



Analysis and Improvement of Social Media Marketing for Ilona Pelli Oy

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis was commissioned by Ilona Pelli Oy, a Finnish clothing brand which has been a part of fashion design in Finland for many years. The company's social media presence needed updating and, with that, gain needed publicity, new customers and sales. The company made limited use of its existing social media platforms and has had no proper content plan nor marketing plan. The objective of this thesis is to analyse the company's current social media platforms and make an improvement plan. The plan will ultimately work as a guideline for the company to upgrade its social media presence in order to attain the required improvement in sales.

When working on the thesis the author gained knowledge of how social media works as a marketing platform. Understanding social media in general as well as its benefits and opportunities for business purposes was needed. Primary data, meaning the company's personal social media analytics and custom data, was collected from the platforms Facebook and Instagram. The analytics were compared against those of its competitors. The improvement plan was curated by using framework that supported the creation of marketing strategies.

Based on the results, the author found out the importance of having knowledge of the company's potential customers. When marketing online, customer segmentation and specific demographics are crucial in order to market content to a targeted segment. The importance of authentic content and frequency of being active online is of great importance to keep followers and potential customers interested and committed to the company online. The analysis shed light on the fact that the company needs a working online sales platform and that it should also have a website that works in alignment with its social media marketing.

Problems regarding social media and the commission company is a lack of knowledge and the inability to use the platforms efficiently in order to obtain all possible benefits for the company. These problems could be tackled with a comprehensive social media plan drawn up and, once this is installed, having someone implement, monitor and update the platforms regularly, in accordance with the plan.

Key words: social media marketing, social media analysis

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1 INTRODUCTION

The popularity of social media changed the ways of traditional marketing. Smaller businesses that operate mainly in physical Brick & Mortar stores have trouble moving their advertising online and using social media to their advantage (Boitnott, 2017.) With knowledge on how to work towards achieving a reliable social media presence, a small brand can quickly gain the media coverage it needs. By getting views and feedback from customers online, a business can grow and targeting the right niche and customer segment, social media can help a business to find its customers. (Schoja, 2016, 10)

It all started with the launch of Web 2.0, also known as social media (Olin, 2011, 9.) More collaborative online websites became responsive and therefore quickly changed the way people communicated with companies and each other. As described briefly Dictionary.com, the Web 2.0 can be explained as a mix of user-generated content.

Because of the popularity of social media, businesses have been driven to go online since that is where the vast majority of their customers can be found (Olin, 2011, 9.) With the rapidly growing number of people spending time on different online platforms, it makes social media a place for businesses to gain views and reach more customers by incorporating social media marketing to the company marketing plan (Moorman, 2019.)

It has been studied, that Finland's online retailing has been one of the fastest growing in Europe (Kurjenoja, 2020, 4.) From in-shop sales and boutique shopping, the popularity of shopping online, has changed the way people purchase their essential, tangible items (Humphries, 2019, 5.)

The main focus of this thesis is to analyse Ilona Pelli Oy's social media platforms and compare data findings with company competitors'. The competitor analysis will help with understanding what Ilona Pelli Oy needs to change in the company's current social media marketing strategy (Kananen, 2018b, 20.) The company has had trouble moving its marketing and sales online and this is why the thesis was commissioned (Pelli, 2020.)

By the end of the thesis Ilona Pelli Oy will be presented with a long-term strategic social media marketing plan. The analysis will give insight on how content could be changed and how the required goals can be achieved.

1.1 Background

This thesis was commissioned through personal connections with company owner Ilona Pelli. The close relationship with the company and author of the thesis enables a personal approach when working with the material for the ultimate analysis and research.

The author of the thesis worked and majored in marketing and entrepreneurship during the first years of her studies. The author interned in three companies that led to her current path of work. The author interned as a social media and online webstore assistant and has worked closely with Instagram and Facebook marketing as well as creating social media content. Through these experiences the author has understood what kind of social media content works and what content led, ultimately, to sales.

Through internships related to public relations the author of the thesis worked with social media and advertising online closely in the Finnish market. These experiences gave a lot of insight for this particular thesis. The topic and platforms included in this study are familiar to the author and the overall research is something the author has experience with. After the thesis is done, the author will carry on executing the final improvement plan and hopes to implement it personally in the future. Therefore, this thesis includes references from personal knowledge and experience as well.

2 THESIS PLAN

2.1 Topic

The thesis topic is the analysis and improvement of Ilona Pelli Oy's social media marketing. The analysis will concentrate on the company's current social media content. The results of the analysis will be compared with the results of competitor analyses as well as with the overall outcome the company wants to achieve with its marketing. The study will specifically concentrate on the online marketing efforts of Ilona Pelli Oy's Facebook and Instagram profiles.

After analysing the current state of the company's two social media profiles and the current marketing outcome, the data provided will be used to implement a social media content related improvement plan. The plan will be based on literature that gives insight on the steps to take when creating social media marketing strategies from scratch. The ultimate plan will also work as guidelines to improve and increase company sales, gain traffic to the company's social media platforms, as well as retain and increase brand awareness through social media.

The analysis will focus on the two largest and most popular social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram, which are both used by companies for online marketing purposes. The two platforms are the most interactive platforms and give the best return on investment, which is perfect for smaller companies (Johnson, 2019.) The two platforms have been chosen in light of the fact that Ilona Pelli Oy is a small scale, local company (Pelli, 2020.) For a smaller company, reaching target customers will be easy through social media marketing, since it is cost-effective, and generates required results (Johnson, 2019.) Also, Facebook and Instagram have both been in use by the company for several years and are the only social media platforms used and updated (Pelli, 2020.)

Building traffic to the company website and Search Engine Optimization will not be a main focus of the analysis since the company does not currently have a functioning web shop (Pelli, 2020.) Possible online retail options will be considered, when suggestions for improvement are made at the end of the study.

The author has chosen to analyse the company's existing social media data to gain insight into how the company uses the two main social media platforms currently and what needs to be changed. With analysing the present situation as well as competitors' social media profiles, it is possible to create a social media marketing plan for the future. (Kananen, 2018a, 286).

By seeing how the company's marketing has been pursued in the past and comparing this to present day marketing, possible problems can be pinpointed and fixed. After collecting the data, improvement for the company's future social media marketing will be summarized in an improvement plan for Facebook and Instagram. The plan will include creating social media posts ahead, developing a distinctive online brand image and gaining customers and followers. The upgrade and possible changes are important for the company's survival during today's modern online purchasing trends and consumer habits, as social media has a wide-reaching benefit that supports businesses (Ryan, 2015, 2.)

2.2 Objectives

The objective of the thesis is to evaluate and analyse the case company's current social media presence and to understand how the company's current social media marketing is working for the company's advantage. With the provided data via Instagram and Facebook analytics, a detailed online marketing plan, which will work also as an improvement plan, will be constructed. The company needs a well-planned online marketing strategy and updates have to be made for the brand to establish itself online, gain new customers, increase sales and establish a strong online brand identity (Pelli, 2020.) Shortly, the objective could be summarized into a research question as follows;

“How to analyse and improve current social media presence for Ilona Pelli Oy?”

Sub-questions that will help during the study's data collection process could be:

“How to design an improvement plan for social media presence?”

“What changes need to be made so that social media platforms could boost brand sales?”

“How to increase sales through updates of social media platforms?”

“How to fully take advantage of online social media platforms Facebook and Instagram considering sales and customer awareness?”

During the study, these research questions will be answered to understand what needs to be done for Ilona Pelly Oy to gain the best results from the two different social media platforms in use.

