

INTEGRATING SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE INTO DIGITAL MARKETING

Case company: Mustavuori Oy



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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämä opinnäytetyö on toteutettu yrityksille käytettäväksi digitaalisen markkinoinnin tukena. Opinnäytetyö on toteutettu laskettelukeskus Mustavuori Oy:lle. Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on selvittää yritykselle sille sopivat sosiaalisen median kanavat ja niiden toimintatarkoitukset. Onnistunut sosiaalisen median mainonta on monen eri vaiheen summa ja saatavilla olevat kanavat tarjoavat eri vaihtoehtoja toteutukselle. Oikean kanavan ja toteutustavan löytäminen on tärkeää, jotta mainonnan tavoite toteutuu.

Ennen markkinoinnin suunnittelua yrityksen tulee tietää kohderyhmänsä, markkina-alueensa ja tuotteensa. Kun nämä osa-alueet on saatu analysoitua, voi mainonnan suunnittelun toinen vaihe alkaa. Opinnäytetyössä on analysoitu yrityksen markkina-alueita, kohderyhmiä, sosiaalisen median kanavia ja niiden käyttöönottoa.

Analysoinnin tukena on toteutettu kaksi kyselyä Mustavuori Oy:n sosiaalisen median seuraajille ja kohdeyleisölle sopivia mainoksia on testattu Facebookin tarjoamalla A/B-testauksella. Kohdeyleisöä kartoittavat kyselyt antoivat kattavan pohjan oikean kohdeyleisön löytämiselle. A/B-testaus tarjosi tietoa asiakkaiden visuaalisista mieltymyksistä ja niiden avulla todettiin, että yrityksen asiakkaat reagoivat ja toimivat paremmin samaistuttavan mainonnan kanssa. Opinnäyte lopussa on arvioitu mahdollisia apuvälineitä sosiaalisen median markkinointiin ja mahdollisiin kanaviin, joita laskettelukeskus voisi hyödyntää. Jotta digitaalinen markkinointi saadaan toteutettua täydellä volyymilla, tulee yrityksen olla tietoinen kanavista, joiden kautta heillä on mahdollisuus kohdentaa mainontansa oikeille asiakkaille ja saada markkinointi tavoitteensa saavutettua.

Avainsanat Sosiaalinen media, Markkinointi, Facebook, Instagram, Laskettelukeskus

Sivut 52 sivua, joista liitteitä 2 sivua

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ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis is implemented to work as a support for businesses' digital marketing. The thesis is commissioned by the ski center Mustavuori Oy. The goal of the work is to clarify for the company the most suitable social media channels and the functions of them. Successful social media marketing is the sum of many different stages, and the social media channels that are available, offer many different options. Choosing the right channels and implementation is important to achieve the marketing goal that has been selected. In this thesis, the channels that have been chosen are Facebook and Instagram. Before implementing a marketing plan, the company has to be aware of its target group, market area, and the product they are planning to advertise. Only when these sections have been analyzed, can the second part of the marketing start. In this thesis, the author has evaluated the case company's market area, target groups, social media channels, and the usage of them.

To support the analysis, two surveys have been carried out for Mustavuori Oy's social media followers, and advertisements suitable for the target audience have been tested with an A/B-testing provided by Facebook. The two surveys indicated to the target audience, provided a comprehensive basis for finding the right target audience. The A/B testing provided information about customers' visual preferences and found that the company's customers responded and worked better with more identifiable advertising. At the end of the thesis, possible tools for social media marketing and possible channels that the ski resort could utilize have been evaluated. For digital marketing to be implemented at full volume, the company must be aware of the channels through which they have the opportunity to target their advertising to the right customers and get their marketing goals achieved.

Keywords Social Media, Marketing, Facebook, Instagram, Ski Center

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Objective and research target.....	1
1.2	Research question	1
1.3	Theoretical framework.....	2
1.4	Analyses.....	2
2	CASE COMPANY: MUSTAVUORI SKI CENTER.....	2
2.1	Company introduction	2
2.2	Target audience.....	3
2.2.1	Geographical.....	3
2.2.2	Demographical.....	4
2.3	Competition environment.....	4
2.4	Organizational and marketing goals	5
2.5	Resources and budget.....	5
3	MARKETING MIX.....	6
3.1	Product	6
3.2	Pricing.....	7
3.2.1	Defining the objective of the pricing.....	7
3.2.2	Determining the demand	8
3.2.3	Competitors expense and pricing evaluation.....	8
3.2.4	Evaluating the determination of prices	9
3.2.5	Other factors affecting the determination of the price	9
3.3	Promotion.....	9
3.4	Placing	10
3.5	Summary of the marketing mix.....	10
4	SOCIAL MEDIA.....	10
4.1	Definition of social media.....	10
4.2	Social media platforms and types	11
4.2.1	Social Networks	12
4.2.2	Media Sharing Networks	13
4.3	Social Media trends in 2020	13
4.4	Customer segmentation in Social Media	14
5	SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING.....	14
5.1	Social Media Algorithm	17
5.2	Facebook and Instagram Marketing	17
5.2.1	Inbound marketing	17
5.2.2	Facebook marketing	18
5.2.3	Instagram marketing	22
5.3	Social Media Marketing analytics	23

5.4	Marketing strategies	25
5.4.1	Influencer marketing	25
5.4.2	Viral marketing	25
6	ANALYSES.....	26
6.1	SWOT-analysis.....	26
6.1.1	Strengths.....	27
6.1.2	Weaknesses	27
6.1.3	Opportunities	27
6.1.4	Threats.....	28
6.2	Online presence analysis.....	28
6.2.1	Website.....	28
6.2.2	Facebook.....	28
6.2.3	Instagram.....	29
7	METHODOLOGY – RESEARCH	29
7.1	Quantitative research method.....	29
7.2	Survey 1.....	30
7.3	Survey 2.....	32
7.4	A/B-testing	35
7.4.1	Results.....	36
8	RECOMMENDATIONS	37
8.1	Controlling and evaluating	37
8.2	Digital marketing tools	38
	Trello 38	
	Hootsuite	38
8.3	Social media platforms.....	39
8.3.1	Youtube	39
9	CONCLUSION	39
	REFERENCES.....	41

1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is intended to be used as a guideline of how businesses are able to integrate social media into their digital marketing. The company that this thesis is commissioned for works in the sports industry environment.

