, and for the videos to reach as many people as possible.

2.2   Requirements

As discussed with the project manager, plan should prove that digital marketing is a more efficient method than attending exhibitions. The reserouces are limited, therefore the strategy should not involve too many costs. I decided to make it completely free of costs, in order for it to be implemented right away.

The plan does not need to be all serious, it could include fun components. As in the the content types can be fun and entertaining, the tone of the social media channels can be also fun, and there can be competitions that would grab the attention of the followers.

The strategy had to be ready early enough for it to be implemented, therefore we set a deadline for the strategy's completion. The deadline was between the end of August and the beginning of September. Also, the plan should not be limited to only this case, but to be suitable for other projects in the future as well.

2.3   Challenges

First challenge of this project is that the project's resources are limited. This means I have to find ways on how to market the project that do not cost anything. Next, the content of the project is limited, since this is not a traditional marketing case where there is a product or a service to be sold. Therefore, there is not much of the project's own content to be produced.

There are also some content restrictions, to the content that is allowed to be shared in the social media channels, which also will make it more difficult to share content across the social media networks. As some partners do not allow to post some specific information out to the public.

Lastly, this is not a traditional marketing case. This is a very different case of marketing because there is no product or service to be sold, and the goal is not to acquire customers. So, not all marketing tips can apply for this special case, and not all traditional marketing practices can or should be applied.

3   Theoretical background

3.1   Marketing plan

According to Duermyer (2017), a marketing plan specifies the market you are trying to reach and provides direction for your marketing needs. The plan covers details such as which platforms or tools to use, how to use them, goals, costs, and what kind of actions to take.

A good marketing plan is will set clear and realistic objectives, and will enable you to reach your target audience and increase the amount of your audience. Also, a good marketing plan will help your audience to understand your product or service, and why it is good or important. (Why do I need a marketing plan? 2016).

In this case however, the question is about a social media marketing plan.

A social media marketing plan summarizes everything you plan to do and aim to achieve using social media networks. The plan should include an audit of your current accounts, goals for the networks, and the actions to take to achieve those goals. (LePage 2017).

A good social media marketing plan would have the objectives and goals clearly listed. You need to know what you are aiming to achieve, and what you have to do to achieve it. A good social media marketing plan also has a social media content calendar from where you can see what to do on each day of the week. The calendar can be a weekly calendar, and should include the type of activity for every day, and what kind of content to post for example. The plan should also include some inspiration for content to be uploaded or shared, to make it easier for the social media account user to know what to post or share.

Having a calendar that specifies what content to share or upload each day gives an opportunity to format the messages and write them in advance and with more caution. This is to have better

content instead of writing on the go. (LePage, 2017). In his post on creating a social media marketing plan, LePage (2017) shows what a social media calendar is supposed to look like in figure 12.

Figure 1: How to Create a Social Media Marketing Plan in 6 Steps (LePage 2017).

3.2 Social media marketing

Social media marketing can be defined as the use of social media netowkrs to market a business's merchandise and services. Through social media marketing, companies can build and enhance relationships with customers. Several social media networks offer information about their users, in order for companies to tailor their messages to their target audience. Therefore, companies can focus their resources on the target customers that they desire. (Marketing Plan 2017).

Daoud (2016) states that some of the essential elements of a social media marketing strategy are identifying the business goals, setting marketing objectives, choosing channels and tactics, and creating a content strategy. The content strategy would specify what kind of content to post, when to post, and on what platform or network to post.

3.3 Content marketing

According to Miller (2016), Pulizzi (n.d) states that content marketing is an approach that focuses on creating and sharing valuable and suitable content to attract an audience. Also, according to Miller (2016), Maksymiw (n.d) states that content marketing is the process of creating and distributing valuable content to an audience with the aim of reaching new customers, or enhancing the relationships with current customers.

Moore (2017) suggests that good content should not be too complicated, but simple enough for anyone to understand. The content should also be findable, you want to make youre that your audience will find it. Also, the content should be shareable easily around Facebook, Twitter, and Email. People should be inspired to read the comments and comment themselves and share the content, therefore the content needs to be engaging. Finally, the content needs to be relevant to the target audience

3.4 Facebook

Facebook is the largest social media network out there. Many businesses find it useful for connecting with customers and showcasing their products and services, even though the average users use it to post personal updates. (Bowers 2017). Facebook has 2 billion active users in the third quarter of 2017 (Statista, 2017).
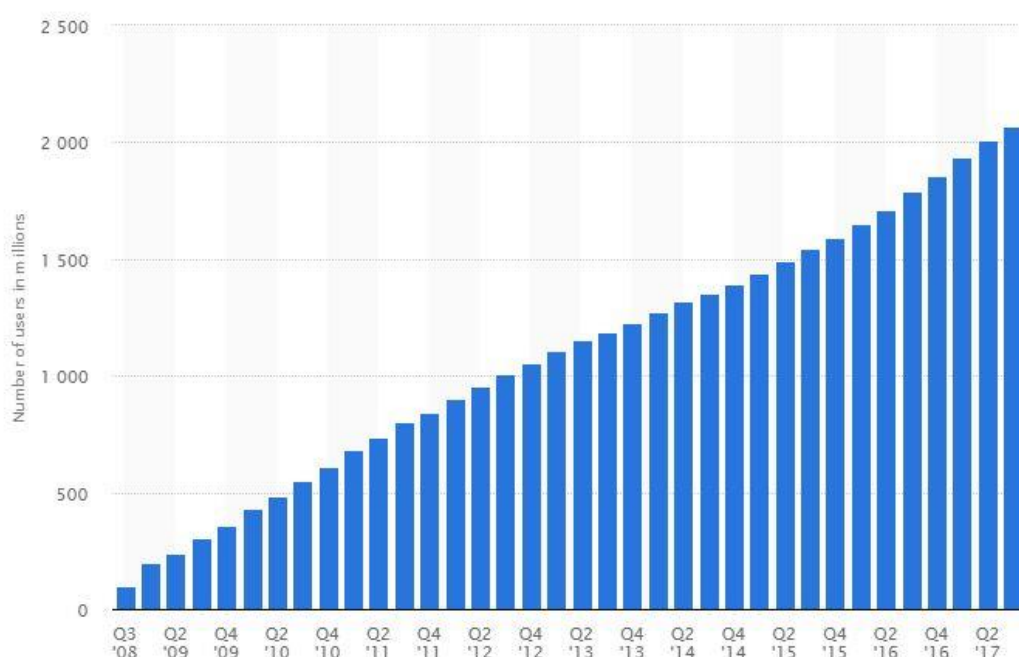
Figure 2: Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions) (Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions) 2017).

People who like or follow the Facebook page receive updates on their News Feed, while the business can raise brand awareness, advertise, interact with users, and collect insights about their audience (Conley 2017). Therefore having lots of followers for a company's or an organization's

Facebook page can be important to measure the audience on social media, and to see the audience they would be posting updates to.