2.3 Concepts and Theory

The thesis will concentrate on defining the concept of social media marketing, specifically marketing via Facebook and Instagram. The thesis will also give insight on how a marketing plan is curated and what needs to be taken into consideration while constructing the plan.

2.3.1 Social Media Marketing

Social media is, for example, online platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube and Snapchat (Olin, 2011, 9.) Social media marketing can be described as marketing that uses different social media networks and websites to market a company’s service or product. Because of social media’s vast reach, it is a new way for companies to gain the attention of their customers. Because of the built in analytics, companies can monitor their customer’s reactions and it helps pinpoint how well the company’s marketing efforts have succeeded. (Kenton, 2018.)

Social media’s two biggest platforms are Facebook and Instagram. Both will be analysed in this study. One of the most popular social media platforms ever created is Facebook. In 2018 Facebook had reached over 2 billion users. (Kananen, 2018b, 106) The platform has so many daily users that the content they create per day reaches over a billion posts (Levy, 2010, 4.) Not only does the social network help connect people together, it quickly became a place for businesses to get in contact with their customers. The ease of use of the platform helped Facebook become swiftly a new way to communicate with customers and market a brand and business. (Levy, 2010, 13.)

Facebook works around people having their own profile and sharing content such as texts, pictures and videos on their personal account. As a user, you can add other people as “friends” that enables to see each other’s posts. Facebook is a platform for informing about events, creating groups and business pages. (Chi, 2018.)

Instagram was acquired by Facebook in 2012, which ultimately linked the two platforms together. The platform is mostly used by a younger audience and is growing fast, due to its convenient way of use. (Kananen, 2018b, 191.)

According to the Tech Terms Dictionary (2014), Instagram can be described as a social media platform that is based on visual content. The main idea is sharing pictures and videos and gaining response to them. Because of the service’s simplicity it has gained popularity fast, as did Facebook. (Kananen, 2018b, 190.)

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of three parts. First, the analysis of Ilona Pelli Oy’s current social media platforms and how they work. The study will pin-point where the company stands now and understand the level the company is at, considering its marketing practises that need to be changed. After analysing the company data retrieved from Facebook and Instagram, similar data gathered from three main competitors will be used for comparison purposes. This part will be based on the competitor analysis by Kananen (2018a, 454.) Lastly with the understanding of what the company wants to achieve and wants to gain from its social media publicity, the creation of an improvement plan and marketing strategy will be created based on the findings of this study and related literature.

2.4.1 Social Media Analysis

The basics of measuring social media success will be used as a base for the analysis of Ilona Pelli Oy’s Instagram and Facebook profiles. When using social media, learning and keeping an eye on what metrics are the most important and work the best for the company is key (McKay, 2017.) The analysis will

concentrate on organic, meaning unpaid, Facebook and Instagram content. Data such as profile follower count, likes and comments on posts as well as follower demographics will be analysed to define the company's current situation on social media.

In addition to the analysis of the company's social media analytics, a SWOT analysis for Ilona Pelli Oy will be conducted as well. The SWOT analysis method will be used to analyse the commission company as well as its competitors. The four-part framework is a definition of a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The analysis will assess Ilona Pelli Oy's internal and external factors. The results of the SWOT analysis will be used to implement the final marketing strategy. (Kananen, 2018b, 17.)

2.4.2 Competitor Analysis

Comparing Ilona Pelli Oy with its competitors will provide insight on how companies with similar customer segments handle their social media. The competitor analysis is often used when improving company operations on social media, according to Kananen (2018b, 69.)

The competitor analysis can be formed by answering the following questions:

1. Who are the company's competitors?
2. On which platform do the competitors work on?
3. How many followers do they have?
4. What content do they create and how do they use it?
5. How do the company's followers react to their content?

Company operations are then compared with competitors. With the competitor's results the commission company can form a personal perception of how to implement results. The analysis requires all of the company segments to be the same. (Kananen, 2018b, 70.)

2.4.3 Creating an Improvement Plan

The study's final part consists of the creation of a social media improvement plan for Ilona Pelli Oy. The plan will work a guideline for the company's marketing strategy. When creating an improvement plan or a marketing strategy, the SOSTAC framework obtains needed information to base the ultimate improvement plan on.

According to Baker (2019), the five steps for creating a social media marketing strategy, are as stated below:

1. Research company customer segment thoroughly
2. Determine which social media platforms to use
3. Create unique and engaging content
4. Organize a schedule for posting the content
5. Keep analysing the content impact and feedback

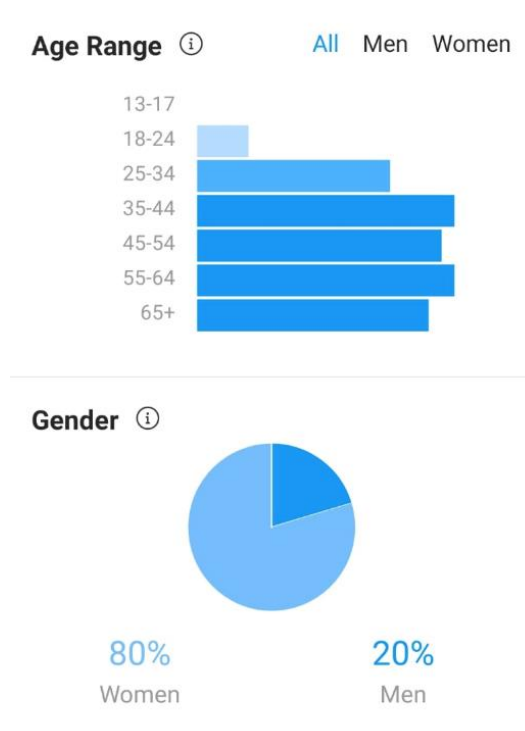
With the framework of the SOSTAC model and using the basic steps of creating a social media marketing plan, Ilona Pelli Oy will be presented with an Improvement and Social Media Marketing plan regarding the platforms Facebook and Instagram.

2.5 Working Methods

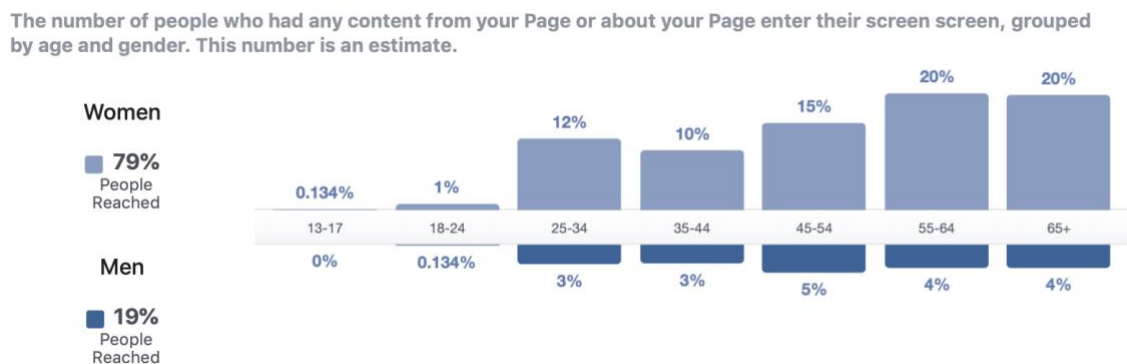
Interpreting social media analytics is similar to analysing quantitative data, as the data is in easily readable, numeric form. Both Instagram and Facebook generate data collected from their users that can be compared to data collected normally through surveys, for example. Both platforms give access to user information that includes metrics such as gender, location and age. Finding customer demographics has been made easy due to the information given by both Instagram and Facebook for company profiles. Specific demographics regarding customers can be gathered from both Instagram Insights and Facebook Analytics. (Gesenhues, 2018.)