For this thesis the case company that the author will be implementing the actions and planning for is called Mustavuori Oy. Mustavuori Oy operates as a sports center, focusing specifically customers in the area of Pirkanmaa. Their main focus in the wintertime is operating as a ski center and in the summertime, they operate as a downhill bike park.

This thesis main focus is implementing a guidance for the case company's upcoming winter season.

1.1 Objective and research target

The objective of this thesis is to present the case company's most suitable social media channels, analyze presence in different social media platforms, scope out new platforms that are suitable for the sports industry and the company's target audience, and implement a goal-directed framework and guidance for future use.

In addition, this thesis research target is to introduce the most suitable social media marketing platforms and advertising methods. The author introduces different types of advertisement options that are implemented during this thesis writing process.

Before the beginning of this thesis the company had no one appointed as the marketing coordinator. All marketing had been done in house.

1.2 Research question

Since the company is new to the market area, with only one season operating both winter and summer time, their social media marketing has not been prioritized as an important part of the company until now. The company aims to promote their business mainly locally to new customers but also those customers that have been using the ski center before it was shut down in 2017.

This problem and need for a clear social media marketing vision form this thesis research question: "What are the most suitable social media marketing platforms to be used when integrating social media into the company's marketing?"

1.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework has been divided into two parts: the marketing mix and background analyses. The first theory introduces the marketing theory marketing mix. The main focus will be in the case company's need. The theoretical part will discuss the theories around these concepts and explain these two concepts so that the reader understands and can use them. Since social media marketing is relatively new to the marketing world, there is not a lot of theoretical literature available.

1.4 Analyses

This part of the thesis will present analyses done around Mustavuori Oy. The author implemented the analyses around competition, a SWOT-analysis and a social media presence analysis. These help to understand the current situation of the company, the market area, and defining the next steps.

2 CASE COMPANY: MUSTAVUORI SKI CENTER

2.1 Company introduction

Mustavuori Oy was established in 2018 as a limited liability company. The company operates as a ski center in winter season, which in southern Finland usually starts in December and lasts until April. In the summer season the ski center operates as a downhill bike park. Mustavuori Oy and their operations are located on an esker called Mustavuori (eng. Black Mountain) in western area of Tampere, Finland (Mustavuori, Yritys, 2020).

The ski centers history goes back to the late 1960's in Tampere, Finland but as the company is now formed and operated, it is a new company to the markets. The city of Tampere developed the area by expanding the ski slope capacity, upgrading the machinery and renovating maintenance facilities. In the 1990's, the city of Tampere outsourced the operation of the ski center to a private entrepreneur, whom then carried out the operations until the year 2017 and did not continue their contract since the entrepreneur at that time had another ski center business also located in Tampere. The area of Mustavuori was not used as a ski center between 2017-2018 (Mustavuori, Historia, Mustavuori, 2020)

In June 2018 the city of Tampere arranged a competitive bidding for the development of skiing activities in the city. Mustavuori Oy won this bidding against two other parties participating in the competition. Due to a formal complaint the competitive bidding was not fulfilled and Mustavuori ski center stayed closed for the winter season 2018-2019. The city of Tampere held a new competitive bidding in the Spring of 2019, which Mustavuori Oy won again and was able to start their operations.

2.2 Target audience

The case company's market is formed by the region of Pirkanmaa and the marketing class is business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing. Mustavuori ski center is located in the region of Pirkanmaa. There are approximately 500 000 inhabitants in the area (Tilastokeskus, 2020).

The company's market area can be segmented according to the customer segmentation. The customer segments are former, current and potential customers. These customers can also be segmented by their purposefulness and skill level. For example, customers can be divided from pro level to beginner level. In between these two ends are the active hobbyist. At the other end are the pro level skiers and snowboarders whose purposefulness and activity levels are high. These customers potentially utilize competitors services (and usually in northern Finland or abroad) and for that reason they are not the main customer segment for the company. Whereas active hobbyists and beginners are important customer segments, since these groups are formed by the inhabitants of Pirkanmaa. Young people, families and adults. The company should offer something for everyone.

So that the customer engagement and involvement can be maximized, there should also be events where the customer is able to take part either alone or in a group. For example, open gatherings where the customer can take part alone and meet other consumers that share the same interest of winter sports. The customers can be segmented also geographically and demographically.

2.2.1 Geographical

Geographical market segmentation means dividing customers by their location, interests and needs. With the case company, this would mean looking into the customer segmentation in Pirkanmaa area and comparing competitors that are operating in the same area. Chapter 5.3 'Competition environment' goes into depth with competition operating in Pirkanmaa region. Table 3 below, shows the overview of the form of exercise (downhill skiing and snowboarding) of Finnish inhabitants in 2017.

Table 1. Form of exercises III, those aged 10 or over (downhill skiing or snowboarding) (Tilastokeskus, 2017)

Age	Men	Women
10 - 14	13 %	13 %
15 - 19	10 %	10 %
20 - 24	3 %	3 %
25 - 34	4 %	4 %
35 - 44	9 %	4 %
45 - 54	6 %	3 %
55 - 64	4 %	2 %

2.2.2 Demographical

Demographical market segmentation looks into the customers age and gender. Young skiers and snowboarders are one of the main customer segments for Mustavuori. In the end, they are the future of the winter sports culture.

