



BUSINESS PLAN: ESTABLISH A DIGITAL MEDIA BUSINESS IN FINLAND

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**BUSINESS PLAN: ESTABLISH A MEDIA
PRODUCTIONS IN FINLAND
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FINLAND**

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BUSINESS PLAN: ESTABLISH A DIGITAL MEDIA BUSINESS IN FINLAND

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Abstract

The thesis's purpose is to research ways of establishing a production company in Finland; as a result, it shows critical elements in preparing a business plan. This study includes both the planning of a company but also the market needs for digital media services. The business plan consists of market research by implementing quantity and quality methodologies, product segments, production process, marketing, and the company's communication.

The production company is going to create marketing videos and photos, conceptual products, and other types of videos, work as a consultant toward marketing campaigns, be in charge of media productions for events, and businesses.

The objective of the theoretical background is to indicate a useful business model for media productions in Finland. Qualitative method is used to show how the data is collected via several sources, including literature reviews, online sources, and interviews.

Overall, the data collected presents the feasibility of a business plan that can obtain our target customers and create appropriate marketing approaches. Without an effective business plan, it is not possible to establish this media production company and how to win the deals. In other words, after the business plan, our team will be able to operate a new media productions business in Finnish Market.

Keywords: business plan, media productions, marketing, Finnish market

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1 Introduction

Over 3 billion people are using social media globally, and Finland's usage is over 60%, according to Website of Stasista (n.d.). Digital media production has been growing very fast recently. With the help of online services, billions of people globally can obtain what they want for their daily needs, entertainment, and studies. This presence seems to be an excellent opportunity for digital businesses. In other to meet market acceptance, we aim to create state-of-the-art and creative videos and photos used for media, events, or marketing campaigns. The services we provide include several types of videos, including short-story, conceptual, customer's advertisement, film, music, cover, dancing, and others. We also work hard and proactively to master the current level as well as to reach the newest trends in the media productions industry.

This thesis will focus on identifying and analyzing opportunities for business in the digital media sector in the Finnish market and know how to adapt internationally. The company should possess a unique business model that provides its customers with digital deliverables. Each business should have its model of service deliverables as a result of customers' needs' analysis. In other words, it identifies the potentials of running a small digital business all in one business plan.

1.1 Background

According to Blanchard (2012), the consumption of media has grown nearly double every 25 years, from 1900 to 2020. There were used to be traditional media, including printed documents, and now changed dramatically to digital forms. Website of Statista (n.d) informed that in 2013, people in the States spent an average of 288 minutes per day compared to 360 minutes per day in 2018 via several types of digital platforms. Furthermore, it can be seen that the increase of time spent on digital platforms offer a real growth of digital businesses.

As mentioned in the Media Industry (n.d), the entire media industry recruits approximately 20.000 employees with gross revenue of 4.5 billion euros. Finnish media is going digitalized; therefore, it required the business to be innovative, adaptive, and proactive to survive and grow. Digital media play an essential role in the Finnish economy.

1.1.1 Small business in Finland

According to Yrittäjät, Finland has over 280 000 businesses in which 98% have less or exactly 50 staff within a company. Over 90% of those companies have ten staff or even less but contribute sharply 50% for Finnish turnover annually.

There are several challenges that entrepreneurs might face, and one of them is branding. It is a fact that many of them failed to promote their brand, meanwhile successful enterprises know how to leverage the digital world to enhance their image, brand, trust, and interaction with customers and the company's partners (Duct Tape Marketing).

1.1.2 Digital media production - business idea

The purpose of the business idea is to set up a company that provides state-of-the-art and creative videos and photos used for media, events, or marketing campaigns. The services we provide include several types of videos, including short-story, conceptual, customer's advertisement, film, music, cover, dancing, and others. In general, the services are related to the website, SEO, social media, video, and branding assets.

In the current market, we do understand that there are already many similar enterprises operating similar business models, offering similar products and services. However, what makes us distinguishable is that we provide our customers with both consultancy services and specific staff to perform requested projects. Products and services are mostly in digital forms, which, as a result, are delivered and acknowledged worldwide.

1.2 Study's purpose

The central aspect is the planning and establishing process of digital media business in Finland. As mentioned, several companies have been running similar business ideas. However, this business idea is to concentrate on providing its customers with digital service deliverables, and the target customers are small businesses and NGOs. Furthermore, the information will be collected via interviews with people who are skilled and working in the field. The business plan will also explain its goals, operations, financials, and marketing plan.

2 Theoretical Framework

The company itself should search for opportunities in the existing marketplace and customers' needs, then adjust or apply suitable operational management methods to enhance the competitiveness of the company.

By comparing market figures, the company achieves a better understanding of its competitiveness and chances of success in the market. Understanding the potential market is never an easy lesson; some companies pay with their failures to learn that. The firm's chance of success is tough to know; it can only be understood by many market types of research and studies. One of the chances is sales forces. To arrive at the sales estimation, the company must collect data in competition, market, consumers, product complexity, retailers' connection. Also, remember that one company is never alone in the new market. So it is important to research to analyze the company's competitors by benchmarking, market research, and such (Czinkota 2009). The main purpose of the thesis is to create a well-detailed and structural business plan which allows the business to launch and also minimize the operational business risks.

Observing the theoretical framework is a vital tool to plan and develop a business plan from the thinking stage to planning. According to Pinson (2000), the usage of this tool has three main purposes, including the provision of business operations guidelines, documentation for the financial support application, and entrepreneurship practice. The final one means that the entrepreneur can create and develop a detailed plan and take into consideration making the best out of the plan. Observing several business plans and theoretical backgrounds, the business owner/ entrepreneur can try out many suggestions to improve their business plans. And so, the business plan is structured as the following

- Business Plan: for the presentation of the business ideas at the starting points
- Business model: to provide the audience with general information of what the business is about
- Financials: the detailed analysis of resources needed when running the business
- Marketing plan: to select and implement the right marketing activities

Overall, the primary purpose of the thesis is to create a well-detailed and proper business plan which allows the business to launch and also minimize the operational business risks.

The picture below explains three main stages of the framework beginning with the business idea. The framework's purpose is to prove the business's feasibility which is the outcome of the three tiers.

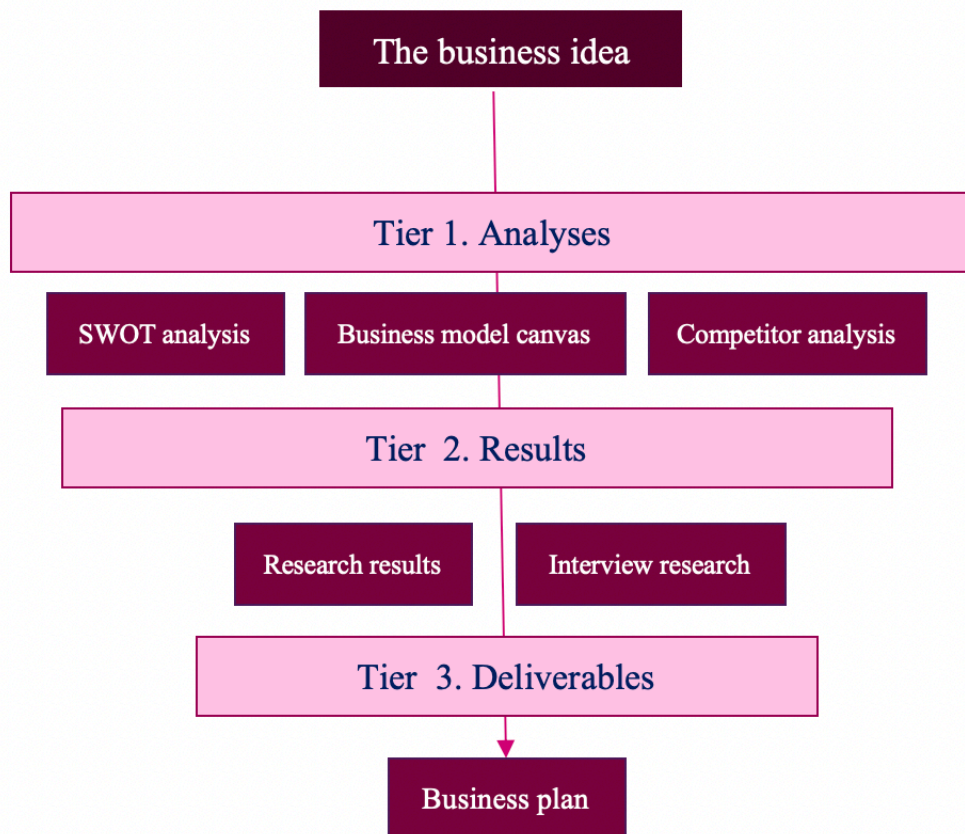


Figure 1 From the business idea to the business plan. 3-tiered approach

The framework is used to prove the viability of the business idea and must be examined via three tiers. The first tier includes SWOT analysis and competitor analysis which are external factors towards the business, however, affecting the business opportunity and capability in the market. Meanwhile, the business model canvas has analyzed the business itself and try to answer the issue that what the business can offer differently and much better than the competitors in the market.