Since the data collection is already done by the apps themselves, the study revolves around the analysis of numeric data that the apps have gathered. Ilona Pelli Oy had not used the business profile on Instagram before, so therefore

because of the study it was activated to gain more insight into company followers. Test posts were made to see examples of reactions and to gain follower demographics.



Picture. 1 Screenshot, Instagram follower analytics of Ilona Pelli Oy (Instagram 2020)



Picture 2. Screenshot, Facebook demographics regarding people who have seen content posted by Ilona Pelli Oy (Facebook 2020)

To gain a wider understanding of the commission company, in-depth interview-like and conversations were held with company owner Ilona Pelli. The information gathered through these discussions are used to curate the improvement plan at the end of the study, as stated before. The questions asked were designed to

answer the different levels of the SOSTAC model, which will be used as a base for the marketing strategy stated in the previous headline.

Social media competitor analysis is based on analytics that are accessible to anyone. Analytics such as company profile follower count, post frequency as well as comments, for example, can be publicly viewed. The data gathered from viewing competitor company profiles on Facebook and Instagram will be taken into consideration when conducting the study's competitor analysis. The competitors that were chosen to be analysed in this study were selected from a list of competitors provided by the company's owner, Ilona Pelli. Companies that have the most following on both Facebook and Instagram and are active both locally and internationally were the final three selected for the study.

2.6 Thesis Process

The following will describe the process of this thesis and the overall topics within the following chapters.

The first chapter is an introduction to the topics of the thesis, Social Media Marketing and the commission company Ilona Pelli Oy. The introduction will include a brief introduction of company, social media marketing for smaller companies as well as touching the subject why the thesis was commissioned.

The thesis plan is clearly set in the second chapter of the thesis, which covers the objective of the study as well as the questions that will be answered during the research process. Insight on how the research will be conducted and what concepts and theories will be used as the study's framework will be provided. This will enable the reader to understand the

During the third chapter of the study in depth information about the commission company will be stated. The company's history will be described briefly as well as its current situation concerning its social media strategy and outcome, overall company goals and future plans that the thesis will apply to. The third chapter will concentrate on describing the main subject of social media marketing that the study's analysis is based on.

The fourth chapter will include the methodology of the analysis and how the theories will be implemented. This part of the thesis will explain how data for the ultimate improvement plan will be gained.

Chapter five describes the answers and data that were gained by the previously explained analysis methods. The ultimate improvement plan will be curated for the company based on the data collected from analysis.

Lastly chapter six will state the conclusions and recommendations that will regard the final improvement plan that will be given to the commission company.

3 CASE COMPANY AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS

3.1 Ilona Pelli Oy

Ilona Pelli is a Finnish fashion designer. Pelli has been a part of Finnish fashion since working as a designer at the known Finnish fashion powerhouse Marimekko during the years of 1993 and 1994. After working with Marimekko, Pelli started her own business due to the fact that she wanted more space to be in charge of her own designs. During the very first years of business, Ilona Pelli sold her designs locally to customers in Helsinki and around Finland as well as to countries abroad. International sales were gained through selling clothing in sales fares in Paris, for example.

Ilona's designs are known for their often asymmetric shapes, good quality fabrics and cuts that enhance the female figure. The designs are made to be classic and are often regarded as timeless. She still designs new models and her manufacturing is in Tallinn. (Pelli, 2020.)

3.1.1 History

Ilona Pelli studied interior and furniture design at the University of Industrial Arts in Helsinki during the years of 1971 to 1977. After graduating she worked within the field of architecture but because of the recession in Finland, building stopped. The recession had an effect on the business. Ilona found herself then gravitating towards clothes design and found herself working as a fashion designer.

Ilona first started a company called Alter Ego with her close friend, and worked in production and sale. Alter Ego was in business for five years during 1985 to 1990. After they closed the business, as a result of the upcoming 90s recession, Ilona then came back to designing clothes in 1992 when she worked for Marimekko. After working closely with brands like Marimekko, Pentik-Lepistö and Turkistukku Oy, in 1995 Ilona wanted to design by herself and work under her personal name. This led to her starting her own company, Ilona Pelli Oy.

Ilona opened a store in Helsinki. The company had renown clients and exported to USA and different parts of Europe. In general sales were good. Ilona Pelli marketed through personal fashion shows and attended different fairs in Paris. Advertisements and interviews in different magazines worked as marketing tools and brought customers into the shop and helped sales grow. (Pelli, 2020.)

3.1.2 Situation now

The growth of the company stopped completely after the boutique was closed in 2001. After the store closed down clothes were not made in bigger batches any more. All of the designs are now made on an order basis only. New customers are hard to gain since the company does not have a functioning online web shop. Therefore, ordering, which is the company's main way of sales, is pretty hard. Most of the sales are nowadays gained through pop up events.

The company's social media is mainly used to inform customers about upcoming sale events, often called "pop-ups". The pop-ups are held randomly at times suitable for Pelli. Usually the events have designs on sale that have been left over from previous sales and pieces left over from inventory from the store.

The company's situation regarding its sales needs a clear structure and some planning. This means a marketing plan will help with gaining new customers and help with sales. For the future, Pelli would want to achieve frequent sales within the local market as well as gaining more attention. (Pelli, 2020.)

3.2 Social Media for Business

Social media is described as online, user generated content. On social media people are able to share their ideas, thoughts and perspectives regarding other people, companies or brands through their personal profiles (Dollahide, 2019.) The term "Social Media" is also known as the Web 2.0. The name stands for a new kind of Web, where there is no more passive interaction (Technopedia, 2017.)

With the rise of social media, traditional marketing changed its shape and found

its way to all new platforms. Social media has slowly taken over as one of the leading channels for marketing and advertising. By marketing on social media brands and companies are now able to reach potential customers directly, create valuable customer relationships and therefore extend their customer service. For social media marketing to work, companies and brands need in depth customer insight and carefully segment who they want to market to. (Kananen, 2018a, 24.)

Social media marketing is described as the creation of content to promote a business or product on different platforms. The content can be tailored to every different platform to boost reactions and brand awareness in a cost effective way. (Baker, 2019.)

Since the rise of the Web 2.0 Ilona Pelli has not fully used the marketing possibilities the new social media platforms enable. The company has created profiles on Facebook and Instagram, but update both very rarely. Other platforms are not used, mainly due to the lack of knowledge and need. The company has a website with contact and order information, as all communication with clients was handled, and still is handled, through email or telephone. (Pelli, 2020.)

For Ilona Pelli Oy Facebook and Instagram work the best because both of the platforms work around visual content. This will benefit when marketing tangible products and when trying to market a certain aesthetic and style, it is possible to accomplish through images. Through Instagram and Facebook, you are able to give a customer an experience and feeling and a want for a product. (Baker, 2019.) Gaining user engagement organically means content gets wanted attention without using payed marketing methods. According to Kananen (2018b, 101), examples such as giving customers benefits, sharing posts with sentimental value or even humanistic content as well as creating a feeling of belonging will gain organic engagement online. These are values and ideas for content that Ilona Pelli Oy will and should concentrate on in the future on both platforms.

3.2.1 Facebook Marketing

In June 2011, Facebook had already reached over 680 million users worldwide (Statista, 2020.) By that time the platform had created simple ways for companies

to advertise their products and create Facebook marketing campaigns. Examples of the ways to market were sponsored posts, Facebook pages, Facebook groups, feed ads, Facebook events and Facebook notes (Olin, 2011, 19.) Creating a Facebook Marketing campaign was made to be simple, but making the campaign effective needed careful planning (Olin, 2011, 22.) Since then, marketing on Facebook has changed significantly. The overall character of Facebook is to be entertaining, guidance, finding information and include sales, all in perfect proportion (Kananen, 2018, 135.)