Table 2. Pirkanmaa region population by age (Tilastokeskus, 2020)

Age group	Population
Under 4	23 349
5 - 9	28 507
10 - 19	56 639
20 - 34	68 685
35 - 54	67 258
55 - 64	63 521

2.3 Competition environment

The ski centers competition in their operating field is broad, if all the ski centers in Finland are taken into consideration. In Finland, there are 66 active ski centers operating under the Finnish Ski Association (Finnish Ski Association, 2020). However, the distances between the ski centers are long, so the competition environment analysis has been narrowed down to ski centers that are operating in Pirkanmaa region. Ski centers that operate in Pirkanmaa and are being considered as competition for Mustavuori are: Sappee Ski Resort and Ellivuori Ski Center.

Sappee Ski Resort

Sappee is located approximately 50 kilometers from the city centre of Tampere. The ski center has 12 slopes and four different ski cafes. It is the biggest ski center in the region of Pirkanmaa. The resort is offering accommodation, from apartments to private cabins. There is no public transportation from Tampere, or from the cities nearby. A private bus is operating Saturdays and Sundays from Tampere to Sappee. The operation is not free of charge (Sappee Ski Resort, 2020).

Ellivuori Ski Center

Ellivuori is located in the city of Sastamala, which is approximately 40 kilometers from the city centre of Tampere. The ski center has six slopes and one ski café. There is also Hotel Ellivuori in the area. There is no public transportation to the ski center (Ellivuori Ski Center, 2020).

When analysing the competition volume in Pirkanmaa region, it has occurred that Mustavuori is the only ski center that is operating in an urban area. Sappee is the biggest and most expensive ski center in the region. Ellivuori Ski Center has branded themselves as family and beginner friendly ski center. The absolute competitive advantage of Mustavuori is its location and size. It is the only ski center in Pirkanmaa region that has a public transportation connected to its location.

Furthermore, Sappee Ski Resort has the longest and highest slope profile, enabling a higher volume of customer flow and opportunities for different experience levels. There are slopes available from beginners to experts. Especially freestyle skiers and snowboarders have the most versatile selection. Sappee Ski Resort also has a Family Park -area which is suitable for smaller children and beginners. Ellivuori Ski Center has profiled themselves as a ski center that is most suitable for families, school groups and beginners. The slopes are gentler and not steep, and there is not a diverse selection for freestyle skiers and snowboarders. Mustavuori seems to situate in between these two ski centers. The slopes offer terrains for beginners and more advanced skiers and snowboarders. The profile is not marketed straight towards certain customer segments, but the area has offerings for all of them.

Alternations in terms of new competitors in the industry are not common. These are activities with such a large capacity and demographic characteristics that competition remains low. As current competitors change their practices, a company may have to adjust its own to stay strong in the market. In this case, Mustavuori is a new threat to its competitors since this year is their second operating year. Competing centers may respond to this through price changes or improving the public transportation to the area.

2.4 Organizational and marketing goals

Mustavuori Ski Center's mission is to operate in a customer-oriented manner, providing customers with quality service in terms of both staff and ski slope quality. In order for a company to fulfil this mission, security, the level of customer service, and responsibility must be considered. The company must act as a responsible employer, because a well-being staff provides high quality customer service. Cooperation with customers is also important so that customers feel that the company's mission is being fulfilled.

Mustavuori Ski Centers vision is to be the leading ski resort in the Finnish market, which operates in an urban area. Sappee and Ellivuori, defined as competitors, share the same customer segments demographically as Mustavuori, but neither center is concentrated in the urban area, so the threat of competition for the future marketing vision is not so high. The question is in the future, how will competitors react? Will they possibly offer frequent bus connections from the cities in the future?

2.5 Resources and budget

The case company has not delivered the author a budget plan or information of resources they have operating in the ski center. The ski center is going to use seasonal workers when the winter season starts. These persons will be operating the ski lifts, the rental shop and ticket sales.

3 MARKETING MIX

The marketing mix is the way the company's brand and products are being implemented in the designated market area. It is often referred as 'The Four P'S', *product, pricing, promotion and placing*.

Marketing Mix should be formed as an explicit integrity, of which parts are supporting each other (Bergström & Leppänen, 2015).

3.1 Product

When analyzing the case company's products, the author is using professor Philip Kotler's three product level model, which is a simplified version of Kotler's five product level model that he developed in the 1960s. Mustavuori Oy is a ski center, which means that the product they are selling is not a concrete product but a mix of augmented and actual product characteristics.

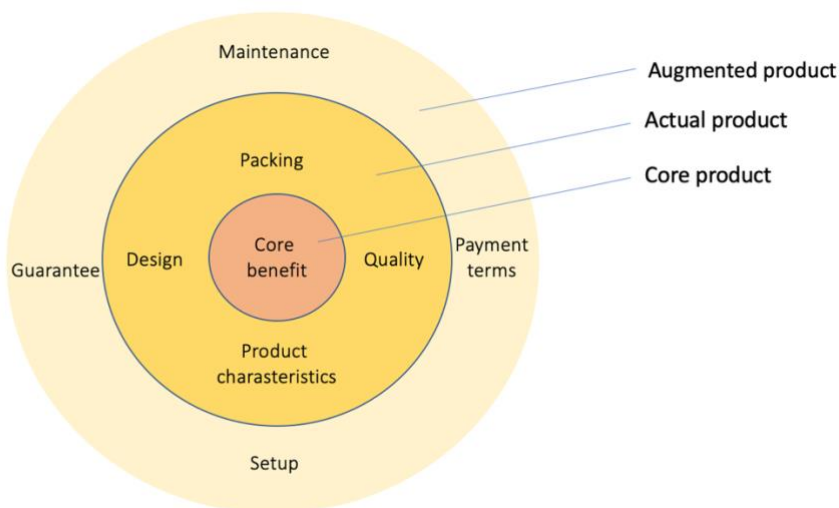


Figure 1. Diagram of Philip Kotler's Three Product Levels (Kotler, 2011)

In the Three Product Levels -model the product has been divided into three different levels. *Core-*, *actual-* and *augmented* product. These three levels have different aspects inside them that have an influence on the product's pricing (Kotler, 2011).

Mustavuori Ski Center's core product and the benefit are skiing and snowboarding on the slopes. In order to make the core benefit, in this case, skiing and snowboarding, into a buyable product for the customers, it has to be transformed into an actual product, which is the second level of Kotler's model.