Moving forward to tier 2, in this section, the research shows the validity and reliability of the research. The interviews with people who are working in the field, who are business owners, digital platform owners, digital-related workers, etc. The result is analyzed and calculated to validate this business idea.

Tier 3, shows how the business plan can be formulated according to tier 1 and 2. This section indicates the business plan with operational and financial numbers. Tier 3 will, furthermore, provides the marketing strategy to achieve target customers for the business.

2.1 Tier 1

2.1.1 SWOT Analysis

As stated by Pinson (2014), SWOT Analysis is an easy-to-use framework; it provides a broad perspective for the company, especially in strategic planning. The method can be used by listing, spreadsheet, or table depending on who implements it. SWOT elements show everything that affects business in both successful and vulnerable ways. More importantly, decision-makers can rely on the SWOT analysis to eliminate the weaknesses and minimize the impacts of threats.

In this thesis, the SWOT analysis used to describe our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on our current team, different backgrounds of teammates, existing market and competitors, and what we should do to utilize our strengths and opportunities and mitigate our weakness as well as threats.

As stated by Kotler and Armstrong (2010), SWOT analysis refers to Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This method is commonly applied for the industry, market segment, place, or even in a product. The analysis supports the business to utilize strengths, overcome weaknesses, prevent itself from threats, and embrace opportunities existing in the market. The opportunities and threats usually come outside the business; however, the measurement can be assessed as harmful and helpful factors that affect the business's operations.

- Strengths are factors that give the business advantage over other competitors in the market
- Weaknesses are elements that cause disadvantages for the business
- Opportunities are elements that the business can shift into strengths or advantageous factors
- Threats might cause business trouble in several ways.

2.1.2 Business Model Canvas

According to Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010), there are nine elements that BMC includes as the following, Unique value proposition: the business that offers customers' problems solutions.

- Customer segments: the business's target customers (who will pay for its products or services)
- Key resources: how much/many or which resources needed to run the business, e.g., team, capital, equipment, etc.
- Channels: how the company reaches its target customers
- Customer relationship: refers to customer acquisition and retention
- Revenue: how the business can make money
- Key Activities: how to manage business operations
- Cost structure: the financial statement includes fixed and variable costs.

As mentioned, BMC is designed to guide the help business to understand the critical components of launching a business. It concentrates on strategic components that have significant impacts on business growth. BMC focuses more on quality than quantity. It is not as simple list down SWOT or writing pages to pages. It identifies vital inputs in each component, simple to use yet detailed enough. BMC is also a common language in the business world. Millions of companies have been using BMC as a starting point to discover, build, and develop their business models. Last but not least, the heart of BMC is the value proposition. The value proposition is considered as one of the most critical keys to the overall success of the business model (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010)

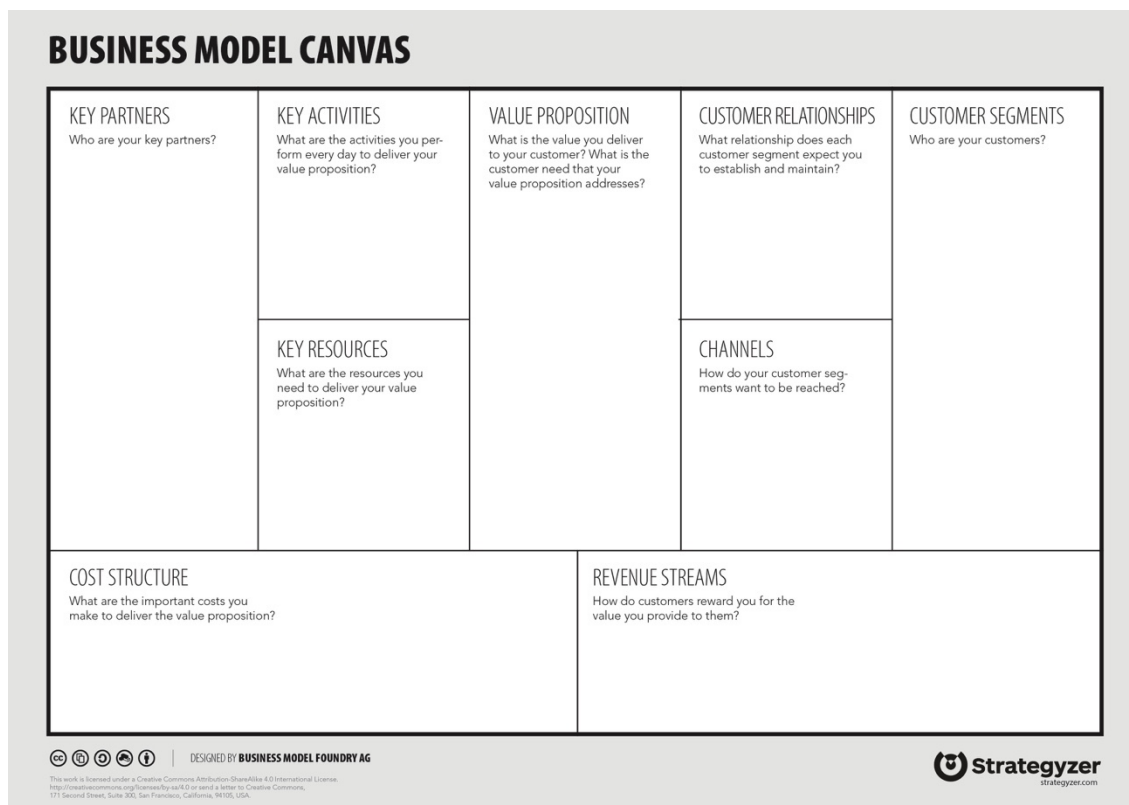


Figure 2 Business Model canvas. Source: Strategyzer

2.1.3 Competitor Analysis

As stated by Kotler and Armstrong (2018), it is significant to find out what differentiates a business compared to its other competitors existing in the market. Having answered this question, the competitor analysis provides a comparison between what other competitors are offering and what can this business offer. This analysis plays an essential role in identifying the opportunities that we can take advantage of other rivals. Furthermore, it also provides guidance for strategic planning for the business.

First and foremost, the company must categorize its competitors and assess them into objectives, SWOT, strategies and then decide which sector can be concentrated on to compete.

The competitor analysis also helps the business owner to specify the competitors' positions in the current market, what makes customers choose their services/ products over other competitors. One of the most important factors might be the product's or service's prices. Pricing can give a competitive business advantage. Besides that, notifying what means of media other competitors are using, what marketing channels are implemented, and how they interact with

their customers also help the company to achieve insights into what the customers want from a media production company. This will help the business see how many threats its competitors can be and identify suggestions to compete with them (Ferenzi n.d.)

2.2 Tier 2

2.2.1 Research methodology

The essence of digital media is to create engaging and useful content, to gain sales and maintain good relationships with the business's partners and customers. It also helps to strengthen the brand in the market. As a result, the qualitative method is used to help us gain a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and limitations experienced by those who are already in the field. Additionally, respondents can have distinctive nationalities but work in digital marketing, media and productions area, and must work for companies within Finland. The responses will be summarized and analyzed in the thesis (Lazo 2010).

2.2.2 Qualitative research

The reason for choosing qualitative methods for this thesis is because we want to gain insights and understandings of human experiences, observations, strategic plans that they are using for their businesses. The research might be conducted via phone or direct visits using the primary approach as interviews. In more detail, the interview method is used for achieving insights into the interviewees' concerns, interests, experiences, values, knowledge, perceptions, and the ways they see others' actions, behaviors, and thoughts (Turner 2015).

2.2.3 Data collection

In this thesis, the interviews are set up with the target interviewees by displaying the purpose of this thesis. According to Silverman (2013), interviews are conducted based on a limited number of cases and open-ended questions. The number of meetings implemented depends on the target groups and how much the problem can be addressed. Unlike the quantitative method, the qualitative interviews are conducted with a small number of people. Commonly, the set of questions prepared is used as a guide, and the responses are not set but

encouraged. In the interviews, the respondents will be asked about their experiences, expertise, and advice during their work basis.

Furthermore, the interview questions designed to include business owners' or workers' perspectives and profiles. The purpose of the division is to provide the business owner/staff with customer behavior, and how their business adjusts its strategies if needed, especially in marketing to position its brand in the market. This might not be an exclusive statement since there are many factors required but somehow helps the business owner to gain insights into how people think of the business products/ services and, more importantly, make their decisions towards those factors (Kothari 2004).