Even though the users of Facebook in Finland have been declining there is still around 2,7 million active Finnish users on Facebook. The average age range of Finnish users is 33,2 years, if over 65 year olds are not taken into consideration. (Pönkä, 2019.) When marketing on Facebook it is important to select the company target group carefully. Knowing the segment to market to a company can achieve optimum results. (Levy, 2010, 84.) Images, image quality and videos that correlate with the company's brand is of vital importance, as this achieves the best reactions from users. This helps boost advertisements organically. (Juslén, 2013.)

By gaining likes on the Facebook page a brand or company gain more organic views. For this, the page needs to be regularly marketed through paid advertisements. Advertisements can help gain page likes, if the segmentation has been correctly targeted. Consistent and good quality content is appreciated and will also gain authentic likes. However, a random segment of likes can be gained by offering users who have liked the page a gift or by hosting a raffle. Motivating competitions are often used, but hardly help with reaching the wanted target audience. (Kananen. 2018b, 133.)

During the years, advertising and marketing on Facebook has evolved. Advertisements are now seen on the viewer's main Facebook page, called the feed. Because of the very central positioning, the advertisements need to be good quality. (Conley, n.d.)

Smaller companies benefit from Facebook marketing because of the low price range of the marketing campaigns. Companies can set their own budgets and

see the amount of people they can afford to market to. This is one of the main reasons Ilona Pelli Oy has chosen to use Facebook. In addition to this, Instagram is popular among a younger audience, whereas on Facebook, the company's main customer segment can be more easily reached.

The main topics that Ilona Pelli Oy should advertise on social media would be upcoming events, new designs and the updated company Facebook page to gain more following. When creating marketed advertisements on Facebook, it is necessary to understand detailed demographics of the wanted segment. (Kananen, 2018b, 136.)

Ensuring page content and advertisements are coherent, fresh and up to date will help gain views and likes on Facebook (Mineo, 2014.)

3.2.2 Instagram Marketing

Instagram has become one of the most significant social media platforms since it now has reached over 500 million users. In 2016 Instagram introduced its new feature dedicated to businesses, with tools to navigate the reach of posts. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 5.)

One of the most important reasons for businesses to use Instagram is not to purely promote a brand, but to make it more relatable and authentic, more personal. Since the platform is solely based on visual content it is important to have a structured plan when using it to gain wanted customers, views and leads (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 4.)

When planning a company's Instagram account, the first steps should include a well thought out goal plan with clear guidelines to be followed on all future content. By determining the goals of the account you can get insight on what to work towards to. These goals should help estimate how many followers are needed and how many likes and comments are required, for example. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 7.)

When planning the company future posts it is important to stay coherent and post

visuals that stay true to your brand image. Using high quality, professional photos and making sure the pictures are visually appealing to the viewers help gain reliability (Kananen, 2018a, 287.) When planning future posts there are many content creator apps that help plan and schedule future pictures, which helps when planning posts ahead. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 14.)

Creating a posting schedule helps decide the frequency of posting and whom to optimize the posts for. Segmentation is important when optimizing posts. The better it is done; the more views the company can achieve from their specified audience. When knowing the segment to market the company can define the most optimal time to post, the best content to post and what generates the best result. At the start, testing to find out what works will help optimize future posts. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 17.)

When analysing an Instagram account, the following points should be taken into consideration. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 19.)

- *Is the profile username easy to find and clear enough?*
- *Is important information stated at the start of the profile? Info such as links and location?*
- *Are the posts relatable to the wanted audience and potential customers? Are the pictures good quality? Is the content customized? Do they encourage engagement?*

It is advisable that different type of content is tried out, just for variation. As examples, content that touches subjects such as the company's products, employees, customer reviews, behind the scenes images and videos are good to use in rotation. Other useful tactics are to organize giveaways and contests as well as have guests posting content. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 24.)

In 2016, Instagram introduced their new feature called Instagram Stories that consisted of photo and video content that is viewable for only 24 hours. The feature resembled another popular social media platform called Snapchat. With the new Stories feature the platform enabled easier communication and faster

interaction with customers. The new feature can be used to inform followers of new posts and it can be used as “not so serious” content, that would rather not be posted to the actual Instagram normal picture feed. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 26.)

Achieving views for your posts helps gain new followers. With using hashtags and by creating possible contests that include liking and sharing content also help with brand exposure. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 29.)

With the new features introduced to the platform in 2016, Instagram marketers had to take some changes into consideration when planning company posts. The change of the platform’s algorithm made it slightly harder for content to be viewed by followers who don’t engage with the brand frequently. This put pressure for marketers to create more engaging pictures that contribute to more comments and likes from followers. Also the changes with the Instagram Stories and video content made basic picture posting reach another level that needed to be considered when planning future marketing. (How to Use Instagram for Business, n.d, 33.)

Carefully selecting and creating the clientele segment to whom content is marketed to is crucial in both Facebook and Instagram marketing. The quality and frequency of the content as well as staying true to the brand are key factors for achieving and retaining dedicated and interactive followers.

4 THE DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Collecting Social Media Metrics

The study's analysis starts with the gathering of data currently available on Ilona Pelli Oy's Facebook and Instagram profiles. The data has been gathered through the analytics of both platforms, so separate data collection was not required. The data was able to be accessed by logging onto the company's two profiles and by overviewing the required data from both platform analytics pages. Analytics are obtainable when the company has a company profile page on Facebook and Instagram. (Baker, 2018.)

Social media metrics is the data that is gathered from posted content and the impact it has on followers and social media audience. The data can include the amount of likes, shares and other engagement and interaction to the page. (Baker, 2018.)

According to Baker (2018), some of the most important social media metrics that should be gathered are:

1. **User engagement:** meaning overall user interaction on posted content
2. **The reach of the content:** meaning how many people have seen the content
3. **Followers:** meaning the amount of people who want to see regular content
4. **Impressions:** meaning the number of times a post has been seen, but not necessarily clicked on
5. **Views:** meaning views on published video content
6. **Profile visits:** the number of people who have opened the social media page
7. **Mentions:** meaning comments that have the company profile tagged on them
8. **Tags:** meaning users who add the company profile in other content
9. **Reposts:** meaning users posting company content on their own page

10. Shares, meaning posted content that is re-posted on customers Facebook page

The metrics listed above will be collected from Ilona Pelli Oy's Instagram and Facebook profiles. The metrics will be collected from the most recent posts on both platforms.

4.2 Understanding the company

In addition to the analysis of the data gathered from social media, an overall study of the company is needed. Information regarding the company's current situation will be obtained through conversation-like-interviews with the company owner, Ilona Pelli.

4.2.1 SWOT Analysis

To gather data regarding broader information of the company, a SWOT analysis will be conducted. The positive factors are the company's strengths, which help set company goals whereas the weaknesses of the company are in the way of company success (Kananen, 2018b, 21.)

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use for your advantage - Strengthen 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid - To eliminate
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure to benefit from these 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid - To eliminate

Table 1. SWOT-analysis (Kananen, 2018a, 21)

The Strength part of the SWOT Analysis provides the answers to questions regarding company benefits and ways of how it can stand out. The Weaknesses give insight on what changes should be made and what are the specific weaker areas of the company. The Opportunities pinpoint competitor weaknesses and the Threats help understand competitor's strengths. (Kananen, 2018b, 21-22.)