Mustavuori is offering different kind of activities, and this means that there is more than one actual product in their selection. For example, day passes, seasonal passes and the sports equipment that is available for rent in their rental store are actual

products. These products help the customer to achieve the core benefit of the product – skiing and snowboarding. The actual product level involves packing, design, quality, and characteristics of the product. The price of the product is also a part of the actual product.

Because of competition and customer expectations, the augmented product is an important part of pricing. The quality of Mustavuori slopes, maintenance, variation, and safety are part of the augmented product. Payment terms that are set in the ski passes, guarantees, and delivery methods are all augmentations. Mustavuori rental stores augmentations are the setup of the equipment, guidance, guarantee, and payment terms (Kotler, 2011) (Mustavuori, Yritys, 2020).

3.2 Pricing

The pricing of a ski center is defined often on many different attributes. The pricing is based on different customer segments. In the neighborhood of Mustavuori there are no accommodation services and the restaurant that is operating as a ski bistro is outsourced to a private entrepreneur. Due to these factors, the pricing process is being viewed through different customer segments; families, season pass buyers, and beginners.

The pricing process is being determined by viewing the customer's segments and defining their objectives, demand, and competition.

3.2.1 Defining the objective of the pricing

Families are the biggest customer segmentation that ski centers have. Mustavuori has a separate ski slope for families and beginners. The objective is to offer a versatile selection of services for skiers and snowboarders of different levels because families come to spend time together during their free time. In families, usually, the parents are the more experienced skiers and snowboarders and want to share their learned experience with their children. This determines the reason for maximizing the possibility to participate for customers that are of different age and have a different skill level.

Beginners are an asset that keeps the skiing and snowboarding culture alive. Many times, the beginners are more from a younger age group, but many of the adult customers are willing to experience new sports. The possibility for this has to be low and easy to reach, which is the reason why in pricing the tickets, there should be different ski pass prices for different areas in the ski center.

The season pass buyers are a vital customer segment because they keep up the culture thriving and are the most active consumers of the core product. Mustavuori offers two different seasonal passes: normal and a family pass. These options not only allow maximizing the participation of the active skiers and snowboarders but also takes into consideration different life situations.

3.2.2 Determining the demand

A season pass campaign is being utilized to forecast the amount of demand. In the past years, Finnish ski centers have started to exploit a seasonal pass campaign before the winter season has begun. With these campaigns, the businesses want to maximize visitor flow, profit, and marketing possibilities. Mustavuori has two campaigns set up for their seasonal passes. The first campaign is set up for October 2020. Both season passes are being sold with a 60 % discount from the original price. The second campaign is set up for November 2020 and they are being sold with a 50 % discount.

The demand is being measured by the number of season passes that have been sold. The amount is being compared to the previous business year's number of season passes being sold. If the number of sold passes is higher than the previous year, the forecast is positive. This determines that the demand is higher. If the amount of season passes is lower than last year, it does not necessarily mean that the demand is low, but that the pricing should be developed. Price elasticity of demand is a risk since the demand descends when the price ascends.

3.2.3 Competitors expense and pricing evaluation

The table (Table 3) below shows the comparison of ski passes pricings that competitors have set. Companies in the comparison are Mustavuori Oy's two competitors from the Pirkanmaa region area, Sappee Ski Resort, and Ellivuori Ski Center. In these comparisons, only the day tickets and season passes have been taken into account.

Table 3. Comparison of ski ticket types

<i>Ticket type</i>	Mustavuori	Ellivuori Ski Center	Sappee Ski Resort
<i>Day pass Adults</i>	25€	35€	42€
<i>Day pass Children</i>	20€*	30€*	26€*
<i>Day pass Seniors</i>	25€	30€*	26€*
<i>Day pass Beginners slope</i>	-	0€*	14€*
<i>Season pass Adults</i>	295€	350€	540€
<i>Season pass Children</i>	295€	260€	370€
<i>Season pass Seniors</i>	295€	260€	370€
<i>Season pass Families</i>	800€	-	120€*

* = Children under 7 years old can ski and snowboard for free in Mustavuori and Ellivuori, if they are wearing a helmet and are accompanied by their parent. Sappee's age limit is 6 years old.

* = Ellivuori has not determined an age group for their senior age group, Sappee's age limit for senior entitlement is over 65-year olds and customers that have a senior card. Mustavuori has no separate prices for seniors.

* = Ellivuori has not determined separately which of their slopes are free. Their website has a mentioning that small lifts are free. Sappee has a separate Family Park - area.

Table 3 above shows that in comparison with the competitors, Mustavuori's day passes and season tickets are not as versatile as the competitors are offering (Mustavuori, Yrityks, 2020), (Ellivuori Ski Center, 2020), (Sappee Ski Resort, 2020)

3.2.4 Evaluating the determination of prices

As Table 3 shows above, the market pricing of Mustavuori should be updated to be more diverse in order to correspond to the market pricing of competing centers. Utilizing variable pricing, Mustavuori could divide the day ticket prices according to customer groups. This would, for example, lower the experiment threshold for families. Combining products for different customer segments the ski center could offer active and beginner level skiers and snowboarders a personalized pricing. This could be exploited by utilizing day tickets with rental equipment as a package. Using a package price, the core product entirety is more effortless, and it lowers the threshold for acquiring new customers (Maj & Iltanen, 2007).

Mustavuori has exploited in their pricing seasonal discounts by offering their customers a possibility to buy a season pass with a reduced price. The pricing could also be allocated to a certain time schedule. For example, pricing with a time schedule, the ticket prices could be lower during morning hours. The customer flow is lower during daytimes and by lowering the price the effect could increase the number of tickets being sold. Hourly tickets can also be used, for example, 1-3-hour day tickets.

3.2.5 Other factors affecting the determination of the price

Mustavuori Oy complies with the terms and conditions for ski passes set by the Finnish Ski Resort Association, which may affect pricing. To pricing set by competition, Mustavuori should react, but also take into consideration the differences between the ski centers.