According to a study by Blitzlocal (2012), videos have more interaction from audiences than photos and statuses. By looking at the figure below, you can see what content type has a better rate of interaction. In our case, the blue lines matter because ABC4EU Facebook account has less than 100,000 fans.
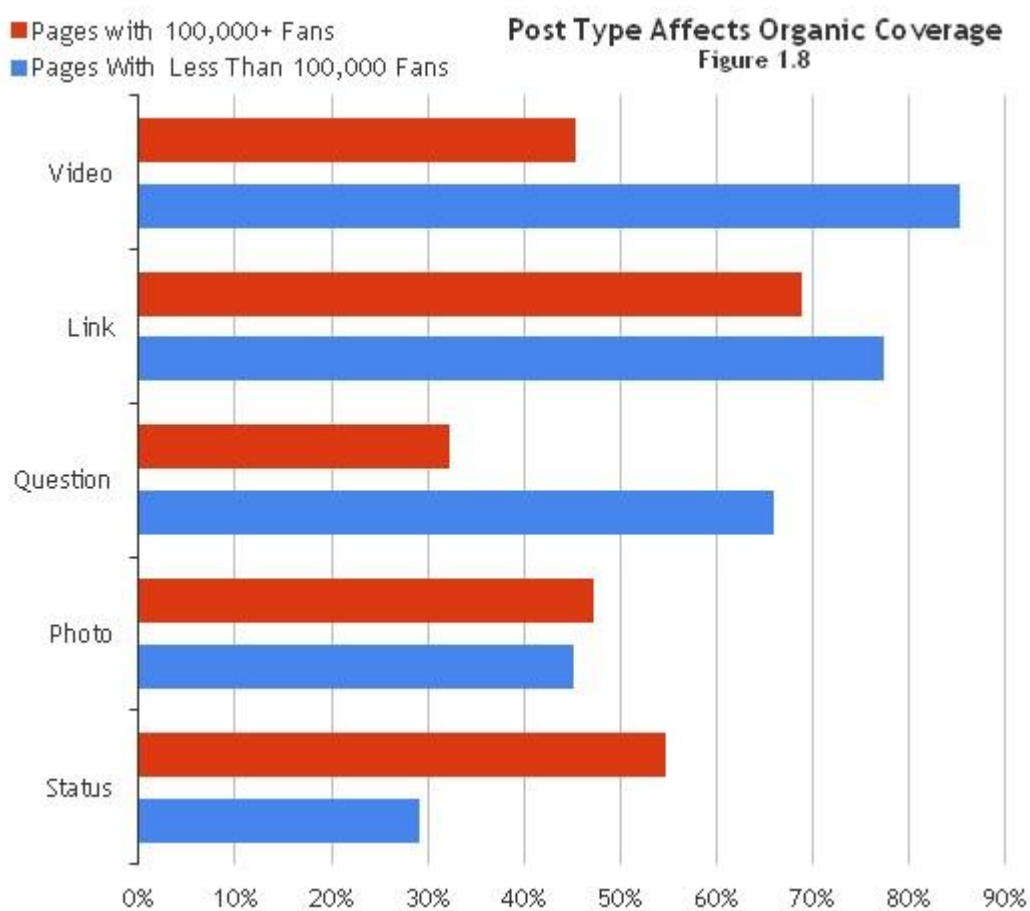
Figure 3: What 120 Billion Facebook Impressions Can Tell Us (Kapur 2012).

One way on how to optimize content is having short posts. According to the study by Blitzlocal (2012), shorter posts have higher engagement than longer ones. According to figure 4, best engagement is with questions that range from 80-119 characters. That would be the optimal range for written posts and descriptions of videos, links or photos.
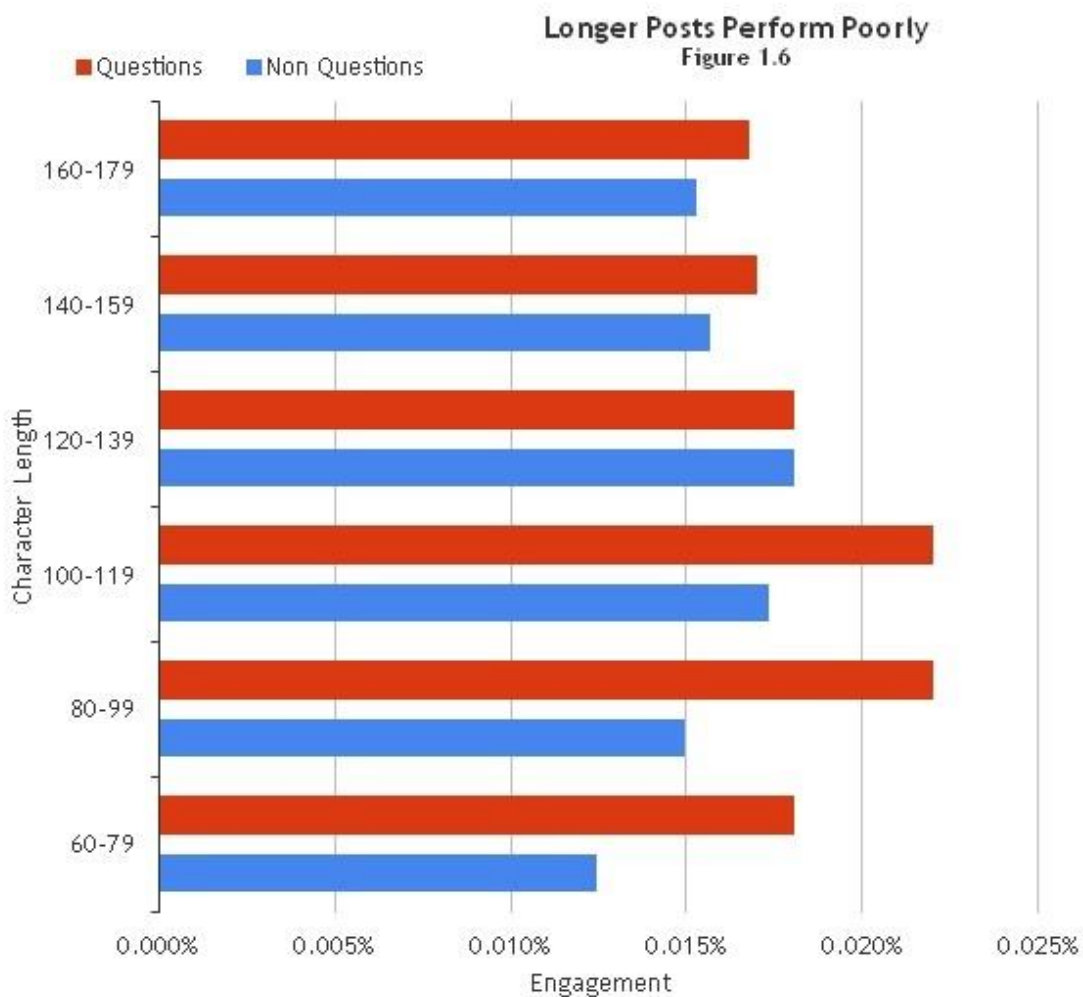
Figure 4: What 120 Billion Facebook Impressions Can Tell Us (Kapur 2012).