4.2.2 SOSTAC

When creating a marketing plan, the SOSTAC planning system, created originally by PR Smith, is a simple and formal way to develop the overall image of any company. In other words, create a plan (Strong, 2014, 161.) The SOSTAC model helps understand current company situation. It defines company goals and how to reach them. By using the model important aspects that any company needs to take into consideration can be understood that can be used as a base when creating a marketing plan.

The SOSTAC model consists of six topics that are analysed one by one. Find the SOSTAC model below.



Figure 1: The SOSTAC model. Strong, 2014, 162.

The SOSTAC starts with a Situation Analysis which answers the question “*Where is the company at now?*”. Knowing where the company stands currently creates a starting point for any future marketing plans. Analysing the company environment and present situation is the first step of the marketing model. (Strong, 2014,161.)

The second step is targeted at the company's objectives. This part of SOSTAC helps answer questions about company future goals and what is the goal the company wants to reach with its sales, for example. (Strong, 2014,161.)

Following the objectives, the third part of the SOSTAC model concentrates on the company's strategy. This part helps gain knowledge on how the company will reach its previously stated objectives and goals.

After naming the company objectives and planning out a strategy, the fourth part of the model focuses on tactics. This specific part goes more in-depth with the company's strategies and explains the details of the needed tools to reach the wanted objectives.

The fifth part of the SOSTAC model is action, which explains the details of the company's tactics. This part of the plan is very important since it explains company internal and external resources and structures on how to perform the already stated objectives, strategy and tactics.

The final part of the SOSTAC model explains the control of the whole plan. It answers the questions of how the created operation will be monitored. This means stating how sales, feedback, and other analytics, for example, will be kept updated and in check. (Strong, 2014, 162)

4.3 Analysing Competitors

Social media has enabled companies to gain information on their competition and see what kind of marketing tactics work for them and what doesn't. A company can reflect their own strategies with competitors and learn from each other. Also, knowing what competitors do enables companies to make sure their content is different and therefore not publish similar content, which helps when wanting to stand out. (Conley, 2016.)

The main goal for the competitor analysis is knowing the competitors and recognizing them, understanding their weaknesses and strengths, seeing their

strategies and therefore implementing the company's own strategy (Kananen, 2018b, 19.)

With the competitor analysis, a company defines its own social media behaviour by comparing to competitor's online behaviour and available social media metrics. Comparison is an easy way to check competitor's ways of marketing, their tactics, new products and services.

Data used in the analysis is often numeric data such as follower count and content posting frequency. A major factor that should be taken into consideration when analysing competitors is time. What time do competitors upload? Are there any differences with the times and the amount of comments or likes on their posts? Is there something that is not working on their social media? What generates the most interactions and how do competitors answer customers? (Kananen, 2018b, 68)

You can always learn from competitor's social media strategies what works and what doesn't. The easiest way to find competitors online is by Googling the same products or services you offer and see what companies the search engine picks up. Benchmarking, which means comparing and analysing other companies' social media profiles is used very often, since social media is data that can be viewed by anyone who has access to the platforms. You can see from competitors posts and content what works and gains conversation. By checking what gains reactions on competitor's platforms helps understand their conversion rate, which helps them gain views. (Kananen, 2018b, 68)

The competitors of Ilona Pelli Oy were found by using the Google search tactic that Kananen suggests. Also, when interviewing the designer herself, she named company competitors. The ultimate analysis is made on the top three competitors with the most followers and most active social media platforms, which is a goal for Ilona Pelli Oy as a company to have someday as well.

As Ilona Pelli has personal contact with the three competitors selected, the names of these companies have been withheld.

4.4 Validity, Reliability and Limitations

The thesis studies the phenomena of social media. As there is a vast number of different social media platforms that are used in businesses, this thesis will only concentrate on two major platforms, Facebook and Instagram, as stated before. The reason for this is because the commission company, Ilona Pelli Oy, has only used Facebook and Instagram for marketing purposes in the past. The company does not wish to use any other platforms and wishes the outcome of this thesis to help gain insight into full use of the two platforms mentioned. (Pelli, 2020.)

The data used for this study was already available and did not have to be gathered specially for the process. The validity of the data is solely based on metrics given by both Instagram and Facebook. This data is fully accessible to anyone.

The data was analysed by the researcher with the understanding of the topics studied from personal experience.

The interview of Ilona Pelli gives insight into the company from a very personal perspective and leaves possibility that interpretations of the company are biased. However, due to the fact that the customers of the company at present are mainly close friends of Ilona Pelli, an interview of customer reviews and feedback might not have given any other answers. No customer insight was considered in general, other than social media metrics, due to the fact that the company's social media has not been in continuous use and the focus of the study is on the analysis of current metrics and the basics of creating a marketing strategy from scratch.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Current Situation

The commission company's current social media engagement was tested within one week, as the company posted on both platforms after a long time. Because of the fact that the company has not been active, the activation of its followers could not be monitored over a longer period of time.

The company has been more active on Facebook than on Instagram, as it has posted content regarding events and pop-up sales on Facebook and not updated Instagram since 2018 (Pelli, 2020.) With the new content posted on both platforms, some current demographics and metrics were acquired.

5.1.1 Facebook Analytics

After posting two posts within the timespan of one week, the Ilona Pelli Collection Facebook page gained five new page followers and four new page likes, which adds up to the page having all together 431 page likes and 439 page followers (Facebook, 2020.)

Some of the most important social media metrics to analyse constantly are post engagement and post reach (Baker, 2019.) The two new posts on the company's Facebook page gained the reach of 893 people and the engagement of 563 people within the time frame of one week. Page views also grew, as the page was viewed ultimately 69 times. The two posts together gained at most 30 likes, one share and one comment. The page was not tagged, mentioned, or reposted in any way. (Facebook Analytics, 2020.)

Since it is important to gain knowledge on customer insights and demographics, statistics were gathered from the followers of the Facebook page Ilona Pelli Collection. It was found that the page is liked mainly by women, which is not a surprise, since the products are mainly targeted to females. The page is followed by 84% women and 13% men. The age of the followers is very widely spread from ages 25 to over 65-years-old. The geographic metrics of the followers were

mainly local, as 375 of the followers are Finnish. A small amount of followers is pinpointed to be from USA and different parts of Europe. 341 of the followers speak Finnish whilst 52 are English speaking. (Facebook Analytics, 2020.)

5.1.2 Instagram Insights

The amount of followers on Instagram profile @ilonapelli is 360. After the recent activity on the platform the reach of the content and profile was viewed by 220 people, the profile was visited 138 times and overall impressions and views 769 times. The platform gained 2 new followers within a week of being active.

The demographics of the followers on Instagram consist of 79% of the followers being women and 21% men. The age of the followers varies, but mostly consists of 35 to 64-year-old people. Most of the followers are based in Helsinki and the surrounding areas. (Instagram Insights, 2020.)

5.2 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis helps define a company's goal and creates strategies needed to achieve them. By analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, a company can gain a clear overall picture of the elements needed to create a strategy on what the company should focus on and what to avoid. (Kananen, 2018, 20.)

Strengths

The company has been a part of the design and fashion business in Finland, since 1990. Since then the company has made contacts with many different customers and relationships with other brands. Ilona Pelli Oy has the strength of already being known within the industry and there is no need for the brand to be built up from scratch. (Pelli, 2020.)

During these years the company continues to have a strong customer base, a significant style and renown minimal aesthetic that keeps bringing customers back. The brand is known for its minimal designs and high quality, which makes

future marketing easier since there is a considerable number of people trusting the company already. (Pelli, 2020.)

Contacts with other designers assures the company a creditable standing within the Finnish fashion industry.