3.3 Promotion

Mustavuori marketing communication is being centered to social media marketing. The brand image is a vital part of the promotion since the area where the ski center is located is known by locals because of the operation history. The volume of marketing should be high.

Marketing should be transparent, and it has to be targeted to the right audience. The targeting can be conducted by figuring out the right channels that the company has in use.

3.4 Placing

Mustavuori Oy's marketing is focused on social media marketing. Channels being used are Facebook and Instagram. These channels offer an easy marketing path since they can be utilized for free but also sponsored advertising.

In this thesis, the author has done an online presence analysis of the case company. In this analysis, the author has investigated Mustavuori Oy's online channels, which are the website of the company (www.mustavuori.fi) and two social media channels: Facebook and Instagram. This analysis can be found in this thesis under chapter 5 'Analyses' 5.3 'Online presence analysis'.

3.5 Summary of the marketing mix

Marketing professional and author Peter Fisk states in his book 'Marketing Genius (2007)' that, decisions that are made towards marketing are a group of elaborated criteria that are realistic and fitting with the company's goals. Choosing the right criteria can have an enormous impact on decision making and values and determine what works and what does not (Fisk, 2007).

To have all the marketing mix sectors working in synergy, they have to be allocated in the right way. Product development and diversifying the pricing for the right customer segments, with the right communication tools, creates a solid base for the company's growth.

4 SOCIAL MEDIA

4.1 Definition of social media

Social Media is a digital platform where people can interact with each other through different type of content. Content can vary from communication to sharing media files. Social Media is either a website or an application that carries out the purpose of sharing content in real-time quickly. Alan Charlesworth states in his book *Social Media Marketing: New Panacea or the Emperor's New Clothes* that social media is a way for people to "communicate and share information" (Charlesworth, 2018, s. 4).

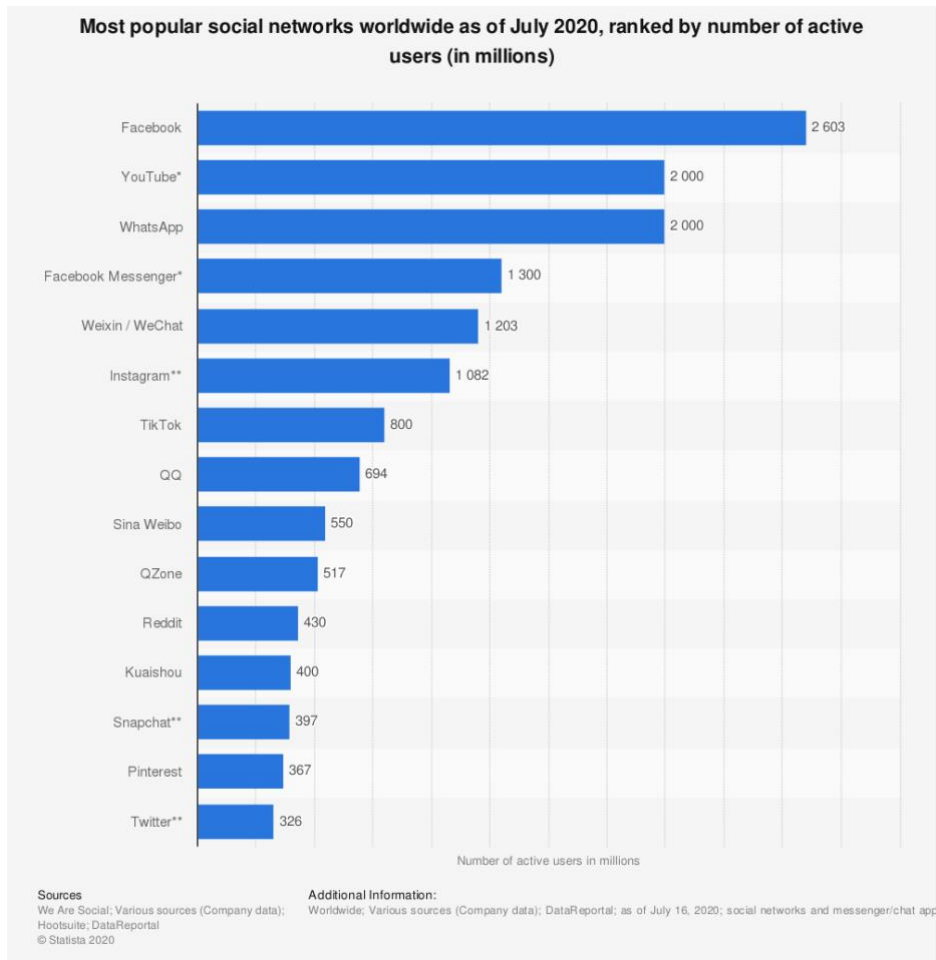


Figure 2. Global Social Networks ranked by number of users (Statista, 2020)

Many people perceive social media to be a smart phone or tablet application, when in reality, social media was originally based on computer usage. This tells that most of the consumers using social media have limited their usage only to application forms of social media (Hudson, 2020).

4.2 Social media platforms and types

Figure 1. shows the most actively used social media platforms in 2020 June and the platforms are stated in the figure as social networks. The author wants to state, based on her knowledge and experience, that the lines between categorizing social media are however blurred since today's social media platforms offer usually many aspects from one another.

In this thesis, the author will focus and use as an example two types of social media that Curtis Foreman listed in 2017 in a blog post that was published by social media management and marketing platform called Hootsuite. Foreman works as a senior editor for Hootsuite and has over 10 years of experience in digital marketing (Foreman,

LinkedIn Profile of Curtis Foreman, 2020). On that account, the author of this thesis has appraised him as a trustworthy source of information. Foreman, C. listed in his blog post '*10 Types of Social Media and How Each Can Benefit Your Business*' that social media platforms can be divided into ten different types. The platforms, or networks as Foreman has stated them, are listed by the way they are being used by people and businesses. In this thesis, the author will introduce two network types that are concerning the case company. The two types are *social networks* and *media sharing networks* (Foreman, *10 Types of Social Media and How Each Can Benefit Your Business*, 2017).