Posts should have an interesting and eye-catching thumbnail or photo. The most important thing is to catch the audience's attention, because many people have a limited attention span, which results people in skimming through content that they find on their feeds. (DeMers, 2013). Below is an infographic by Steeves (2013) that shows us the impact of photos on Facebook.
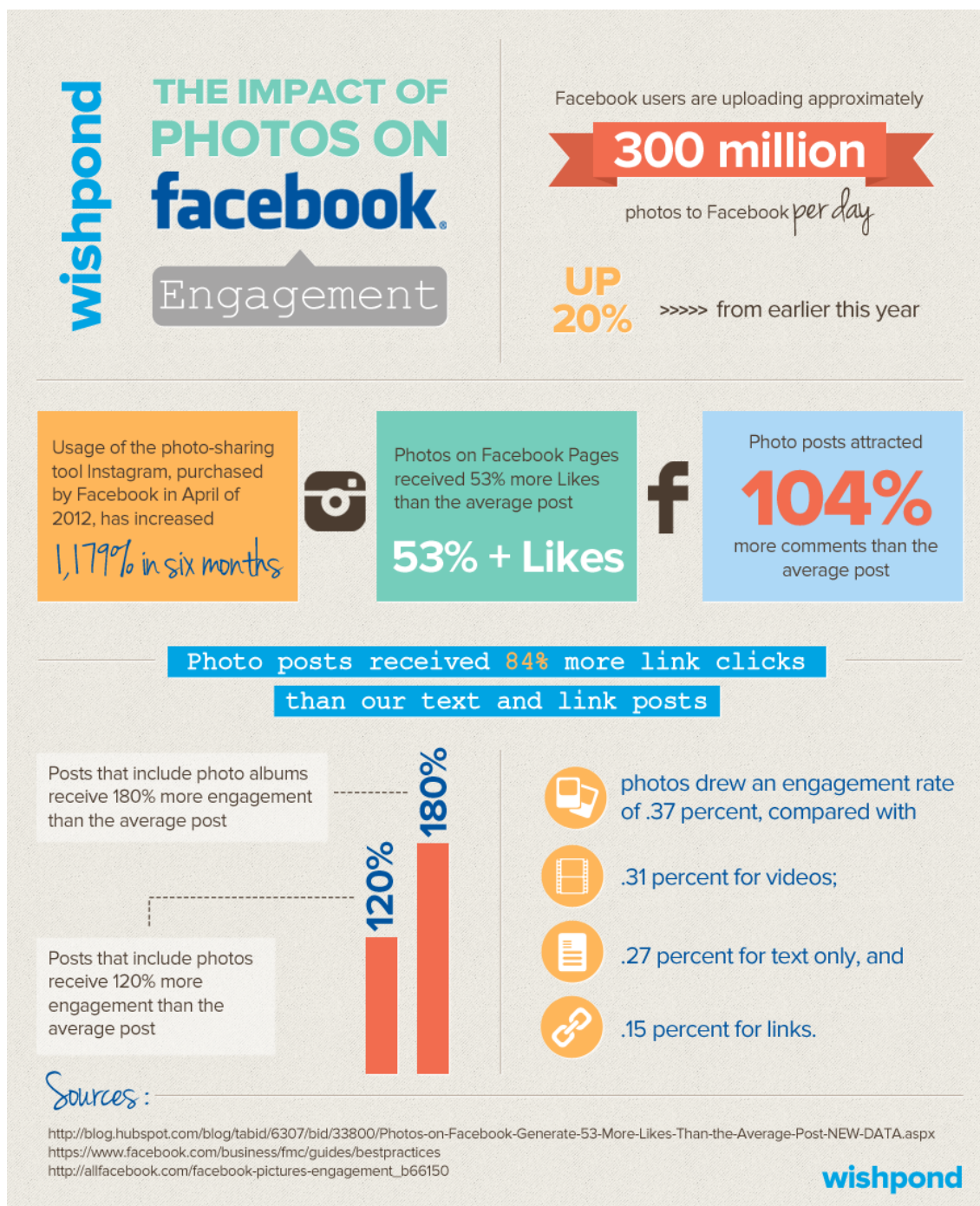
Figure 5: The impact of Photos on Facebook Engagement (Steeves 2013).

Best type of content to share is a link. According to Facebook's own study (Facebook, 2014), sharing links using Facebook's own link format receive twice as much clicks than links that are put into a photo update. Ideally the link would be to an external post such as an article, news or infographic. The link should have a "click bait", which is a headline that encourages the reader to click to find out more and read the article or news. The click bait however should be short and not reveal too much of the content behind the link. (Facebook, 2014)

According to Wishpond (n.d), questions are a great way to engage with your audience and get them to engage with your products or services. Questions such as "Did you know..?", "What do you think..?", "Do you support..?", "Have you heard..?", "Do you agree..?" increase the rate of engagement in posts, and make the reader feel like the post is a little bit more personal.

As Wishpond (n.d) states that you will see results if you tell people what exactly to do, as to give a clear CTA. Some examples of CTAs include "Visit our website", "Read more", "Find out more", "Click on the link below", "Like", "Share", and "Follow us". CTA's can be used with photos, links, or just normal written posts.

3.5   Twitter

Twitter is a platform where users can share their thoughts, updates, and information in maximum 140 characters. Twitter enables affordable and measurable communication around the globe. User's profiles are usually public, meaning that anyone who in the world has the ability to see your posts, unless you choose to have a private profile. Users can follow each other to see what they are up to and what they are sharing. The users can converse with people, favorite other people's content, and share "tweets" or posts by others. (Smith 2013).

Currently Twitter is one of the top websites in the world, and is ranked No.8 globally according to Internet analytics company Alexa. Twitter has over 313 million active monthly users, and 82 percent of them are active mobile platform users. (Gausepohl 2017). The amount of Twitter's users has increased drastically over the last five years, and the user base continues to grow.
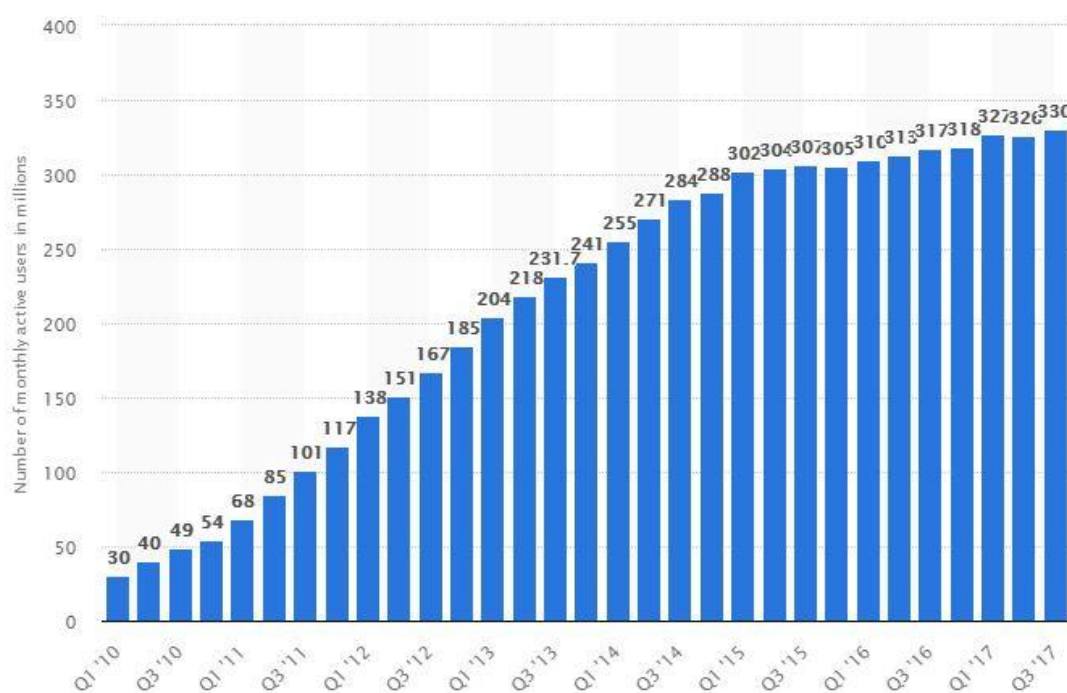
Figure 6: Number of monthly active Twitter users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions) (Number of monthly active Twitter users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions) 2017).

Some ways of good twitter activity are to retweet and favourite tweets. Or to reply directly to tweets, where the approach becomes a bit more personal and direct towards someone. You can ask users questions, but keeping in mind that the questions should be towards their expertise. (Smock, 2013)