In this thesis, an in-depth interview is obtained to gather qualitative data from interviewees. An in-depth interview, including an open-ended, discovery-oriented method, involves a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on particular working space, situations and problems. In this typology of the interview method, direct information will provide us with opportunities to evaluate, understand, and analyze the situations, or contexts. Questions are worded to make the respondents give a longer answer, not just "yes" and "no". Questions in interviews usually begin with "how" or "why" which give respondents opportunities to use their own words to express their perspectives and experiences in working space (Boyce & Neale 2006).

By implementing those interviews, the author can achieve understandings and decide the most appropriate business plan that can be used. The interviews' outcomes also support the service/ product development, and marketing plan for the business. Moreover, as stated by Beuving and Vries (2014), the interviews are conducted one-on-one technique, and its structure is categorized into two main areas: depth and non-direction. Depth provides interviewees opportunities to deliver the meaning of interviewees' responses. Furthermore, the non-direction helps the interviewees to answer the questions based on their perspectives and experiences.

2.2.4 Data analysis

Analysis of data is a set of stages to select and analyze useful data for this thesis. The most common method is content analysis as stated by Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008), this method is used to analyze the information in terms of texts, media, and so on. It is commonly used to examine the responses from the interviews. The advantages of using this method are to have transparent and replicable data, and the analysis can be done at any time with appropriate sources.

There are three main stages when conducting content analysis which are shown as the following

- Select related content that will be analyzed based on the interviewees' opinions, activities, requirements of the tasks done by them by the research topic/ questions.
- Define the categories: the content respondents producing during the interviews based on their positions, working styles, job tasks, concepts, etc.
- Analyze the results and draw to the conclusions.

According to Auerbach and Silverstein (2003), the outcomes from the interviews conducted are examined for the theme's relevancy. The text is analyzed and then categorized to find standard information from different interviewees.

Another data analysis method implemented is the SWOT analysis, which is used to evaluate Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, related to the digital media industry. The purpose of using this method is to get clear and accurate pictures of our current situations and summarize the possible circumstances that are happening in this industry (Kotler and Armstrong 2010).

2.2.5 Validity and reliability

In this section, the purpose of the methods used is to improve the research's validity and reliability. It is important that the data collected is reliable and relevant to the business via the qualitative approach. As stated by Silverman (2000), validity refers to the truth. In more detail, the findings are authentic and come from appropriate and critical examination. In other to choose the proper perspectives, the information should be collected from interviews with related company owners, workers, and managers. Their profiles were selected via the target companies' websites, friend's recommendations, and personal networks.

To make sure the delivery of transparency to the thesis audience, the description of how the process of an interview conducted is carefully presented. The report includes the interviewee's background, method selection, data analysis, and outcomes. The thesis supervisor also assists the thesis author in justifying the information collected, proper methodology applied, and identifying unproven statements.

In general, the primary data is gathered from published books and researches. Then, the interview questions are researched, summarized, and designed to be relevant to the research

goals along with careful selections of interviewees' backgrounds to ensure the validity of the thesis.

Reliability is based on the researchers' perspectives towards digital marketing and media area in the Finnish market. It is a good thing when they can give valid insights into the industry. However, it might be a negative thing when opinions collected based on their subjective perspectives (Website of Research Methodology 2018).

2.3 Tier 3

2.3.1 Business Plan

According to the Website of Yle (2018), in the Finnish market, only every second company can exist in the next five years. The main failures, as stated, the odds against the entrepreneur at the early stage of the business as well as pressure that they have to go through. The question is, why small business usually failed. 42 % lack of the market for the business's products and services, nearly 30% lack of initial and needed capital, over 15% lack of the understanding of business model, around 14% shortage of marketing plan against other competitors, those were statistics showed by Griffith (2014). All of these factors can appear at the early stage of the business.

So as to mitigate the risks at the early stage of the business, one of the most important things that the entrepreneur must do is to have a concrete business plan. It is the core documents, including specific details of the competition, marketing strategy, financial and sales forecasts. In other words, it can be defined as a blueprint of the business, which offers the entrepreneur with the guidance of how to operate the company, as mentioned by Ward (2018).

Figure 2 below shows three main areas that the business will discuss. Firstly, it is about the company background, mission and objective, business model. Meanwhile, the marketing plan is to define competitor details, market analysis, and communication channels. Last but not least, the communication shows how the team should be operated, updated and kept track of what others are doing within the team.



Figure 3 Primary factors of Business Plan

2.3.2 Marketing plan

Digital tools have enabled the business to understand and engage its customers through many channels compared to the past. Percy (2008) stated that the integrated marketing communication enables the company communication channels to be combined so that brand recognition is more precise, targeted and engaging.

Linton (2011) also mentioned that Social media has been a worldwide phenomenon, which shifts the marketing activities from traditional to digital. It helps the company to directly interact with its customers via launching products/services, updating news, and enhancing brand awareness. Also, it allows the business to tighten the customers' relationships.

Furthermore, the marketing mix is the combination of 4Ps, including Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. When mentioning products, it is merely about the quality of the product, how the value is delivered to customers. Price refers to not only payments after every usage but also discounts, payment tools and plans, etc. Promotion relates to the advertisement, emails, public relations, selling and so on. Last but not least, place includes where the technology is located, delivery or distribution location and such (Patterson 2017).

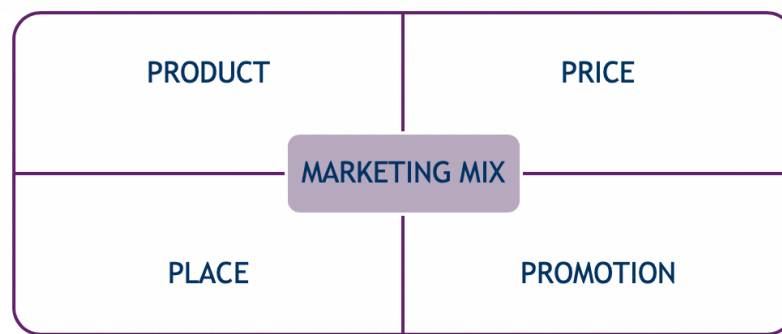


Figure 4 Marketing Mix (Martin 2014)

To achieve a positive result, planning and implementing a marketing mix is very vital. It always comes with the question of how to solve the problems or what solutions that the services or products can bring to its customers. Understanding the services helps the business increase profitability. In the end, business needs to cross-check the marketing mix to avoid conflict among each element, as stated by Martin (2014).

3 Competitor analysis

The Finnish system has been ranked as one of the world's most stable countries (Statistics Finland 2018). Also, recently, the Finnish government has supported many entrepreneurs to launch new businesses every year. Unlike other countries, the legal system is well structured and very understandable, especially for foreigners or immigrants to run businesses here in Finland.

The business idea heavily concentrates on delivering digital media products for marketing and promoting activities. Therefore, we need to take a look at what our competitors are doing in this industry, specifically in the Finnish market. The competitor analysis includes three companies: Lovetus in Rauma, Ink Tank in Helsinki, and Aurora Digital in Helsinki. A SWOT analysis will help us to see their positions in the market when offering customers similar services and products.

In more detail, the subject companies are selected base on their concentration, including graphic design, media exposure, and marketing.

Lovetus is located in Rauma. It was established in 2016. This one-person company delivers visual services to help the company's images become fresher and more attractive. The business focuses on designing websites, designing graphics and visual elements, branding, etc. The company invests mostly in increasing internet exposure. The business owner is highly skilled in graphic design and possesses a strong portfolio to catch the potential customers' attention. Since the company have no other employees, the business owner's work is mostly project-based. Also, threats and weaknesses regarding the one-person company are quite enormous because only one person handles most of the things, including winning deals, building portfolio, designing, production, delivery, and then customer retention afterward.

Ink Tank is a digital communication firm located in the Helsinki area and was established in 2012. The company assists its customers with crafted blogs, social media, print journals, copywriting, video making. To keep the audience entertained, the Ink tank company writes about many things, such as Finland's surroundings, pop culture, books, etc. They attracted approximately 500.000 viewers each month and be seen as Finland's most internationally visited blog right people. It has a strong position in the market, which concentrates on marketing and communication. They are able to keep up with trends and develop their competencies to bring compelling, engaging, and creative products/ services to their customers. Unlike Lovetus, the Ink tank company possesses 13 experienced writers and other talented illustrators, photographer, graphic designer, art director, and filmmaker and sales. They also have an international working environment since the team has several different nationalities.