4.2.1 Social Networks

Social Networks are platforms where people and organizations can connect with each other to interact. For companies, these sites are also important since they can share information in real-time and connect with customers (Foreman, *10 Types of Social Media and How Each Can Benefit Your Business*, 2017). In this thesis, the social network that is introduced is called Facebook.

Facebook is a social media platform where users can interact and create networks with other users. Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. At first, Facebook was designated only for university students but quickly it extended out for public use. In 2006 Facebook became open for use for anyone over 13 years old. By 2010 Facebook had over 500 million users and according to statistics, there are over 2.60 billion Facebook users worldwide (Mohsin, 2020) (Facebook Inc., 2020).

Private users can create a profile page on Facebook, where they can add media files, such as pictures and videos, and share with their friends privately or publicly. Facebook usage is mainly based on friends and family basis, but one big part of the usage is also Facebook groups where unknown people share information and communicate based on their interest. In 2017 Facebook introduced an extended News Feed called 'Stories'. This is an extension where users can share media files for their followers. These pictures or videos will be available to be seen for 24 hours (Facebook Inc., 2020).

For businesses, Facebook offers an excellent platform for customer engagement since communication with customers through it is effortless. It is easy for customers to approach the company through Facebook. Marketing can be conducted through posts that the company shares with its Facebook page followers. This is a free marketing method. An active commitment to the company's Facebook page is important. The company should react to customer's questions and comments that have been done to the company's shared posts, they should share content actively and control private messages that have been sent by the customers (Facebook for Business, 2020). Even though Facebook is defined purely as a social network, it also has a lot of indications of interest-based networking (Foreman, *10 Types of Social Media and How Each Can Benefit Your Business*, 2017).

4.2.2 Media Sharing Networks

Media sharing networks are websites and mobile phone applications that allow users to share videos, music, photos, and audios with other users. These networks benefit companies with marketing and brand awareness. Companies can use these network sites and applications to share their services and/or products, through media so that the company's image stays more transparent to the consumer. They also work well as marketing channels for new products and/or services (Foreman, 10 Types of Social Media and How Each Can Benefit Your Business, 2017). In this thesis, the introduced media sharing network is Instagram.

Instagram is a mobile application that allows users to download images and videos to the service, use various amounts of filters over the photographs, organize them by hashtags, which are keywords, and location tags. Users can share their material either privately or publicly, depending on the settings they have set. Many users have turned their Instagram pages into professions by sharing content publicly and gaining over 20,000 followers (Instagram, 2020).

Instagram was founded in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. The original idea of the social media application was to create a platform where users could share the best locations to enjoy Bourbon-whiskey. The creators quickly noticed that this kind of usage does not engage consumers. The same year they changed the idea to general photography where users could photograph through the app and add a filter to the picture. The same year the app was created, they hit over a million users. Next year they already hit 10 million users. In 2012 Instagram was sold to Facebook for 1 billion dollars (Instagram, 2020).

Instagram has these days various options for content sharing. In addition to the regular news feed and profile uploads, Instagram has a feature called Stories, which is an external platform, an extended news feed, where users can add photographs and videos that are visible for 24 hours. Companies and influencers have taken into use the Instagram Stories extension as an advertising platform. Instagram provides an advertisement manager tool for business profiles. Through the managing tool, owners of business profiles can purchase ad space. These ads can be shown in the user news feed or between stories. Over 50 % of Instagram business profiles are using the ad manager tool to launch their advertisements on Instagram (Instagram, 2020). In August 2020 Instagram launched Instagram Reels, which is also an extension to the regular news feed they are offering. This is an extension where users can record, edit, and share 15-second videos with their followers (Instagram Inc., 2020).

4.3 Social Media trends in 2020

One of the biggest social media trends in the past few years has been customer engagement. Creating content that is reliable, relatable, entertaining, and transparent has become more important to consumers. Companies can enhance their chances to have committed followers by using influencers that already have a follower group that

has a high engagement rate. This is called influencer marketing, which is being explained in this thesis in chapter 3 'Social Media Marketing, 3.2 Marketing Strategies'.

One social media trend that connects with the trends mentioned above is stories. In the chapter '2.2.2 Media Sharing Networks' the author explains Instagram stories. This has also expanded to other social media networks such as Facebook. Stories have become a growing part of social media since more and more people tend to follow the stories rather than the regular news feed. Because of the advantages in technology, consumers have access to the internet with their mobile phones, the marketing trends have set a focus on social media applications (Haughey, CJ, 2020).

4.4 Customer segmentation in Social Media

A website called Search Engine Journal published a survey, conducted by a marketing company called Yes Marketing in July 2019. The topic was why consumers follow certain brands on social media. The survey analyzed 1000 consumer's answers and the result showed that different generations have separate volumes on social media usage. Generation Z (consumers born in the mid- '90s and early '00s) is one of the biggest consumer groups of Mustavuori. In the survey, it appeared that for this generation, Instagram is in more use than Facebook. With these customers, the marketing should be targeted to Instagram. Then again, the Y generation (consumers born at the beginning of the '80s) might be the ones who fund, and use Facebook, which determines that marketing should be also targeted to Facebook (Search Engine Journal, 2019).

5 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social Media marketing is utilizing the social media platforms technologies, channels and publishing types when companies are aiming to increase their consumer engagement, brand awareness, increase sales and website traffic (Tuten, 2017). Using social media platforms in marketing is a marketing type that every company should use. Social media is the fastest-growing trend in the history of the world. In 2020 there are approximately 3.9 billion social media users worldwide (Chaffey, David, 2020).