One way to enhance a tweet is by using hashtags. Chaney (2016) suggests using hashtags often but not to use more than three per tweet. The hashtags should be related to the tweet, and should promote the tweet. Hutchinson (2016) states that hashtags with tweets have twice more engagement than tweets without hashtags. But tweets with more than two hashtags have 17% less engagement. And according to Aravind (2017), two hashtags result the maximum engagement. Figures 6 and 7 below, show us how effective using two hashtags is.
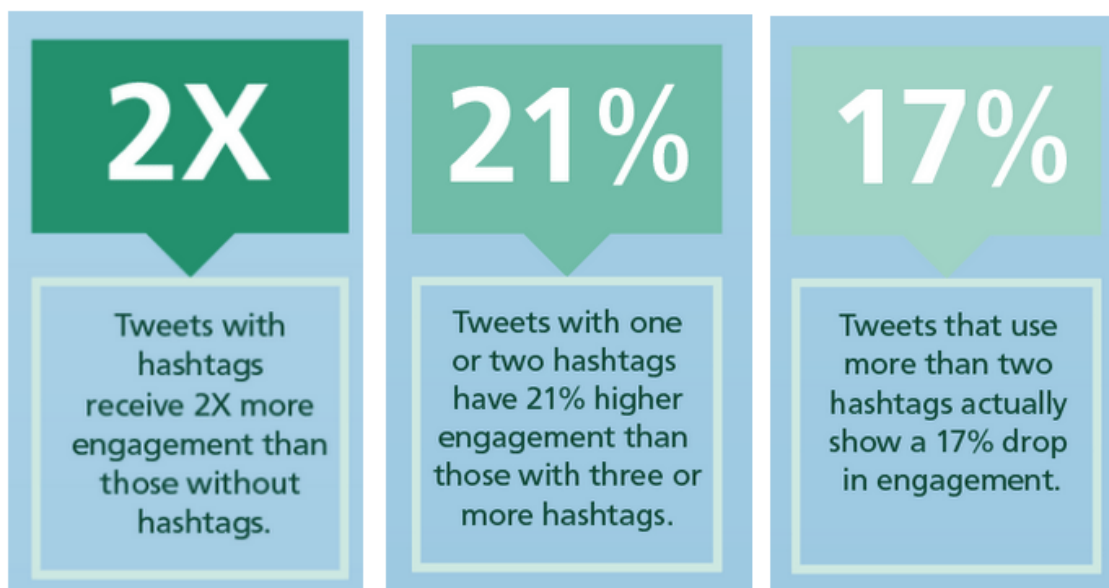
Figure 7: 8 Tips for Creating More Effective Tweets (from Twitter) (Hutchinson 2016).
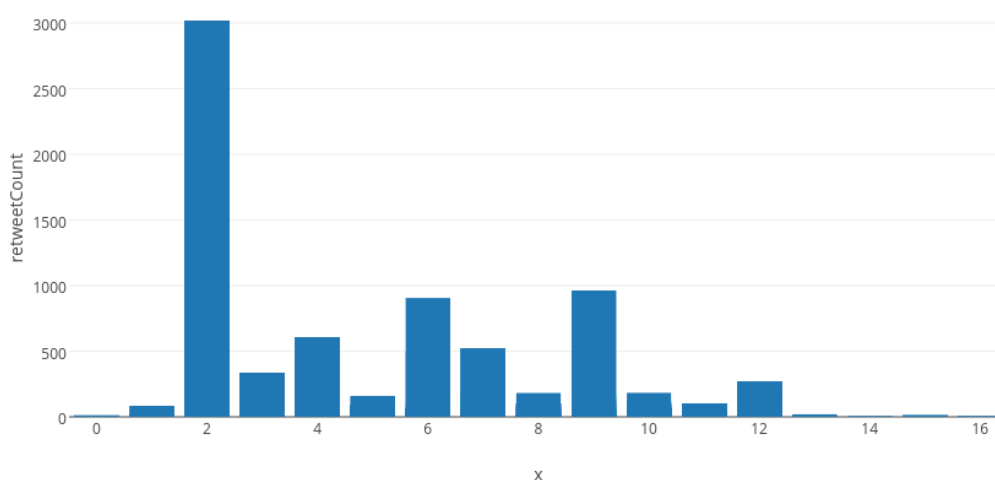
Figure 8: Twitter marketing for Etsy: 6 data backed tips to boost your Etsy store on Twitter (Aravind 2017).

Tweets length should also be optimized. A research by Track Social (n.d) suggests that around 100 characters is the optimal length for a tweet, to have the most engagement. According to the research, tweets that have less than 100 characters receive 17% more engagement than those that have over 100 characters.
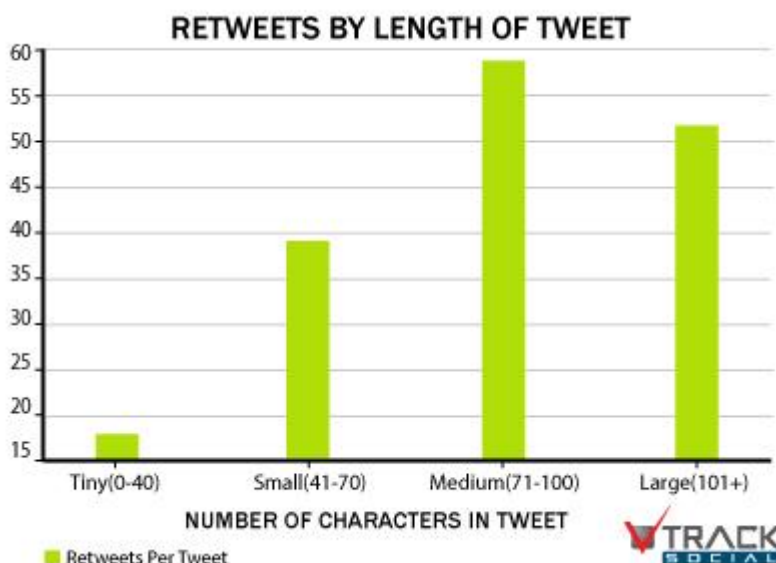
Figure 9: A Scientific Guide to Writing Great Tweets: How To Get More Clicks, Retweets and Reach (Seiter 2014).

Having a Call-to-Action can also enhance a tweet. Patel (2014) states that using CTA increases the chances of interaction because you clearly are asking for action. Also, according to Petropoulou (2016) "calls to action on Twitter work amazingly well. Words like "please retweet" and "help" are focused more towards the readers, which can boost their willingness to interact. (Patel, 2014) Here are some words for CTA that help to increase the rate of interaction:
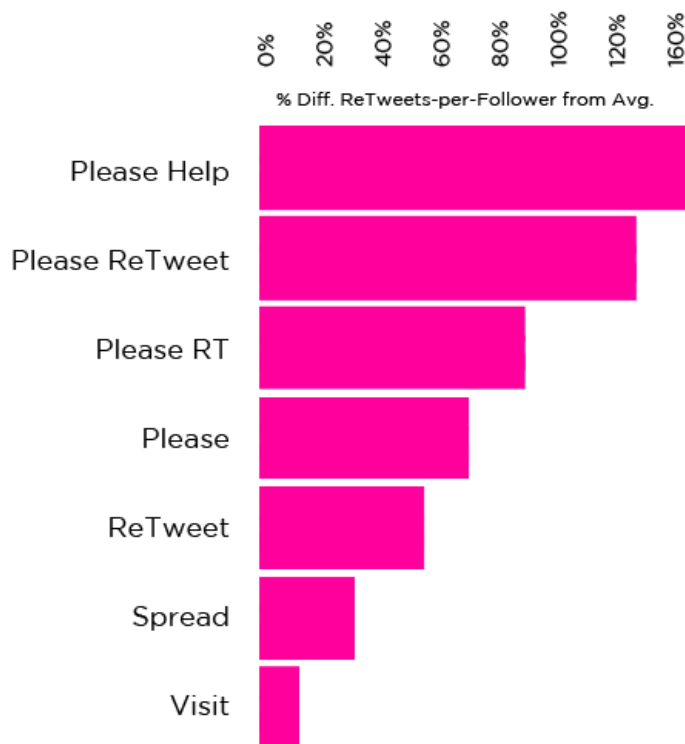
Figure 10: How To Actually Be Interesting On Twitter (Petropoulou 2016).

Enhance tweets by using images. In a study by Cooper (2016), analytics revealed that tweets with photos had more interaction. As figure 10 suggests, tweets with images received 18% more clicks, and 150% more retweets, and 89% more favourites. Visuals can help you stand out from the crowd because in Twitter you have less than a second to capture your viewer's attention. (Petropoulou, 2016)
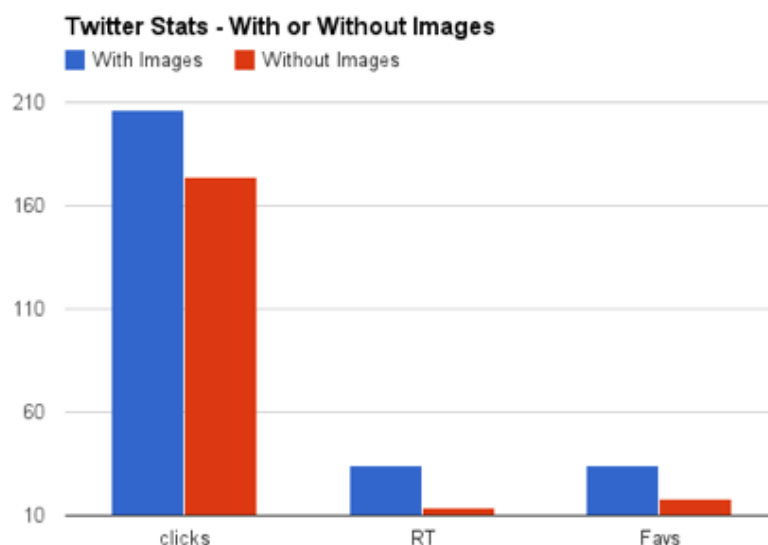
Figure 11: How Twitter's Expanded Images Increase Clicks, Retweets and Favorites [New Data] (Cooper 2016).