Weaknesses

The main weakness of Ilona Pelli Oy is the lack of new customers. The brand should have evolved during the years after the company's physical store was closed but as no investment nor initiative was made into gaining new customers and generating more sales, the income declined. (Pelli, 2020.)

Sales did not improve after that as many of the old customers already owned many Ilona Pelli items and mainly came to support new collections by being present at the fashion shows. (Pelli, 2020.)

In addition, the lack of any active online presence made the company lose touch with modern ways of marketing. Not evolving to meet modern trends of marketing has a negative effect on sales and brand identification.

The lack of a physical store made showcasing products difficult. Pop-up events were held but because of poor marketing only a handful of potential customers were to actually see the products and designs on sale. (Pelli, 2020.)

In due of the above the fact that the company has had no strong future strategy or plans to make any changes to its the way of working, makes it fall behind when other companies are developing and growing in the industry.

Opportunities

The company has always had, and still has, strong potential. The designs are often asymmetrical and very rarely have any patterns or logos. With a choice of basic colours, fabrics picked for high quality and excellent styling, the clothes are elegant, classic and timeless. (Pelli, 2020.)

Due to the current trends of people becoming more aware of ethical issues in the fast fashion market, there is an increasing demand of local and ethically made clothing (Butler, 2018.) The image of Ilona Pelli is often related to good quality, timelessness and being local.

As Ilona Pelli has a large number of close friends and contacts working in the in the Finnish clothing industry, there would be an opportunity to obtain their support when the company sets out on its targets to revive its brand awareness again.

Threats

Finnish design is known internationally for its minimalist design, glass and furniture and also for its biggest fashion brand, Marimekko (Visit Finland, n.d.) There are many smaller companies trying to pursue similar achievements as the big fashion house, but these companies rarely branch out to markets other than local ones. This means there are a lot of new competitors offering fresh, new designs. The distinct designs of Ilona Pelli help, when the company searches for ways to stand out. (Pelli, 2020.)

Having a web shop is considered a necessity if a company is selling any tangible products. Not having a working web shop might steer potential customers to not make an effort to find the company's products. Pop-up events are good publicity but a working web shop is essential for continuous sales. (Kananen, 2018a, 147.)

Even though the majority of consumers are aware of the unethical side of the fashion industry and manufacturing, there is still a big segment of usually younger customers who still buy cheaper "fast fashion" clothing. A small design company that invests money and time to manufacture a curated collection of clothes might lose such customers, who would rather buy cheaper clothes for the fraction of the price. However, this trend is predicted to change over time. Fast fashion consumers are moving to buying good quality clothes second hand. (Butler, 2018.)

Ecological factors of products are more in demand as the trend and awareness of being more environmentally friendly grows within customers. Being transparent is very important when selling clothes, since people want to know what they invest in. Being ecological means that any company needs to make sure that all materials used are as ethical as possible and that all workers are paid reasonably. Factors like this might be a threat, since the origin of some of Ilona Pelli Oy fabrics can't be traced. Ecologically sourced materials are also much more expensive, which has an immediate effect on final product prices as well.

5.3 Competitor Analysis

The following competitor analysis is based on the model provided by Jorma Kananen (2018a, 454.) The goal of the competitor analysis is for the company to gain an understanding of its competitors in order to implement the company's marketing strategy. Due to social media platforms being open and transparent, a competitor analysis can be easily obtained. (Kananen, 2018b, 19.) The answers of the analysis have been gathered by overviewing the competitor's social media platforms. Kananen's model for the competitor analysis is described in-depth in the previous chapter.

All three of the competitors are Finnish fashion design companies that work both locally and internationally. The companies were chosen for reference to what Ilona Pelli Oy would want to achieve with the help of the improvement plan.

Follower count

	Instagram	Facebook (Likes)	Facebook (Followers)
Competitor 1	464,000	337,762	338,235
Competitor 2	12,400	56,040	53,811
Competitor 3	47,500	14,141	14,447

Ilona Pelli Oy	360	430	438
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Table 2. Competitor Analysis Follower count (Kananen, 2018a) Data gathered on 14.5.2020

Follower count from all four companies were gained by observing the companies Instagram and Facebook platforms, as the information is openly viewable. There are major differences with the amount of following with all of the example companies.

Competitor 1 is known as one of the biggest fashion brands in Finland and it has gained popularity as well internationally, which can be acknowledged by the amount of following both on the company's Instagram and Facebook.

Competitor 2 has been around the Finnish fashion industry for a long time and is considered as a very traditional brand. It is considered a competitor to Ilona Pelli Oy because of the material used in its products as well as of its minimalist style. Competitor 2 has re-done its marketing strategy and due to that has gained a lot of attention on social media in a short amount of time.

Competitor 3 is a locally known fashion brand that is considered the most similar to Ilona Pelli Oy by Ilona Pelli herself. Competitor 3 is popular within the local Finnish market. The competitor is known for a more personal approach with marketing and its minimalist designs.

Post Content and Nature

	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Instagram	Products Exclusive Styling tips Reposts Encouraging	Colour matching Lifestyle Products Influencer content	Products Commercial Art Inspirational Personal
Facebook	Informative News related	Commercial Products	Products Commercial Art Inspirational Personal

Table 3. Competitor Analysis Post Content and Nature (Kananen, 2018a) Data gathered 14.5.2020

As this data is not numeric, it is considered qualitative data that is obtained by viewing pictures and visual content.

The nature of the posts Competitor 1 has on Facebook are the same as what the company posts on Instagram. The nature of the overall content is slightly more informative and encourages people to access the brand's website. Informative collaborations are shared on Facebook as well as more information on upcoming collections and new products.

The nature of the posts Competitor 2 has posted is only commercial as the company does not post any inspirational or lifestyle content on their Facebook page. The posts include pictures of products with product information and a link to the brand's online store. The content of Competitor 2's Instagram feed posts are mainly updates of products with the description simply naming the item, without engaging followers at all. The company's Instagram feed pictures show behind the scenes material from photography sets and stories explaining the clothing patterns. The company's Instagram Stories share very styled and good quality pictures with only informative content.

After analysing Competitor 3's Facebook and Instagram, it turned out that the company posts the exact same pictures on both platforms. This refers to the fact

that the company is outsourcing its posting to a scheduling app that works both on Facebook and Instagram simultaneously.

Content Feedback

	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Instagram	Positive comments Questions Feedback Opinions	No feedback	Positive comments Reactions
Facebook	Positive comments	Positive comments Negative questions	No feedback

Table 4. Competitor Analysis Post Content Feedback (Kananen, 2018a) Data gathered on 14.5.2020

As this data is not numeric, it is considered qualitative data that is obtained by viewing comments by social media users.

All feedback Competitor 1 gains online is positive. Followers express their feelings about new products and pictures by commenting and by tagging their friends. Some questions and concerns appeared to be about orders and the company's online store. Occasional feedback about product quality are made, but this seems to not occur often.

Due to the lack of encouraging engagement of followers, the posts by Competitor 2 very rarely get any feedback or comments in general. However, when feedback is given, it is mainly positive. Followers have answered, when posts encourage commenting. However, these kinds of engaging posts are very rare for Competitor 2. The brand does not encourage follower engagement but yet still, because of the well thought of and personal aspects of the posts, followers comment their appreciation by commenting hearts and by complimenting the pictures shared.

Every post shared by Competitor 3 gains comments that praise the brand and followers share their positive reactions. Negative feedback is rarely given. Competitor 3 has feedback on Facebook regarding important issues regarding the company. People have often asked about product sizing and inform about the lack of larger sizes. Other feedback, if there is any, is usually positive. Because the posts by Competitor 3 are not engaging, there are rarely any comments and not much likes on the posts on Facebook.