Aurora Digital is also a digital communication company based in Helsinki. The business was founded in 2018. The business has several positive feedbacks from CEOs and Founders of Top Data Science, the F company, MediaMarkup, Osaketori, which can be seen as their former customers. The services offering to its customers comprise web and app development, graphic design, video production, digital marketing, and white label service. The main focus of Aurora Digital is to create an eye-catching design, fun, and easy to understand, useful content to meet customer needs. The team also has eight people, covering different expertise, including digital marketing, tech, sales, content creator. In terms of nationalities, five of them are young Vietnamese, and the rest are Finnish and Swedish people.

4 Business Model Canvas

The reason for choosing Business Model Canvas is because of its simplicity and transparency; the BMC can be changed and or reviewed within a single page instead of writing 100+ pages as in a business plan. The tool breakdowns the primary consideration for decision-makers. It shows how things affecting the direction of a business and, therefore, give a clear picture of

how to utilize existing resources into the business plan. More importantly, the business model canvas can be completed in a short amount of time (Young 2018). This canvas also allows users to understand visual and practical aspects of a Business Model, helps team to set up the strategy, provides assumptions of challenges, and quickly sees the business on one page.

Giant companies like Microsoft, GE, or Mastercard have been using the Business Model Canvas (BMC) to visualize the framework of the business. Unlike traditional ways of business model demonstration, the business model canvas has only one page that addresses many crucial elements that involve while delivering the value proposition. The one-page BMC will be shown in the appendix.

Customer segments

This block verifies the business's target customers. The identification of the customers is essential to the business because it is the best way to design the its products or services in accordance with customers' needs. The identification includes the relationship between profitability, willingness to diversify the range og product, and more importantly, customers, as stated by Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010)

Problem

As mentioned by Maurya (2012), the problem is the core of the whole canvas, because it is a link to the product/service design, customers' needs. At least 3 top problems should be included in this block along with possible solutions. An early adopter is the term of the target customers for start-up at the early stage.

Unique value proposition (UVP)

So as to define the customer's segment of the business, it is essential to take the value proposition into account. The values can be quantitative or qualitative. According to Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010), for example, the feedback from potential customers can be qualitative values to the product/ service design. Meanwhile, promotion or cost reduction is quantitative values.

As mentioned in the problem block, there might be three or more problems that can be listed; however, the UVP should link to the most severe problem. Furthermore, Mauraya (2012) mentioned the concentration on marketing is vital because it highlights the benefits that customers will have according to the product/service features.

Solution

Most start-ups at an early stage cannot have clear solutions for listed problems (Mauraya 2012). The main reason is the testing on products and services in real-life. As a result, having numerous adjustable solutions is much better than having an utterly absolute solution.

Channels

This block shows how the business can deliver its values to meet the customers' needs. According to Mauraya (2012), it is crucial to consider the scale of channels that will be used. There might consist of inbound or outbound marketing methods, direct or indirect sales, and such.

Cost structure

The cost structure depends on the following factors: cost of getting customer feedback, cost to establish minimum viable product, and the burn rate related to fixed and variable costs.

Mauraya (2012) stated that the burn rate is considered as the cost that the business is spending on installing their products/services in a certain amount of time to gain cash flow back to their business and based on the revenue stream, the business owner will know the break-even point.

5 Interview analysis

5.1.1 Interviewees' backgrounds

The interview method used to acquire data is a part of qualitative research, as mentioned in the previous section. The contacts are collected from those who are working as marketers in industry including media, tech, digital marketing.

The interview questions and answers are shown in the appendix. The content focused mostly on how they create a strategic marketing plan and its influence on brand awareness. Five people have been interviewed so far from a YouTube channel owner, Filmmaker and Social Media Marketing intern, marketing coordinator and growth lead. The interview results are positive since there are lots of details extracted from the interview with them, which are as the following.

Interviewee Codes	Position	Years of experience	Type of organization
A	Owner of Youtube channel	1.5 year	Individual Business
B	Filmmaker, Film Director, Photographer, Social Media Consultant	3 years and 9 months	Vice President of HEFFI - Helsinki Education Film Festival International
C	Social Media Marketing Intern	5 months	Tech consultant company
D	Marketing Coordinator	1.5 years	Media company
E	Growth Lead	2 years	Tech consultant company

A interviewee: Peter P is a youtuber, he has 238 subscribers at the time, the interview conducted.

B interviewee: He is a filmmaker, film director, photographer and social media consultant. His title is vice president of the Heffi - Helsinki Education Film Festival International.

C interviewee: She has been working as Social Media Marketing Intern at a tech company for around 5 months at the time of being interviewed.

D interviewee: She used to work for a marketing agency in Finland for over 1 year as content a marketing creator.

E interviewee: Growth lead. The growth manager works for the tech business that provides the immigrants with technology courses including machine learning, front-end development and intensive full-stack course.

5.2 Category 1: Years of experience - Junior positions

A	Owner of Youtube channel	1.5 year	Individual Business
C	Social Media Marketing Intern	5 months	Tech consultant company

D	Marketing Coordinator	1.5 years	Media company
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A: As a person who wanted to focus on creating values for the community and share his comments toward things/locations he has experienced over years. He started his YouTube channel in late, 2017.

E: Her concentration is to enhance the brand awareness and search for funding. She also involves in customer acquisition, retention and upsell. She started her position in late 2019.

D: Marketing Coordinator. She is working for the marketing company that inspire businesses to create a positive impact on people's lives. The business helps its customer to find growth from new perspectives, with focused strategies and based on human insights. She has been working for her company for 2 years as a growth and brand strategist. She started her job in 2017.

5.3 Category 2: Years of experience - Senior positions

B	Filmmaker, Film Director, Photographer, Social Media Consultant	3 years and 9 months	Vice President of HEFFI - Helsinki Education Film Festival International
E	Growth Lead	2 years	Tech consultant company

B: The respondent has been working in the film making industry since he was young, took a break due to his schedule. He then returned and worked as a professional filmmaker for around 3 years and 9 months. Also, his side hustle is social media consultant.

E: This respondent has been working for tech company, which provides immigrants technology programs, and connects them with jobs afterwards. Her role in the company is growth lead. She takes care of marketing campaigns, inbound leads, and maintains good relationship with the partner companies.

5.4 Category 3: Similarities

Interviewees B, C, D, E have been spending approximately **1-3 hours** a day to create content. The purpose is to enhance brand awareness and eventually obtain new customers for the companies. Also, the marketing plans based on the trends, and data collected in the market. Online platforms are used to communicate with target customers, as well.

Brand strategy is also the core of a marketing plan, which includes social media insights, strategic foresight, concepts and designs of the campaign.

Content is key. The respondents B, C, E mentioned that they use analytics to define their next posts. The content of posts should be about the brand, what the business did, is doing and will do that beneficiate its potential customers. Some stated that the content could be professional, fun, and exciting to catch the attention of the audiences.

The most common ways of communication towards potential customers are using newsletters, setting up meetings, making phone calls, or sending emails. Digital platforms that A, B, C, D, E use are **LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram**. Having good knowledge of **Google Analytics, Facebook Analytics** is considered as an essential criteria when developing marketing content/ strategy as well.

All of the interviewees believe that nowadays people prefer **digital platform** compared to traditional ones. Because it is a trend and it is not quite usual when you people promote their businesses via flyers or brochures.

Having transparent **communication** is highly crucial to keep track of what is happening within the team, therefore, the respondents C, D, and E mentioned, they have at least one team meeting weekly. The team needs to be willing to work towards the same goals.

5.5 Category 4: Recommendations:

The interviewees C and D: mentioned their tasks were mostly market research and then developing the marketing plan based on what they collected from the market. Both of them focused on helping their companies by providing them brand strategy, customer experience strategy and design, concept creation and commercialization, social media insights, strategic foresight, etc.

As mentioned by C, every message is consistent with the marketing concept. She also helps the business to grow new leads via calls to action, landing pages, and lead content

generation. The main social media channels that they are using are Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.

C and D also stated that understanding the customers' needs, including feedback and requests, are important. They have to clarify the strategies to improve growth and revenue for her company as a result of implementing the marketing plan.

Interviewee A: He believed many people used Facebook groups to promote their products, and they only share the content when it is fun, interesting, emotional and it comes automatically. Digital platforms are more convenient, and affordable to use.

Respondent E recommends several tools to maintain good communication and responsibilities among team members and their tasks, Trello, and Slack, OKRs, Leadership meetings, Kanban for project management.

6 Business Plan

6.1 Company

Our business is a full-service digital marketing and media agency based in Helsinki, Finland. In the beginning, we are a team of four people; three of us are Vietnamese, another one is Finnish-Vietnamese.

We utilize the digital world as a storyteller to create long-lasting and meaningful products and services for our customers. Our aim is to bring international experience and knowledge, deliver marketing and media campaigns in the Finnish market in particular and European countries in general. We offer our customers full services/products in terms of marketing.