4   Creating the marketing plan for the project

4.1   Target audience

I discussed with the project manager about who the target audience would be. Now, the narrower the target group is, the better the message delivery will be. But, in this case, since ABC4EU is not selling a product or a service, and the goal is to spread the word, the need for having different target groups is not a necessity. Instead, I divided the target audience into two groups:

1. Third country nationals who travel to Europe

This group contains everyone who does not hold a European passport, but is travelling to Europe. Basically, anyone eligible to use the border gates that are being piloted. This group was selected because they would be the potential users, and they would need to know about the new gates and how to use them.

2. EU Commission and parliament

This group is smaller and more specific. The idea of this group is to have these people acknowledge the project and share their thoughts about it. This would be done through social media, in order for their followers to know about the project and receive the message that ABC4EU wants to deliver.

4.2 Reaching the target audience

ABC4EU has two main social media channels, Facebook and Twitter. Facebook would be used to reach the third country nationals who travel to Europe. Facebook is ideal for this target audience because it is larger than the second group. Twitter would be used to reach members of EU commission and parliament. The tagging feature in the tweets is really useful in this case, ABC4EU can tag members of the European Commission or Parliament into the tweets to engage a conversation or a tweet.

The twitter accounts of the members of the European Commission can be found online from European Union's own website, from the "contact" section. There you can filter and choose which network accounts you would like to find. You can also filter results by institution or agency, topic, or by type of account. After conducting the search with the favoured filters, you will see a list of people and their accounts. There is also listed what these people can be contacted about. (Social Networks 2017)

4.2.1 Using Laurea's channels

Since Laurea is a partner in the ABC4EU project, I thought to use Laurea's channels for delivering the message. Laurea has a student portal, Link, which could have an advertisement or blog post about the project. In Laurea's 2015 annual report, it was stated that there were 7391 students and 514 personnel, that already is quite an audience to have the message delivered to. Laurea also has the student email, which can access directly all the students and send some information about the project, or promote the social media accounts.

4.2.2 Facebook

The aim from using Facebook is to spread the word about the project and the pilot. Facebook is also to be used to reach the third country nationals who travel to Europe. Facebook needs more activity from ABC4EU's account, in order to increase visibility and let the target audience find the account. The account's content needs to be optimized and enhanced, in order to get the visitors interested and keep the followers interested and engaged.

First, there has to be more interaction in Facebook by the ABC4EU account. The aim of this approach is to be seen and increase visibility. The Facebook account is there, but people are not finding it. This problem needs to be fixed by increasing the activity and showing the name "ABC4EU" to the public audiences in Facebook. Ultimately, the page needs to have more followers to know that there are people who are interested in the project, and receiving the message ABC4EU wants to send.

There are different ways to achieve this, such as liking related pages or pages of interest to the project. You can comment as ABC4EU's account on posts of related pages or pages of interest. The idea is that the page's followers would see a comment by ABC4EU, and click on the profile to learn more. Another method to increase activity in Facebook is by sharing posts. Sharing a relateive post from another page can increase visibility because there is a list of all the accounts that have shared a post, and this list is open to anyone. You can also tag people or pages in your own posts. This is the most effective approach, because when you tag another page on a post, this post will appear on their wall. Having ABC4EU's post in another page's wall or profile means all this page's followers will be able to see it.

Next, the content posted in Facebook has to be optimized to be more interesting and engaging, in order to catch the attention of our audiences and increase the chance of people liking, commenting, and sharing the posts. The content needs to be relative to the project and its cause. For example making posts or sharing posts about borders, airports or travelling can be considered relative and interesting to the travellers coming to Europe.

Also, content types have to be taken into consideration, different types of content can be more interesting than others. There needs to be different types of content posted and shared, so not to have the same kind everytime. This is why in the social media calendar, every day is set to post a different type of content, in order to have some change in the account and not to bore the followers with the same content type everytime.

Links to external articles are a good type of content. The link should be accompanied by an eye-catching photo or thumbnail in order to catch the reader's attention while they are scrolling their feed. Once the attention has been grabbed, there needs to be a brief description with the link. The idea is to give the reader an idea about what they could read or see by clicking the link. The description needs to be brief, if it's too long, then the reader might think they don't have time to read it and they could scroll away. The description needs to be crafted in a way that it is interesting and would make the reader click the link and go read or see what is behind it. Therefore it should contain the main idea of the content of the link.

Another content type to post is an infographic. Infographics are a great way to explain something in a visual way. Infographics don't usually take long to read, therefore they are ideal for social media, as people do not tend to spend too much time on a post. Infographics can be made from scratch for example explaining something about the project, the pilot phase, or about some statistics. Or, infographics can be shared from other pages, as long as they are relative to ABC4EU and it's audience.

Another type of post is a news or an update of the project. People need to be informed about what is going on with the project. Any kind of news can be posted such as achieving milestones, acquiring new partners, successful results of tests, introducing new technology, testing something new, news about events or showcases or basically anything that is happening in the project that might be interesting for its followers to know about. If there is no news or updates in a certain time, then the content can be changed to another type. Sharing other kind of news can be done as well. For example news about new airport regulations, travel regulations within Europe, or some kind of spotlight trending industry topic. Anything can be shared, as long as it is relative to the industry.

Make a post in the form of a question. There are many types of questions to ask, such as a preference question where you provide two choices and ask which one would the reader prefer. Another type of a question can be a fill in the blank where you provide a sentence and an image and ask the reader to fill in the blank by commenting on the post. You can also make a post that says "Like vs. Share" which means people can answer the question by either liking the post or sharing it. This way the audience get an engaging way to show their own preference. Polls are also an engaging type of post, where the audience gets to show their preference and answer a question by selecting an answer. Another popular example is the "Caption this" post, which allows the audience member to share their own caption as a comment on the post. There are also other types of direct questions, although these are a bit less engaging, but questions such as "Did you know..?", "Have you heard..?", "What do you think about..?", and "Do you support..?". These types of questions in a post will feel like you are speaking straight to the reader.

Use a Call-to-Action (CTA). Using CTA's in a post is an effective way to increase post engagement. There are many different types of CTA's that you can use. Some examples can be a post with an infographic and asking the followers to share it, or to comment their thoughts on it. There can be more directing CTA's that ask the followers to visit the website, or order ABC4EU's newsletter. There can be more Facebook specific CTA's that incude liking, sharing, commenting, or tagging on the post itself.

4.2.3   Twitter

Twitter is mainly to be used to reach certain people, especially from the EU commission and par-
liament. Just like Facebook, Twitter's use has to be optimized as well in order to achieve more
successful results. The content in the Twitter account needs to be optimized and enhanced as
well. As in Facebook, the followers in Twitter need to receive relateive and interesting content to
keep following the account and interacting with it.

More interaction is needed in Twitter as well, with the ABC4EU Twitter account. The same prob-
lem lies here as well; the account is created but people are not finding it. To fix this, ABC4EU
needs to go find the people and present ABC4EU to the public. The overall interaction needs im-
provement. Interaction in Twitter should not be limited to only influencers, but interaction is also
needed towards partners and related accounts or accounts of interest. Basically, the same inter-
actions; retweeting, favouriting, and replying are all common interactions and the more they are
done, the more ABC4EU account name appears to the public.