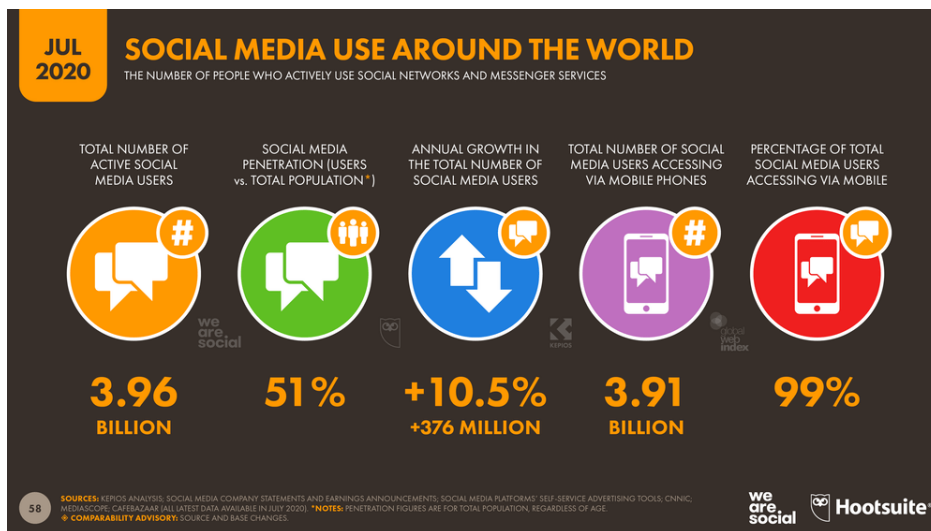


Figure 3. Infographic of social media use around the world 2020 (Chaffey, David, 2020)

When businesses utilize their marketing digitally to social media, one of the first things to consider is the goal of the advertisement. Who is the target customer? How does the company want to promote their brand advocate? In this thesis, relevant social media platforms for social media marketing are Facebook and Instagram. Choosing the right platform and the right content to reach the right target group is vital in social media marketing.

Social media marketing is part of digital marketing. In digital marketing, many abbreviations are used. Below, a few of them are introduced. These are abbreviations that come across when doing social media marketing on Facebook and Instagram and are essential to know (Hootsuite, 2020).

Impressions

The number of how many times businesses advertisement has been displayed.

CPI – Cost per impression

Cost per impression, also known as cost per mille, is a term that is being used in advertising. It measures the price of the advertisement per thousand impressions. For example, if the cost of an advertisement is €10 000 and the advertisement is shown 2,3 million times, CPM would be €4,35

$$\frac{10\,000}{\frac{2\,300\,000}{100}} = 4,35$$

CPC – Cost per click

Determines the price of the advertisement per click. It's commonly used as the payment method in digital marketing. It means the price that businesses pay of one-click when a consumer clicks their advertisement.

CTR – Click-through rate

It is the rate of how many consumers that have seen the business advertisement have clicked on it. For example, if the impression of the advertisement is 1000 and it has been clicked ten times, the CTR value is 1%.

$$\frac{10}{1000} * 100 = 1\%$$

CVR – Conversion rate

It is a measurement rate that is used in business web shops of how many of the people who are visiting the web shop end up buying a product or service. For example, if 1000 people are visiting a web shop in a month and 25 of them end up buying a product, the conversion rate would be 2,5 %

$$\frac{25}{1000} * 100 = 2,5 \%$$

CTA - Call to action

Call to action is a marketing way to pursue the customer into taking an action. For example, it can be a button in the advertisement that says, 'Order now' or 'Buy now'. Figure 3. Shows an example of a call to action button in an advertisement. The CTA button leads usually to the website that is being advertised.



Figure 4. Screenshot of an advertisement in a user's Facebook news feed with a call to action button (Columbia Road, 2020)

CRM – Customer Relations Management

Customer management systems that help businesses to manage their customer relationships

5.1 Social Media Algorithm

An algorithm is a list of mathematical instructions to follow to solve an issue. For example, a baking recipe could be thought of as an algorithm, but in this thesis, the author will focus on computer-based algorithms and especially, social media algorithms.

Social Media algorithms are a way of sorting different content in the user's news feed. Facebook and Instagram's algorithm works with customer engagement. The platforms gather user data and some of them the users feed themselves. This kind of data could be the users name, age, location, and interests. Other data that the user might not share with the platforms themselves might be sites they have visited or typed in a search engine. After receiving data from the user, the platforms start to push to the user's news feed profiles, posts, and advertisements the user has engaged with.

5.2 Facebook and Instagram Marketing

Facebook and Instagram marketing can be created either separately or through Facebook's marketing platform Business Manager. When creating non-paid advertisements, businesses can create shared posts either in their business profiles news feed, or stories. Both of these options are available for Facebook and Instagram. Businesses can also create sponsored advertisements through the Facebook Business Manager platform.

5.2.1 Inbound marketing

Inbound marketing is building a lasting and valuable relationship with customers. The opposite of inbound marketing is outbound marketing, which means one-way and non-targeted marketing. This kind of marketing method can be for example newsletter marketing, TV-marketing, and telemarketing.

Marketing that is done on social media is always inbound marketing. Inbound marketing targets to lure potential customers towards the company's products and services. The strategy is that the potential customer does the interaction with the company on their own initiate. This can be accomplished by creating content that is targeted right and creates a desire to engage with the company.

5.2.2 Facebook marketing

Before a company can start advertising on Facebook, they have to set up a business page for their company. When setting this page, the company chooses their business category. After this content and information can be added. The company can add several users to its business page if the users have their own personal Facebook account. These users are called page roles and they all have different adaption options (Facebook Inc., 2020).

	Admin	Editor	Moderator	Advertiser	Analyst
Manage Page roles and settings	✓				
Edit the Page and add apps	✓	✓			
Create and delete posts as the Page	✓	✓			
Send messages as the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Respond to and delete comments and posts to the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Remove and ban people from the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Create ads, promotions or boosted posts	✓	✓	✓	✓	
View insights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
View Page Quality tab	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
See who published as the Page	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Publish and manage jobs	✓	✓			
Turn on job features for a post	✓	✓			

Figure 5. Screenshot of page role options in a Facebook business page (Facebook Inc., 2020)

After the settings are prescribed, the company can start creating content in their news feed and stories and start advertising their business.