The company is operated by four members, and all of us are under 30. Our young ages offer us many advantages compared to other old-fashioned business including open-minded, adaptive, innovative, and such.

We have many experiences in marketing, human resources, project management, music production, camera and video editing, and design. More importantly, we are willing to listen and study our target customers in order to deliver the best and most suitable products/customers.

Unlike other companies, we work very closely with our customers and involve them in initial thought stages and seriously take into consideration in every stage of the marketing campaign or other requested products/ services.

6.2 Company's missions and objectives

The company's aim is to deliver superior customer services. We operate based on the unique business model with a willingness to adapt to new trends and changes, also listen to our customers to make them feel genuinely valued.

Through the business model, we can describe the rationale of how the company can create, deliver and capture value. In other words, we can understand how one company makes money via nine basic building blocks covering four main areas including infrastructure, finance, customer, and offer.

The objectives of the company is presented as the following

- Enhance brand awareness of the business
- Working closely with customers in Uusimaa regions
- Becoming a trusted company
- Becoming the good customers' choices in digital marketing services

6.3 SWOT of the business idea

SWOT analysis is used to help the entrepreneur to understand business capabilities. As below, the SWOT table consists of many elements that are taken into consideration. We need to take a look at the business' capabilities through the evaluation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Amstrong 2010).

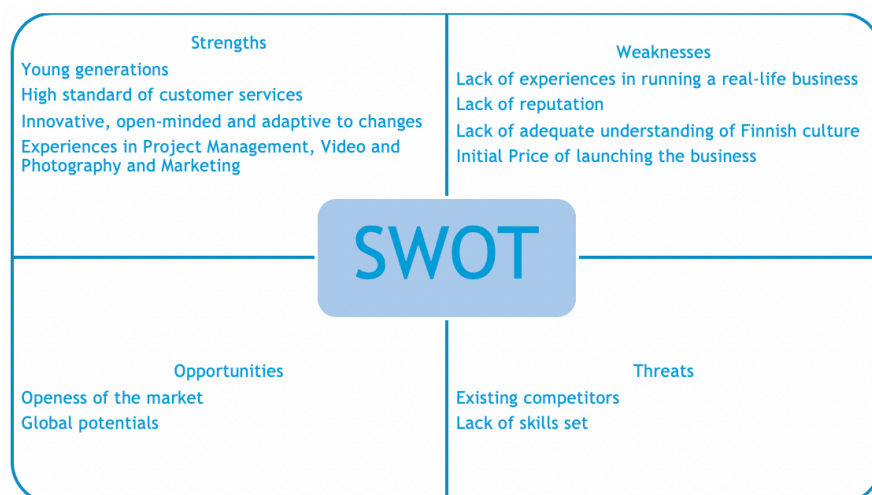


Figure 5 SWOT Analysis (Vu 2019)

Strengths

To begin with, the business aims at producing and delivering good digital media products/ services as well as a marketing campaign. The team members have been working and collaborating together in 3 projects. The first project was A little Christmas - Dansasing Group, a 3-month project for those who lived in Uusima and surrounding areas, had talents in singing and dancing, practiced for 3 months and performed in one night (A little Christmas 2018). Three out of 4 people were in the performance team, except for me, who worked as the project coordinator and performer. The next project was Vtalent contest 2017 - a 6-month project, in which talents registered, showcased and had opportunities to win 300 EUR for the winner prize. One of us was the contest's judge, one was in the marketing team, the others worked as project coordinators (Vtalent 2017). Moreover, most recently, we launched a Youtube channel as Bananah, to showcase our skills in video making, post-production, marketing and improve operational management skills (Bananah 2019). We have launched so far 4 videos so far. We have been working together over the years, and walking in the same direction in which we decide to establish a digital media company. As a result, we understand the working styles, backgrounds, attitudes and expectations of each person.

As mentioned, the business aims at delivering high-quality digital products/ services to its customers, every feedback of its customers will be taken into account, and creative ideas are regularly experienced.

The team backgrounds are entirely various including experience in marketing, human resources, project management, music production, camera and video editing, and design.

More importantly, we are willing to listen and study our target customers in order to deliver the best and most suitable products/customers.

Our strengths will empower us to learn new things, adapt to change more effectively, and ability to understand our customers will not only help us to maintain positive brand awareness in the market.

Weaknesses

In terms of weakness, the business is a start-up, and the operations run by young people, therefore, lack of experience is inevitable. Another weakness is that financial resources are limited. Regarding our weaknesses, none of the team members has over 5 years of experience. We also lack reputation and an adequate understanding of Finnish culture since we are mostly from Vietnam and another one's opinion might be subjective.

Furthermore, like any other start-up, the business needs to attract customers and convince them to try out our products/ services. In order to deal with a lack of reputation, brand awareness development is prioritized by broadening gradually our networks, promoting our brand during networking events, also, taking unpaid projects at the beginning to let our customers understand our styles and purposes. As a result, it might be trouble for a teammate if he/she lacks financial support. In addition, It might be easy to initiate things at the beginning, but when it comes to operations management, it requires lots of skills, energy, experience, to manage it effectively.

Opportunities

With a new business launched, the customers have more options to experience another style of digital media products/ services. The demand for digital media products/ services has been growing dramatically every year, which, of course, offers an excellent opportunity for the business to expand our brand awareness among our potential customers. According to Deloitte (2015), the consumption of digital media is highly increasing. The increase is affected by the usage of mobile devices technology and internet connection. Furthermore, with the transition to on-demand content, in digital forms, in particular, there are apparent rooms for new digital media businesses to run and delivering on-demand digital products/services to its customers.

Threats

As a new company, the competition rate is very high. There are many existing companies in the field offering similar media products and they possess experienced team members who have been working in the industry for years and know what they are doing best, such as Lovetus, the business owner is very high-skilled in design. Furthermore, Aurora digital is a young and dynamic company, but has been delivering high-quality web development, digital marketing and video production services and acquired much positive feedback from big companies including Top Data Science, MediaMarkup, the F company, etc. The fact is that, our competitors are bigger, more experienced, and more professional. Therefore, the business can focus on approaching small and non-profit businesses where its competitors might charge them more than they are willing to pay.

As mentioned before, in order to produce a media product, we have to use many software and equipment such as Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, Figma, Wordpress, and unfortunately, we have not been in any media school, or professional programs regarding media production. In terms of lacking software usage, we try to take online courses, participate in media and marketing related communities, and, more importantly, we practice our skills as much as possible.

6.4 Business registration

To start a business in Finland, the entrepreneurs must register their companies with the authorities. Those authorities include Finnish Trade registration, tax administration, employer register and so on. It is compulsory to register a name for the enterprise, and it should be different from other existing companies. All of the registration is free of charge but the Finnish Trade register. Some of the registration required physical forms, however, most of the registers can be done online. Furthermore, as stated by The Finnish enterprise agencies (2018), it is important to keep in mind the copyright matters in the whole process.

Another note for the new enterprise is to register a Business ID as a Business Identity code. The business ID is several digits given by the Finnish authorities to the business owners. Also, it is a very important element to show that the company operates legally. When handling the business papers, and invoices, a business ID is required. More importantly, the Business ID is needed when registering for the Finnish Trade Registration and Finnish Tax Administration.

6.5 Business model

Our company is a digital-based service that focuses mostly on Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and other non-profit organizations. As mentioned, the business concentrate on branding and developing a marketing strategy for the customers.

6.5.1 Services

- **Social marketing:** we assist our customers in branding, including increasing their visibility in social networks with creative and innovative ideas. The service for social media marketing consists of strategic planning, content creation, implementing and monitoring. We ensure the target audience will not miss out on any content that stands out. We help our customers by maximizing their brand engagement with target audiences.
- **Video and Photo production:** our team will create quality content in digital space, we make sure our content works on social networks. And more importantly, we bring out the best visual story that grabs everyone's attention.
- **Event management:** our team has various experiences in project planning and event management. With the right skill set. We can take the burden off our customers' shoulders. The service includes event planning, media, marketing, venue, partnership and so on.
- **Design and branding:** Brand is much more than just a logo, and we understand this very well. We create and develop out-of-the-box ideas, by bringing customers' stories and imagination into our works.
- **Web development and other services:** we also understand why our customers need a responsive and visual website. It is because their stories need to be heard in creative ways. We provide our customers with web hosting, newsletters, and email management.

6.6 Marketing Plan

It is vital for the entrepreneur to set a concrete and precise marketing plan. We create brand awareness by implementing Customer service relations activities and involves our stakeholders.