ABC4EU should interact directly with the influencers that they see relative to them. Interacting
directly with influencers needs more improvement. This can be done in by directly favoriting
their tweets, sharing their tweets, and replying to their tweets. Replying to their tweets should
be the most effective, as this way ABC4EU is personally engaging in a conversation with the influ-
encer. This is great visibility for ABC4EU, as the influencer's followers will be able to see the con-
versation in the influencer's profile.

Next, the content, or tweets, need be enhanced. This is important because if new people visit
ABC4EU's account and don't find interesting or relative tweets, they might not hit the follow but-
ton and therefore they would be interested in the project. Therefore, ABC4EU has to make sure
that their content is interesting and relative to the target audience.

A tweet should have two hashtags. The hashtags should obviously be relative to the tweet's con-
tent. The hashtags are used to increase the visibility of the tweet, as people can search for
tweets by hashtags. So, in other words, the hashtags make the tweets more public, and appear
more to the public. The hashtags should be carefully chosen, as they need to be also somewhat
interesting and searchable. For example, if ABC4EU creates its own hashtag, no new followers will
find it because they most likely will not know about the new hashtag that ABC4EU created.
Therefore, the hashtag should be something that people already search for.

The tweet should not be too long, even though Twitter recently increased the character limit. Ac-
cording to studies, the optimal tweet length to increase it's retweet, or share, is between 71–100
characters. This is considered for all types of tweets, such as news or updates, descriptions for

links or photos, and questions. Increasing the chance of the tweet being retweeted is crucial, because this would be optimal for ABC4EU as when a follower retweets a tweet, this follower's own followers see this tweet and can interact to it themselves. Basically it means that the followers would be spreading the message, or marketing on behalf of ABC4EU.

Enhance tweets by using images. Tweets should have interesting and eye-catching photos, as proven by studies that tweets with photos have more engagement in the form of retweets and facourites. Visuals will help increase the engagement of posts because in Twitter, there is only a few seconds to grab the attention of a follower or reader, and a photo will do great if it is eye-catching.

As with Facebook, include questions and CTA's in the tweets. This way you are giving direction to the reader and asking the reader to do something. Questions or CTA's are a great way to increase engagement on posts or tweets, and therefore should be used. There are many different cases on where to use questions or CTA's, such as posting an article to a new travel regulation and asking the followers if they have heard of this new regulation. Another example is asking the people to reflect on this new regulation, to ask them to share their ideas or feelings about it. If it's an amazing news about the project, the followers can be asked to retweet the tweet to their followers.

4.3   Social media marketing inspiration

For inspiration, I created a list or topics that can help in choosing what type of content to create or share. The idea is to know what kind of content to share, because sometimes it can be difficult to find the right content to share or sometimes there is no inspiration.

The topics are: borders, border control, border security, airports, ports, airport security, port security, new airport codes, new airline or ferry codes, news about related airports, news about project partners, travels to and from Europe, and new EU regulations concerning travelling and borders. When in doubt of what kind of content to share, referring to this list can be helpful.

4.4   Social media calendar

The schedule should show at least what type of content is to be shared, which day, what time, and on which social media network. I created a calendar that specifies the days, times and which social media networks to use, as well as the content type for each day. The days and times have been selected according to researches that claim that these days and times would reach the most engagement from the followers.

Below is the calendar I created for this strategy.

Network	Day	Time	Content Type
Facebook	Monday	12:00-15:00	Relative article
	Wednesday	12:00-15:00	infograph/article
	Thursday	12:00-15:00	news or update or tag a partner
	Friday	12:00-15:00	spotlight trending industry topics
Twitter	Monday	12:00-15:00	news or update
	Tuesday	12:00-15:00	interaction with an influencer
	Wednesday	12:00-15:00	partner retweet
	Thursday	12:00-15:00	spotlight trending industry topics
	Friday	12:00-15:00	relative article

Figure 12: Social Media Calendar.

It is a more simplified version of LePage's (2017) version. It is more simplified because of the limited amount of content ABC4EU can produce, since this is not a case of traditional product or service marketing. I made a general weekly calendar that shows the content to be shared or uploaded on each social media network. The most suitable times of days for posts are recommended for each social media network.

According to a study by Ellering (2017) that studied 20 other studies on the best times to post to Twitter and Facebook, the best time to post on Facebook is between 13:00 – 16:00. And the best time to post on Twitter is between 12:00 – 15:00. Aynsley and Fontein (2016) state that the best time to post on Facebook is between 12:00 and 15:00, while the best time to post on Twitter is at 15:00. Therefore, I came up with the best solution being 12:00 – 15:00 for both networks.

4.5   An engaging competition for Facebook audience

Wishpond (n.d) states that Facebook promotions are an amazing way to get people talking about your products. This is a mere suggestion, meaning that it is optional. However, if a competition is to be conducted, it should be done after there are more followers on the network sites.

The competition would be something like giving the audience a chance to share ABC4EU's own content in their personal accounts with a specific hashtag. This way, the audience will promote for ABC4EU. Another idea is that the audience create their own content according to some rules that ABC4EU suggest. For example, a photo contest where you have to take the most interesting

photo of someone using the e-gates at an airport. In both cases, there would be a prize to encourage the audience to participate and try to win the competition. Ultimately, it will be promotion for ABC4EU by the audience themselves.

4.6 Video upload strategy

This strategy is intended for the pilot videos that ABC4EU has produced and will produce. This strategy will optimize the videos before they are ready to be uploaded, then examine the best times and ways to upload them. Also, the best ways to upload them to each social media network.

Since the videos are important are intended for the audience, they should not be rushed with the upload, but wait first until there is a certain amount of audience in the social media networks. Once there is a satisfying number of followers and activity, then would be the optimal time to upload the videos.

4.6.1 Editing the video

First of all, the video is too long for its purpose. The purpose of the video is to show how the e-gates work, that they are simple and easy to use. The video is 2:53 minutes long, and it can be easily shortened to 1:30 minutes. 90 seconds should be more than enough to explain your product or service to your viewer, if it takes longer than 90 seconds you might have you're your viewer. (Gribbs 2017)

Next, the video type should be changed to an explainer video. An explainer video is a video that 'explains' what your company or organization does in a simple way that is easy enough for anyone to understand. (Guerin n.d) THere is a good example of a video that explains what is happening in the video with text, that I will use as framework for editing videos. The video is called "7 how-to tips for shooting still life photography". (7 how-to tips for shooting still life photography 2017). The video's title already explains what the video is about, and you have a clear idea about what you will watch. The video is divided nicely into 7 categories, and each category has supporting text to what is happening in the moment. There is also nice and energetic background music to keep the viewer entertained, and since there is no talking, a background music is a good option.

What could be done to the video by ABC4EU mentioned above, is to change into a 4-step video on how to use the e-gates. This way the process is simplified and easier to follow. The video would feature text explaining what is happening at each point. I added a background music, so that it

would be entertaining to watch. However, this is not a final product, this is only an example on what can be done to optimize the video. You can find the video at Appendix 2.

4.6.2 Facebook

To optimize the video for Facebook, the video should be uploaded directly from Facebook instead of uploading to Youtube and posting the Youtube link on Facebook. In order for the video to be playable directly in Facebook. The website address and Twitter account should be added to the video at the end of the video, as well as a CTA to share the video. (Lua, 2017)

The video should catch the attention of the viewer within the first three seconds. One way to achieve this is to have a custom thumbnail with text explaining the main idea, and then to jump straight to the main idea in the video. (Lua, 2017) Having a good description of the video is also important. The description should include the main idea or moment from the video. This is to give an idea to the viewer what they are about to see, so to build up their expectation and increase their interest in watching the video. Otherwise it could possible that the viewer would not want to watch the video because they would now know what is it about.