Content Posting Frequency and Time

	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Instagram	Posts daily Stories daily	Posts daily Stories very rarely	Posts daily Stories very rarely
Facebook	Once a week	Very random and rare updates	Posts daily

Table 5. Competitor Analysis Content Post Frequency and Time (Kananen, 2018a)
Data collected on 14.5.2020

The average posting time for Competitor 1 on Instagram is at least every other day. Often the company posts one post per day with occasional one day skips. Posts on the profile's Instagram Stories are daily. The average post time for feed pictures is during noon. Competitor 1 posts on Facebook roughly once a week at round 5 pm or during the mornings at around 9-10 am.

Competitor 2 posts to their Instagram feed frequently, often every day or at least every other day. The posting time is roughly during the afternoon. The brand does not use its Instagram Stories actively. Competitor 2 posts on Facebook very rarely. Posts are sometimes weeks apart and sometimes there might be similar posts twice a day. Their activity on Facebook is very random.

Competitor 3 posts daily on Instagram. Sometimes the brand posts twice a day, often during the afternoon or midday. The brand's Instagram stories are not used actively. Competitor 3 posts on Facebook mainly during the early morning with

exceptions of some posts being posted during the afternoon. Because the company seems to be using a content scheduling app, the posting of content occurs simultaneously on Facebook and Instagram.

Content shortcomings

Data gathered for the analysis of competitor shortcomings is mainly qualitative data that can be interpreted in different ways, and is therefore not valid for this study.

The stated perspectives are only made by the author who analysed this particular data. The data collected will be given to the commission company separately due to its bias approach and therefore will not be included in the official study.

Content Answer Frequency and Time

Competitor 1 Instagram feed posts were answered immediately by followers after posts went online. Most comments are made within the first three hours of the posts being up. Commenting continues steadily, slightly slowing down and often ending within 24 hours. Competitor 1 Facebook followers are not that active as those on Instagram. Facebook posts are commented on during the timeframe of 24 hours since the post goes live. Competitor 1 acknowledges and likes comments and answers questions, if any are asked.

Since Competitor 2 does not engage or encourage engagement with their customers, their uploads do not get comments. However, when the brand did encourage followers to comment, that particular post got 13 comments. Competitor 2 is not active when considering answering its Facebook followers. Since posts are not engaging, customers do not often comment on any of the content on Facebook.

Competitor 3 Instagram followers comment on posts within 24 hours, often closer to the time the picture has been posted. Answering follower questions is done also within 24 hours of the comment. (Instagram, 2020) Facebook posts are

commented on sometimes, often during the same day of the post, which are noticed by the company liking the comments. (Facebook, 2020)

With these answers to the competitor analysis, the commission company can see an outline of competitor company strategies and the way they work on social media. The analysis findings will be implemented when creating the ultimate marketing plan for Ilona Pelli Oy.

5.3.1 Competitor SWOT Analysis

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <p>Follower amount Online activity Bigger budgets Visual aesthetics Quality photography Known in the Finnish market</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <p>No clear personal aspects Facebook marketing wasn't as updated as Instagram</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <p>Distinctive styles can easily gain awareness Appealing internationally Visibility</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <p>Not enough sales locally and no marketing abroad Other similar companies</p>

Table 6. Competitor SWOT-analysis (Kananen, 2018, 22.)

When comparing the competitor's online presence to Ilona Pelli Oy it is clear, that all of the companies compared are active on social media, whereas Ilona Pelli Oy is not. That is the most important difference in what competitors are doing differently. Competitors also have larger budgets that enable them to concentrate on generating good quality pictures for their online content. All of the competitors are active on Instagram and Facebook, Instagram especially.

Themes that occurred when analysing competitors were the distinctive brand aesthetics that could be recognised by studying competitor content. Product placement and styling was used often when marketing products. Only Competitor 3 used personal aspects in its content, which gave insight on the brand's owner and designer. This theme would benefit Ilona Pelli Oy, as the company is very similar to Competitor 3 in the sense that its owner and designer work close with their companies.

Not using social media clearly distracts Ilona Pelli Oy from gaining needed sales and engaging with new and current customers. Gaining more understanding on the two social media platforms and using both more frequently will be useful. The competitors are all very similar companies. Importance of making sure content for Ilona Pelli Oy is clearly personalised and different when compared to competitors will be of benefit.

5.4 SOSTAC

Situation Analysis

The Situation Analysis covers points that explain where the commission company stands now and who are the customers and competitors. The analysis reflects the current internal capabilities and resource situation. (Strong, 2014,161.)

Ilona Pelli Oy is a small company that, at present, generates a random and small income, that merely covers costs. The company is not active on social media and does not market any of its products through other advertising platforms, as it previously did. There is no future plan or strategy for generating sales. (Pelli, 2020.)

At the moment the company includes Ilona Pelli (owner and designer), the manufacturer and sewers in Tallinn, that construct the final items upon orders. Ilona Pelli herself sells the final products. Future measures will include a social media and visual assistant to help with marketing campaigns and the two social media platforms. (Pelli, 2020.)

Objectives

As stated in this study, the objective of the company is to gain sales and increase revenue, reach new clients and create a stronger brand image. Investing in a web shop is a primary requirement to gain sales. Sales could be achieved by activating Ilona Pelli Oy on social media and by implementing a clear marketing plan.

Strategy

By creating a web shop, using social media platforms and marketing online the biggest steps towards achieving the required goal are taken. Creating a well-planned calendar that includes visual planning and upcoming interesting content will also help gain required brand visuals and boost sales (Cooper & Tien, 2020.)

Clear segmentation and understanding of who the company will target their advertisements and content to, will give insight and help the overall online strategy to work. The customer segment can be curated by answering questions such as "Who are we marketing to?" and "What are our customers like?", for example. Creating a customer persona also gives needed insight on a clearer segmentation. (Kananen, 2018b, 27.)

Tactics

One of the strategies used to increase sales would be for the company to create a content plan that would include all updates on social media platforms Instagram and Facebook. It would include the planning of visuals and information of events, products and other updates.

Action

Ilona Pelli Oy needs to invest in someone who will handle the company's social media in order for the content to be consistent and make sure that the company is continually active online. Having a social media expert handle this will help.

Control

Keeping up with updates needs communication with customers, frequent questionnaires and posts that ask for customer reviews. This will be implemented to understand how the updates are functioning.

Customer feedback and interactive discussions as well as following both Facebook, Instagram and web site analytics will give insight on how the new strategy is working.

5.5 Improvement plan

The improvement plan is based on the findings and results of the company analysis and competitor analysis. The structure of the plan is based on the SOSTAC model, as explained before.

Ilona Pelli Oy's online presence is mainly made up of pictures and information shared on social media and on the company's website. To create continuous interest to the customers, the company needs to plan ahead on a clear social media strategy and implement a coherent brand image, as the company's competitors have. This is possible by paying more attention to the visuals and with regular updates. Also as results imply, being more active online will help gain more interaction on both of the platforms.

The basic upload rate for the company would be at least every other day on Facebook and Instagram's feed, since competitors upload daily. The posts should engage followers and encourage interaction. The Instagram stories should be more frequent uploads and should be planned to give insight on lighter subjects and everyday situations that have a connection to the brand. Posting high quality images and therefore providing followers content that they will want to share themselves needs to also be taken into consideration. (Kananen, 2018b, 91.)