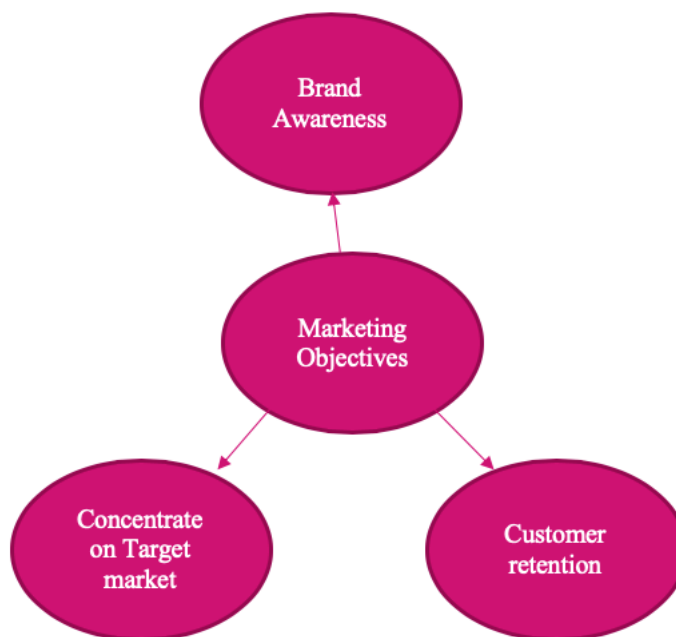


Figure 6 Marketing objectives

6.7 Marketing mix

The marketing mix is the combination of 4Ps, including Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. When mentioning about products, it is merely the quality of the product, how the value is delivered to customers. Price refers to not only app payment after every use, but also discounts, payment tools and plans, etc. Promotion relates to the advertisement, emails, public relations, selling and so on. Last but not least, place includes where our business is located, delivery or distribution location and such (Patterson 2017).

6.7.1 Product

The products that our company delivers to our customers are digital marketing services. We take orders from our customers, and then produce the branding, marketing activities as requested. The services that we are focusing on areas the following.

- Social marketing: we assist our customers in branding, including increasing their visibility in social networks with creative and innovative ideas. The service for social media marketing consists of strategic planning, content creation, implementing and monitoring. We ensure the target audience will not miss out on any content that stands out. We help our customers by maximizing their brand engagement with target audiences.
- Video and Photo production: our team will create quality content in digital space, we make sure our content works on social networks. And more importantly, we bring out the best visual story that grabs everyone's attention.
- Event management: our team has various experiences in project planning and event management. With the right skill set. We can take the burden off our customers' shoulders. The service includes event planning, media, marketing, venue, partnership and so on.
- Design and branding: Brand is much more than just a logo, and we understand this very well. We create and develop out-of-the-box ideas, by bringing customers' stories and imagination into our works.
- Web development and other services: we also understand why our customers need a responsive and visual website. It is because their stories need to be heard in creative ways. We provide our customers with web hosting, newsletters, and email management.

6.7.2 Promotion

This element means the tactic and strategies that our company will use to communicate with the customers. There are also various of social media materials on YouTube, Facebook, Websites so as to bring the customer toward visual, interactive and clearer communication of the company's product range, services, and operations in general.

As a new business in the market, it is crucial for us to implement different promotion activities to draw customers' attention to our products/ services. We can utilize the interviews' response to develop our marketing activities as below

- Social networks: social media channels have immediate effect on our customers. We will utilize the marketing ads such as google ads, Facebook ads, etc. The marketing lead needs to actively control and interact by posting frequently. He/she must

manage the communication via these channels under circumstance of questions asked, comments, and such.

- Marketing content: create articles regarding up-to-date news, matters or issues, and other interesting topics and then post it on our website and social media.
- We will also use Search engine optimization (SEO) to help people more easily reach our website. SEO can be used by installing a SEO-friendly website and using very popular keywords regarding media production business.
- Personal networks: we will also utilize our connections to promote our brands. For instance, participating in related events, conferences, meetups, etc.

6.7.3 Price

Our objective is to provide advanced service in our target market with affordable rides. The price is set based on of our application development, promotional activities, break-even, drivers and other elements.

6.7.4 Place

Due to the limited capital, we will use free working space in Metropolitan areas to work as a team. We will discuss with Helsinki think company, Maria 01, etc. We schedule team meeting every Thursday at 5.30 PM.

At Maria 01, the members are various from tech-startups and corporate partners. They have 3 packages to register as a member in the fastest growing startup and venture network.

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

HOT SEAT	DEDICATED DESK	PRIVATE OFFICE
<p>PERKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Co-working desk ✓ Access to all meeting rooms & event spaces ✓ Access to private community events & parties ✓ Access to member-only discounts & conveniences ✓ Mail delivery point & pickup area ✓ Reception service upon guest arrival ✓ Printing stations ✓ Soundproof phone booths ✓ Community gym ✓ Sauna (Coming soon) ✓ Access to house 24/7 	<p>PERKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Own desk ✓ Access to all meeting rooms & event spaces ✓ Access to private community events & parties ✓ Access to member-only discounts & conveniences ✓ Own mailbox & pickup area ✓ Reception service upon guest arrival ✓ Printing stations ✓ Soundproof phone booths ✓ Community gym ✓ Sauna (Coming soon) ✓ Access to house 24/7 	<p>PERKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Private room ✓ Access to all meeting rooms & event spaces ✓ Access to private community events & parties ✓ Access to member-only discounts & conveniences ✓ Own mailbox & pickup area ✓ Reception service upon guest arrival ✓ Printing stations ✓ Soundproof phone booths ✓ Community gym ✓ Sauna (Coming soon) ✓ Access to house 24/7

Joining Maria 01 might be very beneficial for us, because we have a closer look at how other start-ups effectively operate. We are able to access to mentorship, funding, talent pool and gain foster collaboration within the community.

Our base is in our online website. All of our works including products and services are promoted in our website, allowing our customers fully access. Also, we will boost our presence via social media channels.

6.8 Communication and team meeting

It is important to have clear communication within the team. Each team member is responsible for implementing their tasks, and updating the team if there is any problem they are encountering. According to Interview E, as a growth leader, she has been using Trello, Kanban board, OKRs to set goals, track the tasks, and send an update to the team. Each team member should have their own task tracking system, as well as the entire team, where everyone can update their status of the tasks.

The team leader needs to make sure everyone in the team understands their tasks, agrees on and works towards the same goals.

Furthermore, external communication to target audience/ customers needs to base on the company's core value, stay consistently.

7 Conclusion

To collect the responses from interviews, qualitative research is determined with a set of questions, and interpret the results based on qualitative approach. Each interviewee was set up with a specific time, date and to answer the same series of questions. Those interviews were conducted purposely so as to gain their professional perspectives and experiences on promoting their services/ products to their businesses' customers.

The interviews revealed several interesting perspectives and recommendations, focusing on how they shape their activities towards marketing and brand awareness specifically. Brand awareness and marketing activities were key elements throughout all the interviews. Teamwork, tracking system, communication, are also important to define the success of the team. All of the respondents prefer digital platforms including Instagram, Youtube, Facebook and professional uses via LinkedIn. Understanding the customers' needs and wants is also taken into consideration when developing the marketing strategy.

Entering a new market is never an easy job. There are lots of differences and challenges that the company must perceive before making any decisions. In order to make the right decisions for the operations, the analysis of competitors, SWOT, and people working in the field is required as a prior condition. Towards the goal of achieving success in business, the effective starting point is to have a precise and compelling business plan, especially a concise marketing mix analysis. It is created based on a business model itself, which demands a general understanding of many practical matters, such as the marketplace; trends; marketing mix comprehension, and others.

As mentioned, the purpose of this thesis concentrated mainly on how to make a business plan based on data collected and theoretical backgrounds, how to define the needs of the market from the marketing analytics. It is clear that the planning stage is very significant to the success of any business. Personal branding and development are, no doubt a key element to help the business move forwards to its goals.

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview form

Business name:

Interviewee:

Location of interview:

Date:

Short description

Questions and answers

1. How much time you spend to enhance brand awareness of the company?
2. How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?
3. What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?
4. What are digital platforms you prefer to use?
5. What are the main activities you do to market your brand?
6. How do you engage with your customers, and followers?
7. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?
8. What benefits marketing will bring to your company?
9. What do you do to keep your team on track?
10. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

Appendix 2: Interview A - Response

Business name: Owner of an Youtube channel - 238 subscribers.

Interviewee: Peter Le

Location of interview: His study place at a tech company.

Date: Tue, 10 Dec 2019

Started 2 years ago, then a break, then going back last Dec 2018.

Questions and answers

- 1. How much time you spend to enhance brand awareness at the early stage of business?**

At the early stage, I did not really remember how many hours, but I spent around 1 hour a day to write my video content, then film, upload and promote my videos through my connection.