The best time to upload the video is on a Thursday between 13:00 – 15:00 for the most views. According to studies this is the most optimal time for posting a video on Facebook in order to receive engagement. In this case, I want to make sure that the video that ABC4EU would post would receive the maximum amount of engagement by the page's followers and audience.

4.6.3 Twitter

First, the video has to be uploaded to Youtube, so that we can have a link to share in Twitter. The video should contain the website address at the end with a CTA to share the video. Also, a Facebook account, because this video will not be in Facebook. This is to increase the visibility of the Facebook account, and in case some Twitter users have not heard of the Facebook account, now they would know about it and possible follow it and "like" it.

When uploading the video to Youtube, it is important to make sure to use relevant keywords in the description. In order for the video to be found, and the relevance of the keywords is important so it won't look like the keywords are just spam to increase visibility. Also, a thumbnail that makes the viewer curious and interested is crucial. When the video is in Youtube and Twitter, it must have an interesting thumbnail that would make the viewers interested in watching it. The thumbnail could also include some text exaplaining very briefly the main idea of the video in just a couple of words.

5   Conclusion

The idea of this project was to enhance the use of social media networks, and to figure out an op-
timal way to post pilot videos to the social media networks. By following these tips or recommen-
dations, there will be more activity in these networks from both ABC4EU's side, and target audi-
ence's side.
Top three reminders would be to have more activity on ABC4EU's accounts, increase visibility and
fan base, and to post and share interesting content for the target audiences.

The end product is a manual that can be followed by the person in charge of social media for the
ABC4EU project. The manual suggests how to use the networks, what kind of content to post,
what makes a good post, how to modify the videos available now, and how and when to upload
them. The idea was to make its simple and easy to follow, so that anyone could use it.

I presented the final product to the project manager and some members of the project. They
liked it and thought it was good, however they wished it would be more as an inspirational docu-
ment, where they could get inspiration and reminders on what kind of content to use and how to
use social media networks. Also, the idea of a calendar was not what they were looking for, in-
stead they would want a more flexible option, hence the inspirational document.

6   References

7 how-to tips for shooting still life photography. 2017. Directed by COOPH. Accessed 13 December 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6Kz62IEjyw

10 Laws of Social Media Marketing. 2016. Directed by Entrepeneur. Accessed 1 December. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--s2sfm9JkI

10 Questions to Ask When Creating a Social-Media Marketing Plan. 2014. Directed by Entrepeneur. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIrS2zkWXY4

21 Ways to Create Amazing Facebook Posts to Promote your Products. 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://blog.wishpond.com/post/53926393458/21-ways-to-create-amazing-facebook-posts-to-promote

Aravind. 2016. Twitter marketing for Etsy: 6 data backed tips to boost your Etsy store on Twitter. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://around.io/blog/twitter-marketing-etsy/

Aynsley, M. & Fontein, D. 2016. The best Time to Post on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.hootsuite.com/best-time-to-post-on-facebook-twitter-instagram/

Ayres, S. 2017. 7 No-brainer Tips to Write an Awesome Facebook Post. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.postplanner.com/7-no-brainer-tips-to-write-awesome-facebook-post/

Ayres, S. 2017. Here's a Quick Way to Get More Likes on Your Facebook Page. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.postplanner.com/get-more-likes-fans-facebook-page/

Best Way to Share Videos on Facebook. 2014. Directed by Chase Me Films. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=564wGPH_2Es

Chaney, P. 2016. 25 Ways to use Twitter for Marketing. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.practicalecommerce.com/25-ways-to-use-twitter-for-marketing

Cisnero, K. 2017. A Social Media Audit Template and Guide for Marketers. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-audit-template/

Conley, M. 2017. Facebook Marketing. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.hubspot.com/facebook-marketing

Conner, S. 2017. How to Set Social Media Goals-And Reach Them. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.hootsuite.com/smart-social-media-goals/

Cooper, B. 2013. How Twitter's Expanded Images Increase Clicks, Retweets and Favorites [New Data]. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://blog.bufferapp.com/the-power-of-twitters-new-expanded-images-and-how-to-make-the-most-of-it

Daoud, H. 2016. 8 Essential Elements of a Social Media Marketing Strategy. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/essential-elements-social-media-marketing-strategy/

DeMers, J. 2013. The Power of Images in Social Media Marketing. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://sendible.com/insights/the-power-of-images-in-social-media-marketing

DeMers, J. 2014. The Top 10 Benefits Of Social Media Marketing. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2014/08/11/the-top-10-benefits-of-social-media-marketing/2/#3ea96b8a743f

DeMers, J. 2015. 50Free Ways To Increase Your Facebook Page Likes. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2015/06/16/50-free-ways-to-increase-your-facebook-page-likes/2/#30923b694e85

Duermyer, R. 2017. Steps to Create a Marketing Plan. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-a-marketing-plan-1794426

El-Arini, K. 2015. News feed FYI: Click-baiting. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2014/08/news-feed-fyi-click-baiting/

Ellering, N. 2017. What 20 Studies Say About The Best Times To Post On Social Media. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://coschedule.com/blog/best-times-to-post-on-social-media/

Fallon, N. 2017. Facebook for Business: Everything You Need to Know. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/7761-facebook-business-guide.html

Gausepohl, 2017. Twitter for Business: Everything You need to Know. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/7488-twitter-for-business.html

Gribbs, S. 2017. Short Vidoe Vs. Long Video: What Will Work Best In Your Marketing Strategy. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://greenbuzzagency.com/short-vs-long-video/
Guerin, E. 2017. What the Heck is an 'Explainer Video'?. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://www.adeliestudios.com/explainer-video/

Hutchinson, A. 2016. 8 Tips for Creating More Effective Tweets (from Twitter). Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.socialmediatoday.com/social-networks/8-tips-creating-more-effective-tweets-twitter

Increased Global Travel. 2017. Increased Global Travel. Accessed 1 December 2017. http://www.globalization101.org/increased-global-travel/

Kapur, S. 2012. What 120 Billion Facebook Impressions Can Tell Us. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.clickz.com/what-120-billion-facebook-impressions-can-tell-us/46470/

Lee, K. 2014. Anatomy of a Perfect Facebook Post: Exactly What to Post to Get Better Results. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://blog.bufferapp.com/anatomy-of-a-perfect-facebook-post

LePage, E. 2017. How to Create a Social Media Marketing Plan in 6 Steps. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-create-a-social-media-marketing-plan/

Lewis, N. 2014. 7 Things that make for a good tweet on Twitter. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://nicklewiscommunications.com/7-things-make-good-tweet-twitter/

Lua, A. 2017. 17 Ways to Get More Views, Engagement, and Shares for Your Facebook Videos. Accessed 1 December 23017. https://blog.bufferapp.com/facebook-video#native-video

Marketing Plan. 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marketing-plan.asp

Miller, J. 2016. What Is Content Marketing? Definitions from 25 Thought leaders. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/blog/best-practices--content-marketing/2016/what-is-content-marketing--definitions-from-25-thought-leaders

Moore, P. 2017. 28 Attributes of Good Content Marketing to Rock Your Social Business!. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://www.pammarketingnut.com/2012/06/28-attributes-of-good-content-marketing-to-rock-your-social-business/

Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions). 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/

Number of monthly active Twitter users worldwide from 1st quarter 2010 to 3rd quarter 2017 (in millions). 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.statista.com/statistics/282087/number-of-monthly-active-twitter-users/

Petropoulou, K. 2016. How To Actually Be Interesting On Twitter. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.business2community.com/twitter/actually-interesting-twitter-01481956#qoxVAAbiYfGBptXU.97

Scheidies, N. 2017. 21 Ways to Dominate YouTube: The Ultimate Guide. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.incomediary.com/21-ways-to-dominate-youtube-the-ultimate-guide

Seiter, C. 2016. A scientific Guide to Writing Great Tweets: How To Get More Clicks, Retweets and Reach. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://blog.bufferapp.com/writing-great-tweets-scientific-guide

Smith, M. 2011. 7 Ways To Craft Your Facebook Posts For Maximum Shares. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.facebook.com/notes/mari-smith/7-ways-to-craft-your-facebook-posts-for-maximum-shares/10150469618686340/