Adding value to Ilona Pelli Oy products would be by communicating about the company's history, ethics and being transparent and personal about how the company operates. Personalizing the whole online experience for the customer immediately adds value, when compared to automated content created by bigger companies. Creating a coherent and timeless brand image, with visuals that give customers a total experience of the brand, also increases the chances of people lingering on its pages – an added value (Kananen, 2018b, 91.) When comparing with competitors, content regarding products, styling tips, art and inspirational pictures are every popular within the company competitors and should be used in Ilona Pelli Oy content as well. Personal aspects in the content too as well as influencer co-operations should be implemented. Distinctive differences with the content posted on Facebook and Instagram will make both of the platforms more interesting to follow.

By making sure content urges customers to comment and communicate on all platforms the company can get closer to its potential customer segment and create connections with people who are interested in the brand (Kananen, 2018b, 101.) After gaining a stronger customer base, surveys would help to learn more about specific customer needs. Reviews and working with social media influencers also help customers understand more of the brand and it adds a new route for customer-company communication.

Collaborating with other brands, influencers and companies to help boost sales and brand awareness is a regularly used process. This also has to be taken into consideration when creating a marketing plan because of the extra costs of using other established companies and personal brands to boost sales and views. If possible, personal contacts could be used, since it would be then more budget friendly and personal contacts is one of Ilona Pelli Oy's strengths.

One of the biggest setbacks for the company is its non-existent online purchasing operations. Investing in an online sales platform will immediately help gain sales. At present, Ilona Pelli Oy does not have any sales outlets neither physical nor online. The main objective for the company is to set up a point of sales. (Pelli, 2020) An easy to use online web shop or by using social media's new online shopping alternatives, such as Facebook Page Shop (Facebook for Business,

2020) and Instagram Shopping (Instagram Help Centre, 2020.) would be examples to be considered. A set goal for future sales would be to increase online sales, which is now not active at all, and also to steer all sales online. Pop-up events would only be supportive events.

By creating a web shop, using social media platforms and marketing online the biggest steps towards achieving the required goal are taken. Creating a well-planned calendar that includes visual planning and upcoming interesting content will also help gain wanted brand visuals and boost sales. (Chacon, 2020.)

Having a content plan will help especially if the company does not have a special social media moderator who frequently posts on the spot. By planning ahead, the company will save time and can think of the content in a wider setting. By using planning apps such as “Later” you are able to handle and plan posts months ahead. Planning also helps to achieve coherent brand visuals and to see how both social media profiles will look from a visual perspective. Using an app to create content and time the social media posts help with saving time and resources. However, if the company does grow and gain a very active following and online customers, a social media and webstore specialist will be needed to handle future updates.

Due to the lack of a bigger budget, the company is not able to enable any public relations through an established PR company. Connections with the press, influencers and other brands need to be made through personal recourses and people within the company. Direct marketing will be implemented through customer segmentation and with future Facebook and Instagram campaigns. Other types of direct marketing have not been and will not be used. (Pelli, 2020.)

Good content means followers spend more time on platforms, there is a clear rise in conversion rates, more sharing and engagement (Kananen, 2018b, 81.) By requesting current customers, followers and friends to share the redesigned Instagram and Facebook profiles it would reactivate interest, new followers and views on both platforms. Planning collaborations with local influencers will help gain new views and by following competitors and recognized people in the industry, the company could gain their attention.

By making sure the basics of gaining organic engagement is used, the company can benefit from more visibility without only relying on paid marketing. With re-designing and activating both of the company's social media platforms, the overall new style of the content and pages will be coherent with the brand image and aesthetic.

Specific changes for Facebook would be the update of the profile header image, and refreshing the company's profile picture to a new version of the logo. Updated information about the designer and the company's contact details will be provided. New content would include high quality pictures and more detailed information of events, new products and nostalgic posts.

After implementing this plan, company sales and engagement rates should still be closely monitored. Updates will be followed to avoid mistakes and for answering customers the moment they communicate on any of the platforms. Also customer reviews and communication should be measured for progress. (Pelli, 2020) The outcome cannot be influenced immediately, but it will be monitored and a lot of testing should be done when creating visuals and content for all of the marketing platforms. Learning how to manage the marketing tools given by both Facebook and Instagram and by making online purchasing as easy as possible, the required outcome, which is sales, should be easy to achieve.

Ultimately the responsibility of the business outcome is the team working around the content that is created and updated that will encourage potential customers and sales. The required outcome will be achieved when sales become frequent and orders are received as a result of online marketing campaigns. Income should increase to cover costs and ultimately start producing a steadily growing profit. To review the progress and to monitor the changes made towards achieving the required outcome, sales and engagement will be monitored closely and compared to figures that show the current situation.

6 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of the thesis is to formulate changes needed in Ilona Pelli Oy's social media presence and to create a marketing strategy to modernize its online marketing methods and improve sales. The thesis was commissioned by the owner of the company due to the lack of sales and a practically non-existing online presence. Also with hope of that by updating and improving social media to bring the company in line with modern marketing methods would bring in new customers and increase sales.

It is important to keep in mind that using social media's benefits in marketing is an ever-changing skill and needs constant updating and learning, since the online systems and structures are changed often. (Kananen, 2018, 58)

By using different analyses, the author gained insight into where the company stands and what it wants to achieve. For Ilona Pelli Oy the macro goal of using social media marketing is to gain sales and the micro goal is to gain followers, likes and more visibility. Including company specific information, three main competitors were analysed to gain knowledge on what kind of content might work, since all these companies have similar customer segments.

When working with social media, it is important to keep check of analytics and work with the statistics offered by both Instagram and Facebook to understand what content works with specific target customers. Even though the study helps build up a new base for both social media platforms, the most important aspect for Ilona Pelli Oy is to invest in an online web shop. The products marketed via social media might not be able to be sold due to the difficult and out of date method of ordering products that is currently in use. Making sure the whole purchasing chain works from the initial advertisement, to the ease of viewing the product, purchase and payment is essential to ensure sales.

The primary data was collected mainly by analysis. Secondary data was gathered through manuals regarding social media marketing and company marketing strategies.

The main purpose of this study was to answer *“How to analyse and improve current social media presence for Ilona Pelli Oy?”*. The study evaluates how the company’s social media presence can be analysed. By understanding the company’s overall goals, where it stands within the industry, as well as how its competitors operate on the same platforms helps define what aspects need to be improved.

Sub-questions of the whole process were *“How to design an improvement plan for social media presence?”*, *“What changes need to be made so that social media platforms could boost brand sales?”*, *“How to increase sales through updates of social media platforms?”* and *“How to take full advantage of online social media platforms Facebook and Instagram considering sales and customer awareness?”*

Understanding what platforms work the best for the company and to set aside a budget for marketing is of vital importance. In addition, taking a close look at competitors in the same field and how they work is essential. Since closing its store, Ilona Pelli Oy’s sales have declined. Therefore, modernizing the marketing of the company’s products should have an effect on overall sales.

Understanding and marketing to a carefully studied segmentation of potential and existing customers and social media followers is important. Knowing the best times to post, and what kind of content works the best are some of the aspects that need to be taken into consideration when marketing on social media. Being active and creating demand for the products is key.

Modern marketing via social media needs to be constantly studied and understood for it to gain the best possible results.

Overall the study was based mainly on things the author learnt before through her jobs and internships. Having a close connection and understanding of the company was a benefit. Seeing how other companies work and recognizing the differences with how they use social media was new to the author.

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TABLES

Table 1. SWOT-analysis

Table 2. Competitor Analysis Follower count

Table 3. Competitor Analysis Post Content and Nature

Table 4. Competitor Analysis Post Content Feedback

Table 5. Competitor Analysis Content Post Frequency and Time

Table 6. Competitor SWOT-analysis