- 2. How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?**

I created my own marketing content and embeded link of youtube channel in the status on FB, and Welcome to Finland twice a week. Whenever I thought I had time, I will update my social media status to let people know about my new videos. Also, I paid attention to which time range will attract more people. Usually between 12 PM - 6 PM. Most people, posted in those groups and asked for subscribe, like, and share. People share the content when it is fun, interesting, emotional and it comes automatically, but some times, I asked my close friends to share it.

- 3. What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?**

Nowadays people just focus on digital media, because it is a trend and it is not quite ok when you people to promote a youtube channel with flyers or brochures. And millions of people doing it online, so why doesn't it.

I think it is more convenient and affordable as people updates news online mostly, not much on the newspapers anymore.

- 4. What are digital platforms use prefer to use?**

Facebook, and Instagram. Those channels are more interactive and have been using a lot for a long time.

5. What are the main activities you do to market your brand/ Youtube channel (in his case)

Create content, and it should be funny, interesting quotes extracted from my experience in life, a little bit of making up story as well. E.g. when I was in Korea, there were Korean and Vietnamese friends, asked me that "what did you do today?" And when people asked me what to eat when they visit Korea, I told them that you should try the foods that I made in the videos.

The next step of promoting my videos including embedding the link in the status. You should also need to make sure what your main language to communicate with your audience. In my case, I used Vietnamese and target audiences are my friends, and those who want to know more about the places I went to.

6. How do you engage with your customers, and followers?

Keeping the communication up is important, because I am always online so it is easy for to communicate with friends and followers.

7. Why you think engagement with them is important?

If you want to sell a product, you need to let your customers know about you, don't you? In my opinion, the engagement with your audience is to let them know what your plan is, what you want to do, how interesting your videos are, your vibes and such.

8. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?

I use Youtube studio to track what kinds of keywords may lead my audience to my channel or videos. I also track the increase/ decrease numbers of my subscribers every weeks. If I did well, the subscription increases from 5-10 people every week. Not much but it is progressing.

9. What benefits marketing will bring to your channel (business/company)?

Seeing the increases of shares, likes, and subscriptions. My channel is more viral compared to the time I initiated it.

10. What do you do to keep your team on track? (not asking this question because this is his individual business)

11. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

For me, keep them updated is good enough.

Appendix 3: Interview B - Response

Business name: Vice President of HEFFI - Helsinki Education Film Festival International

Interviewee: Filmmaker - Social media consultant (B)

Location of interview: His studio nearby Matinkyla metro station, Espoo.

Date: Tue, 9 Feb 2020

Started when he was young, then stopped for a while. Eventually, he decided to become professional filmmaker and social media consultant as side hustle.

Questions and answers

1. How much time you spend to enhance brand awareness at the early stage of business and How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?

I am now working for two places, one is at the film academy, and one as Social media consultant.

- Regarding the film academy, at the beginning, me and my team had to have at least 1 team meeting a week to define our business strategy, marketing activities and how to implement it. It was quite hard at the early stage because nobody has known anything about us, so we need to use some business canvas, and workshop at the ideation stage, and then we try to reach out our social networks. I myself have developed a very strong connections before, so it can be used as an advantage for the team, the other people as well. For now, we still have one meeting a week to keep up with what we are doing. In my opinion, branding is one of the key elements that new business should focus on to let the target customers know about who you are, what you gonna deliver.
- About the second workplace, I spend 2 hours a week to post some news or requested information from their companies on their social media networks. I also spent some time on preparing the content, so the total hours can be between 2-3 hours weekly.

2. What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?

Digital media, absolutely. As a filmmaker and SoMe consultant, I need to keep up with trends. My tasks as a consultant, I need to create short-length videos to post on Instagram. That way we can easily capture their attentions on something fun and interesting. By combining my video making skills, I can apply many cool effects for the videos to make it more appealing to the audience.

3. What are digital platforms use prefer to use?

Facebook, and Instagram. For professional networking, needless to say, LinkedIn would be the most important platform to use.

4. What are the main activities you do to market your brand?

As mentioned, I create content for them, the content can be seen as videos, blog posts, or some interesting news. Also, I mentioned LinkedIn for professional networking, it is because you can easily reach out the people who are interested in the same fields, or they are working in the industry. If you content is catchy to them, they will share, like and interact with you which helps a lot for my personal branding specifically and my businesses in general.

5. How do you engage with your customers, and followers and why you think engagement with them is important?

I consistently keep them updates, for instance upload 2-3 posts per week, the content should be related to what target customers are interested. Understanding the customer needs is very important for the brand.

I also try to obtain new networks on LinkedIn, sharing good news to help enhancing my personal branding. When people started knowing about you, it is easier for them to spread, or share what you share. And of course it is good for your businesses.

6. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?

Google Adworks, Youtube studio, Facebook statistics are used to evaluate the traffic, and to know what kind of things that interest my audience.

7. What benefits marketing will bring to your business/company?

Absolutely brand awareness has been improved, and I keep it up all the time.

8. What do you do to keep your team on track?

Transparent communication is important and every week, we try to set up a fixed meeting date for the whole team to join. We review what have been done by them in the previous week and what to do next in the upcoming week. We also keep track of the process, so that we know responsible persons, according to their tasks.

Your team needs to be collaborative, trustful and willing to work towards the same goals. As conflictions might happen, it is important for the team leader to deal with those issues right away.

9. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

Keeping them excited with upcoming projects via posts, news, or any kind of updates.

As I said, communication is key to maintain good connection with your customers.

Another thing you need to keep in mind is to always build your personal branding, it is good for you in the long run, your also needs it. And keep growing your networkings is very important. The good time to post anything on Instagram and Facebook is between 12-6 PM, and LinkedIn is 9 AM - 12 PM, when everyone tends to check out news, reads something or just scrolls their newsfeeds. I do not post anything after 8 PM either on Facebook or LinkedIn.

Appendix 4 - Interview responses C

Interviewee: Anh Luu - Social Media Intern at a tech company (C)

Location of interview: Her tech company.

Date: 10 Feb 2020 at 2 PM.

Started in September 2019, working as an intern. Grow the number of LinkedIn followers from 500 to over 1000 within 5 months

1. **How much time you spend on marketing the company? And How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?**

Almost everyday, I spend time to create content and enhance the brand awareness because I have do it consistently. The hours of working depend on whether the company organizes special events. Normally spent haft a day to make content and plan the marketing/content strategy for the whole week.

2. **What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?**

I am more interested in working in digital media, I personally was not exposed to traditional media, I did not like to read newspapers or watch television.

3. **What are digital platforms use prefer to use?**

Facebook and Youtube. For Facebook, I follow trustworthy news stations like BBC, Yle. For Youtube, I like to see some unique, trending content to get entertained.

4. **What are the main activities you do to market your organization?**

As a Social Media Marketing intern, I am making content, taking photo, to shine the spotlight on the student development journeys. The content include company's culture, and employee branding.

Sometimes it took lots of energy to deal with different kinds of posts. For instance, I tried to figure out how I am going to position the brand, what is the big why behind the company, and then go all the way to analyze my competitors, and define the personalities of the brand, core values and operational culture. They are all written down in competitor analysis, persona, SWOT, survey, and other analytics.

Furthermore, in-depth information will be accrued and updated from Google Analytics, Facebook Analytics, etc.

5. **How do you engage with your customers, and followers?**

Try to bring different content, not only the topic about developers, but also events my company organizes, expertises on software development, recruitment for those who are interested in IT industry, consultant and so on.

6. Why you think engagement with them is important?

Touchpoints of the customer experience is how they perceive our brand as Intergrify. So it is important to make an impression and make sure they remember whenever they need developers or they want to collaborate with us.

7. Which areas you want to concentrate on using marketing efforts?

Focus on the area that I am good at which is the content marketing, but I also want to learn more about digital marketing, like SEO, Google Adwords. Because the company is quite small so I did not have a chance to really work on it yet.

8. How often you work on those channels?

Everyday, it has to be consistent, I check the analytics, and make contents related to analytics. Look at how many people engage, at what time, did they have any reactions there. I commonly post between 9-10 AM in LinkedIn, Facebook is about 3-4 PM.

9. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?

I will check how many people reach the post, how many likes, and shares, and if the page gain new followers from the post via Facebook Analytics.

I checked from Google Analytics if the company has gained new inbound leads.

10. What benefits marketing will bring to your business/company?

Brandawareness for sure, reputation, and final goals would be getting more inbound leads. Because ROI is what I am targeting at.