Smock, C. 2013. 7 Ways to Engage with Industry Influencers on Twitter. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.likeable.com/blog/2013/11/engage-industry-influencers-twitter

Social Media Marketing (SMM). 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media-marketing-smm.asp

Social networks. 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/social-networks_en#n:0,1|i:1|e:|t:|s:

Sorokina, O. 2014. Save Time on Social Media: One Social Media Profile, One Mission. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.hootsuite.com/the-purpose-of-each-social-media-profile/

Steeves, N. 2013. [INFOGRAPHIC] The Impact of Photos on Facebook Engagement. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://corp.wishpond.com/blog/2013/01/10/infographic-the-impact-of-photos-on-facebook-engagement/

Swenson, V. 2015. Video Marketing tips, Strategies, and Tutorial. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/video-marketing-tips-strategies-tutorial-vadik-swenson/

Weller, C. 2015. The 11 Commandments of an Infallible YouTube Strategy. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.chicagostyleseo.com/2015/08/11-youtube-strategies/

What Is Content Marketing?. 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/

What is Social Media Marketing? Social Media Basics Explained. 2016. Directed by WuHoo Digital. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m45nVsvvEY

What Is Social Media Marketing?. 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://searchengineland.com/guide/what-is-social-media-marketing

Why do I need a marketing plan? 2017. Accessed 2 December 2017. https://www.business.gov.au/info/plan-and-start/develop-your-business-plans/marketing/why-do-i-need-a-marketing-plan

Wikipedia. 2017. Third country national. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_country_national

Witlen, S. 2016. When is The Best Time to Post Your Video on Social Media. Accessed 1 December 2017. https://blog.magisto.com/2016/03/13/best-time-post-video-social-media/

7   Figures

8   Appendices

Appendix 1: Social media marketing strategy / manual

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGY | CASE ABC4EU

WASIM AL-NASSER

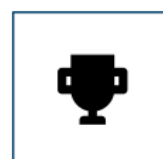## CLICKABLE TABLE OF CONTENTS

Goals	Target audience	Facebook	Twitter
Videos	SOME Schedule	Related topics	Competitions

GOALS

- To spread the word about this project to the target audience: 3rd country nationals who travel to Europe and EU commission and parliament.
- To get influencers to share experiences and discuss about the project.
- How to use social media channels effectively (Facebook and Twitter)
- How, where, and when to introduce pilot videos.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- **3rd country nationals who travel to Europe**

This audience is to be reached mainly through Facebook. The idea is to spread the word about the project so the audience is aware of the project and so they can see the pilot videos.

- **EU Commission and parliament**

This audience is to be reached through Twitter. The idea is to spread the word about the project and to get influencers to talk about the project, and share their experiences or thoughts.

USING LAUREA'S CHANNELS

- Use Laurea's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) to spread the word among students.
- Use Laurea's LINK, to have an article or ad about ABC4EU
- Use Laurea's email option which sends an email to all the students about the project.

FACEBOOK

- Facebook would be used for spreading the word in a general manner.
- The content needs to be interesting and can be related to borders, airports, travelling, etc.
- More interaction in Facebook with the ABC4EU account. Such as: liking related pages or pages of interest, commenting on posts, sharing posts, and tagging other people and pages.
- Posts should be short, and have an interesting photo to catch attention. Tag other pages in the posts so the posts go to the page's wall. Create and share infographics.
- Content modified for Facebook, especially videos. Such as: uploading the video from Facebook, adding other sites links to the video.

FACEBOOK POSTS

A good Facebook post has the following:

- A link to an external post, article, news or infographic, and a short description of maximum 120 characters.

- An eye-catching photo or thumbnail that will impress the viewer, make them smile, make them interested, or make them feel something. The photo should be related to the description.

- An engaging question such as: "Did you know..?", "Have you heard..?", "What do you think about..?", "Do you support..?", etc.

- Call-To-Action (CTA). For example: "Check out our website", "Read more", "Find out more", "Click on the link", "Like", "Share", "Follow us", "Visit our website/link", etc.

- Depending on the case, a partner can be tagged to the post if they can relate to it. For example if the post is about something a partner university ahs achieved, that university's Facebook page should be tagged in the post.

FACEBOOK SPECIFIC VIDEO

When uploading a video to Facebook, make sure to:

- Upload the video directly from Facebook (not a Youtube link).

- Catch the viewer's attention within the first 3 seconds. For example a good custom thumbnail with text explaining the main idea. Jump straight away to the topic.

- Add captions to the video. Many people watch videos on their phone without sound.

- Have a good description for the video. Take the main idea or moment from the video as the text component.

- CTA to share the video and/or to share the video.

- Add website and twitter account at the end of the video.

TWITTER

- Twitter would be used to reach certain people and the EU commission
- More interaction is needed in Twitter. Interactions such as making new posts that are interesting, tagging partners or other pages, retweeting, favouriting, and asking questions to influencers.
- A list of contacts from the European parliament:

https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/social-networks_en#n:0,1|i:1|e:|t:|s:

TWITTER POSTS

A good Tweet has the following:

- Two hashtags.
- If a link is used and it is too long, then it should be done as a "Tiny URL", which shortens the URL. https://tinyurl.com/
- Tweet's length should be around 71-100 characters.
- Call-To-Action (CTA). For example: "Check out our website", "Read more", "Find out more", "Click on the link", "Like", "Share", "Follow us", "Visit our website/link", etc.

YOUTUBE/TWITTER SPECIFIC VIDEO

When making a video and uploading it to Youtube, remember the following:

- Put the link of ABC4EU website to the description of the video.
- Use relevant keywords in the description.
- Pick a good thumbnail that is interesting and makes the viewer curious.
- Add captions.
- Have positive background music.
- Add CTA such as: "Share with your friends", "Leave a comment", "Follow the link in the description", etc.
- The shorter the video, the better.
- Add website and Facebook link at the end of the video.

EDITING EXISTING VIDEOS

Madrid-Barajas EES & e-gate - ABC4EU project

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgvEJe8KzyM

Suggestions:

- Shorter, around 60-120 sec
- Step-by-step video (e.g. Crossing EU borders in 4 simple steps)
- Explaining text in the video, or captions
- Minor style and text edits
- Something like this: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6Kz62IEjyw

VIDEO EXAMPLE

- https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B97XeiEb3KjJdF9HOHVRU3lRNTQ/view?usp=sharing

VIDEO UPLOAD STRATEGY

- Facebook: First gaining more followers, then uploading it on a Thursday between 13:00-16:00 for the most views. Editing the video especially for Facebook (Adding other social media links and website), uploading the video directly to Facebook. Share the video on as many personal accounts as possible, as well as partners pages.

- Twitter: First gaining more followers, then uploading it on a Thursday between 12:00-18:00 using a Youtube link. Share the video on as many personal accounts as possible.

SOCIAL MEDIA SCHEDULE

Network	Day	Time	Content Type
Facebook	Monday	12:00-15:00	Relative article
	Wednesday	12:00-15:00	infograph/article
	Thursday	12:00-15:00	news or update or tag a partner
	Friday	12:00-15:00	spotlight trending industry topics
Twitter	Monday	12:00-15:00	news or update
	Tuesday	12:00-15:00	interaction with an influencer
	Wednesday	12:00-15:00	partner retweet
	Thursday	12:00-15:00	spotlight trending industry topics
	Friday	12:00-15:00	relative article

RELATIVE TOPICS

- Borders
- Border control
- Border security
- Airports
- Ports
- Airport security
- Port security

- New airport codes
- New airline or ferry codes
- News about relative airports
- News about project partners
- Travels to and from Europe
- New EU regulations

COMPETITION

A competition in Facebook

- People have to share a photo created by ABC4EU and a random winner gets a reward

Or

- People have to upload their own photo using a specified hashtag and a random winner gets a reward

*Not to be done immediately, but after gaining a good amount of audience in the page.

Appendix 2: The video I edited

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RAf53DHzhg&feature=youtu.be