11. What do you do to keep your team/activities on track? (as an intern, she works under supervision of her manager, and so the term " activities" is used for this case)

I made a general guideline about content marketing, and every week I update it and the posting schedules to make sure the page is always alive, with new development, new events, new achievements, new posts. I also believe, communication within my team is crucial to get things done.

12. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

I keep the communication with the those who are interested, for instance, they tagged us on some of their posts, if they have questions, or comments, I make sure to respond it on time.

Business name: Social Media Analytics Agency in Marketing industry

Interviewee D : Marketing Director Assistant/ Creative designer

Location of interview: Online

Date: 8 Mar 2020

Short description: worked in B2B enterprise, products offered is social media analytics services as Marketing Director Assistant/ Creative designer, headquarter in Oulu, second office in Helsinki, partners in China, Singapore, etc.

1. How much time you spend to enhance brand awareness of the company?

It happens all the time, I need to keep it up consistently. Brand awareness is very important, there are two types of content, 1st concentration is about the company itself, its value, core products and it should be underline in every content that I created. And the second one, is various but specifically concentrates on a certain topic.

2. How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?

5-6 hours a day, and 5 days a week.

3. What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?

I prefer digital media because people have been online recently, they are all busy, especially B2B people are busy and basically they do not have much time physically present themselves somewhere. They mostly check out news, and posts online instead. It does not mean real-life conferences are not important, it is just convenient for them to check out most of the things online.

4. What are digital platforms you prefer to use?

Website, Social Media channels: Instagram, LinkedIn for B2B, Facebook, but not my priority. Because I used to work for B2B, we are focusing on other channels, but not Facebook, it is usually used for casual connections, we did not do business there. Some other professional platforms for specific occasions like Pinterest, and other designing channels and Youtube, medium for writers, tiktok. Snapchat for teenagers and young audience.

5. What are the main activities you do to market your brand?

I spend most of the time on helping my director on creating content according to the tasks given. Create articles and blogs, videos for the company's Youtube Channel, prepare daily Instagram posts, design banners for different campaigns and contributed to creating the case study in order to attract new leads for the company sales force. I also prepared twitter, facebook and LinkedIn daily.

6. How do you engage with your customers, and followers?

It is very hard to get their attention, first of all, I need to clarify what they are in need of. If I do not have enough resources, you need to envision what their needs. Persona, the final goals of the business are to get your customers buy it. So understanding their profiles is a good way to improve your services, and know what to focus on.

7. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?

It depends on the audience interactions: we will sum up the numbers of likes, shares, comments. Since we have been working with Analytics, we are able to know the right numbers of engagement, what can be improved, can be added into the content, etc.

8. What benefits marketing will bring to your company?

Brand awareness, relationship with target audience and potential customers via communication platforms digitally and in real life.

It supports directly to the sales team, marketing team worked as a foundation, attracted people who are interested. Via those contents, they will subscribe to the company's email lists, and we give it to the sales team, and try to obtain new customers.

9. What do you do to keep your team on track?

My duty is to work according to the requests from my boss. And communication is key to know what we are doing, and we also have a team meeting every Monday to discuss about our tasks, what problems we are encountering.

10. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

We call it post-service phrase, we send them emails, giving them analytics that beneficiate them. We also provide them with promotions and discounts on our services. And Market updates, social

Appendix 6: Interview E - Response

Interviewee: Katja Lairikko at a tech company (E)

Location of interview: Her tech company.

Date: 30 Jan 2020 at 1 PM.

She started working for her tech company in 2018 as growth lead.

1. How much time you spend to enhance brand awareness at the early stage of business?

Around 8 hours a day, my responsibility is to present our business to anyone I was talking to, including friends, acquaintance, potential partners.

2. How much time you spend to marketing your products and services?

I spend 1-2 hours a day to consider marketing plan made by our intern, we have two services: education and consulting. For B2B, I spend 5 hours a week to write newsletters, overseeing content creator, coordinating and helping the marketing team to work on their content. Maybe sometimes I help them with brainstorming.

3. What do you prefer, traditional/ printed media or digital media? Why?

Digital marketing: because the reach is higher and cheaper. Social media, SEO, and Marketing. For us, most of the clients are Finnish, so the company wants to convert the website into Finnish for SEO.

4. What are digital platforms use prefer to use?

LinkedIn, and Facebook. LinkedIn is for professional used, most people prefer Facebook, but in my opinion, if you want to do B2B marketing, LinkedIn is the best option, big minus is that it is expensive comparing to Facebook.

5. What are the main activities you do to market your organization?

- Social media marketing
- Newsletters that we send to 1.200 people
- Our presence in events, tech meetups, the students who join those events, wearing Integrify shirt and talk about what they did at the company.

6. How do you engage with your customers, and followers?

Newsletters, and sales team contact them often, and invite them here to the events.

Cold calling and via newsletter: that reminds them our services that we can offer them technical support and staffing.

Understanding the customers needs including feedbacks and requests is super important. I need to clarify the strategies to improve growth and revenue for my company. As my company is a startup, I am the one who involve directly in partnership and fundings.

7. Why you think engagement with them is important?

To let our potential customers and partners know about our presence.

Building the relationship in general is very important. And keep everything constantly.

Getting them excited about what they did. So that, we can reach out easily and achieve our goals.

8. Which areas you want to concentrate on using marketing efforts?

Sales and SEM. Coding in helsinki keywords, or common topics: where to find cheap consultant, how to build a website, then we need to create the content around those keywords.

9. How often you work on those channels?

Almost everyday.

10. How do you evaluate your marketing activities?

Google analytics, inbound leads.

LinkedIn and Fb insights manager.

Measure how many people can get into jobs in the end. (being employed)

11. What benefits marketing will bring to your business/company?

More people find us, both companies and applicants, building strong brand, employer branding, talent people want to work for us.

Increase sales.

12. What do you do to keep your team/activities on track?

Trello, and Slack, OKRs, Leadership meetings, Kanban for project management.

Team meeting to brainstorm and select 4-5 most important goals, and then set goals for quarter.

I have my own OKRs, and take a look at it everyday and update it on the next days.

13. After delivering the product/service, what do you do to maintain good relationship with your customers?

Send the person there, teach the people who are consultant here how to behave and succeed in the company. After the contract signed, after the 1st week the sales team will contact the company and the developer to see whether everything is ok. And then after one month they will have a lunch meeting between the company, partner company and the staff.

If they want to collaborate with marketing content, they can contact and we will create for them. We post the content when sb get the job, we post them on social media and tag the company so that promotion.

Appendix 7 Email content to potential interviewees

Hi (name)

I hope you are doing well. I am Sollie Vu, now working on my thesis. I am conducting interviews as part of a research study to increase our understanding branding and marketing strategy for new businesses in Finland.

As a (title) you are in an ideal position to give us valuable first-hand information from your own perspective. The interview can be implemented by face2face meeting or via phone, and it takes around 20-30 minutes and casual.

We are simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives on how you collect market insights, general thinking process and how you measure your strategy in the market. Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential. Each interview will be assigned a number code to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and write up of findings.

There is no compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to our research and findings could lead to greater public understanding of the people in the field. If you are willing to participate please suggest a day and time that suits you and I'll do my best to be available. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you in advance for your huge support.

Appendix 8 Business Canvas of the business

<p>Key partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplier and Vendor partners: a range of tools, services and tech used to support the development and online content Platform Partners: Instagram, Facebook, google, etc. Advertising partners: advertising agencies that support commercial customers. Strategic and Alliance Partners: Companies and organizations on various projects and shares certain resources 	<p>Key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content creation and distribution of online and mobile content targeted at online audience and educated millennials. Each channel has a specific content, for instance, Food and drink channel will produce content regarding foods, cooking, etc. <p>Key resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intellectual properties and brands. Platforms: fb, Instagram, website, YouTube, local Existing networks and partnerships, communication infrastructure. 	<p>Value propositions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality reporting and up-to-date news (original content) Covering a wide range of subjects: daily problems, politics, fashions, history, food and drink, games, designs, technology, other trends. Online audience. Provision of detailed analytics, and user insights, community updates, social interaction, branded content creation, and advertising products. 	<p>Customer relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audience is free to use the channels Commercial customers work directly with Sales for advertisements via phones, emails, online contact forms, personalized responses <p>Channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media Website Sales 	<p>Customer segments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General consumers and advertisers. Consumer base aged between 18-49, millennials. Target customers with a wide range of interests: daily problems, politics, fashions, history, food and drink, games, technology, design, other trends. English-speaking countries. Brand marketers, commercial entities, advertisers, with advertising services.
<p>Cost structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of IT Production of content for customers Marketing and Advertising schemes Contracting 		<p>Revenue streams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and distribution of online content Traditional advertising: displaying advertising Branded content and editorial sponsorships: third-parties product compelling content to promote certain products and ideas. 		