Facebook offers options for advertising. One option is to create advertisements directly on the business's Facebook page. Advertisements can also be created in a Business Manager advertisement tool. On Facebook, companies can advertise either with sponsored advertisements, or with organic content. Organic content is either written text, shared media file or all of them together. This is something a company can do for free, by sharing content on their Facebook profile. With this, the company can create discussions with their followers and enhance customer engagement. Facebook also has a stories section, expanded news feed where users can add content that is available for 24 hours.

Creating an advertisement from the businesses page is a simplified method of marketing and is easy to use. This creation method is the best way to promote a single marketing target. Facebook Business Manager lets the user create more detailed advertisements with more detailed target audiences, placements, and budgeting. In the business manager, Facebook allows users to create campaigns, and under the campaigns, the user can create multiple advertisements (Facebook Inc., 2020).

Creating an advertisement in Facebook Business Manager the advertisements consist of three elements: campaigns, ad sets, and the actual advertisements. The first thing the company has to choose is the campaign, under the campaign are ad sets and last are the actual advertisements.



Figure 6. Structure of a Facebook advertisement (revealbot, 2020)

The campaign has three main goals: awareness, consideration, and conversion. Facebook has built these goals in these sets so that the company can progress following all of them. When the company is new and starting their business, they should choose awareness as their goal, so that they can raise brand awareness and reach for their business. Consumers need to know what your business is all about. After the company has maintained awareness of their business and has raised a customer group they can start adding as their advertisement goal consideration. The main goal of consideration is to drive traffic towards the business. The actual sales are done with a conversion goal (Facebook for Business, 2020).












Awareness	Consideration	Conversion
 Brand awareness	 Traffic	 Conversions
 Reach	 Engagement	 Catalog sales
	 App installs	 Store visits
	 Video views	
	 Lead generation	
	 Messages	

Figure 7. Three options for campaign goals in Facebook Business Manager (Facebook for Business, 2020)

The next step is to create ad sets. These are sets of different advertisement groups. These groups define the target customer groups and distribution of the advertisements that are in the sets. Companies can create several ad sets and test different target groups. Facebook offers three different target customer groups: core audience, custom audience, and lookalike audience.

- The core audience consists of Facebook’s own classification of a group that belongs under a certain demographic. In Mustavuori Ski Center’s case, this kind of group could be, for example, people who are interested in skiing and snowboarding or Finnish Ski Centers.
- Custom audience consists of people who have viewed the company’s website. It is formed with Facebook Pixel, which is explained in chapter 4.3 ‘Social Media Marketing Analytics’. The custom audience can also be formed through a CRM-file that has been downloaded to Facebook.
- A lookalike audience goes hand in hand with the custom audience. Lookalike audience is an expansion of custom audiences. Facebook

searches for people whose interest is similar to the business's custom audience.

After the target audience has been set and the distribution has been chosen, the next and final step is to create the actual advertisements that are going to be shown. In this step, the headline, accompanying text, CTA, and the media file is being chosen. Here inbound marketing has to be taken into consideration and the company has to think about what kind of message they want to send out through their advertisement (Facebook for Business, 2020).

Mustavuori.fi
Sponsoroitu ·

TITLE

ACCOMPANYING TEXT ...

! 20/21 KAUSIKORTIT nyt myynnissä ! 31.10. asti ennakkohintaan 115€ & perhekausikortti 300€! Meillä voit maksaa myös liikuntaeduilla. Osta nyt Mustavuori Lippupuodista, LINKKI BIOSSA @mustavuori.fi

115€
KAUSIKORTTI

MUSTAVUORI.FI
Kausikortti 20/21
Tampereen seudun edullisin kausikortti löytyy täältä! Älä vietä mäki...

C-A-T

Tartu tarjoukseen

Figure 8. Mustavuori Ski Center Advertisement in Facebook (Mustavuori.fi Facebook, 2020)

For Mustavuori, this is the best option to advertise their season pass campaign since there are two prizes for the pass. For example, Mustavuori could set a target group that consists only of people who are between the age of 25-40 years old, follow certain

Figure 9. How Instagram Business Page is seen by users following the company (Mustavuori Oy, 2020)

Company's Bio is the first marketing a user sees when they land on business Instagram profile with organic search. The bio text should include a link to the company's website if they have one, and a short description of what the company's operations are.

Companies can create organic posts to their news feed and use that as a free marketing platform. Instagram stories work the same way, except the content is available only for 24 hours. This is a good method to share content that might not suit the visuality of the company's shared posts.

Instagram is all about videos and pictures. Having a visually engaging feed is important to gain more followers.

Instagram paid advertisements are set up through Facebook's Business Manager. The user needs to connect its Instagram account in the manager tool. Then the marketing follows the same pattern as advertising on Facebook. User has to set an objective for their campaign, name them, and select a target audience. After selecting the right placement methods and budget the advertisement can be set to be active (Instagram for Business, 2020).

5.3 Social Media Marketing analytics

Measuring marketing performance is important. This way the business gets valuable data on their marketing performances and sees what works for their target audiences and what does not. Facebook and Instagram advertisements can be analyzed through Facebook Business Manager.

Instagram analytics can be seen also through Instagram's application. Through the platform, businesses can analyze their customer's geographical and demographical insights but also the performance of their paid advertisements. Facebook Business Manager lets the user test with various methods that are presented below. Facebook pages can be analyzed through Facebook Insights It shows data of user's business page.

Facebook offers users various tests with which it is possible to measure the profitability and benefit of advertisements. These are templates that Facebook has created, and they help businesses to find the right advertisement types for their customers. They are free to use but they might affect the advertisements CPM.

A/B-testing, also known as split testing, is a type of comparison and marketing analyzing method where different elements of two advertisements are tested. These advertisements are about the same product or service, but the elements differ from each other. These elements can be either visual elements, headlines, accompanying texts, and CAT's. The goal is to discover the elements that engage the company's

target audience the best and creates more conversion. Usually, the easiest and best way is to choose only one element.

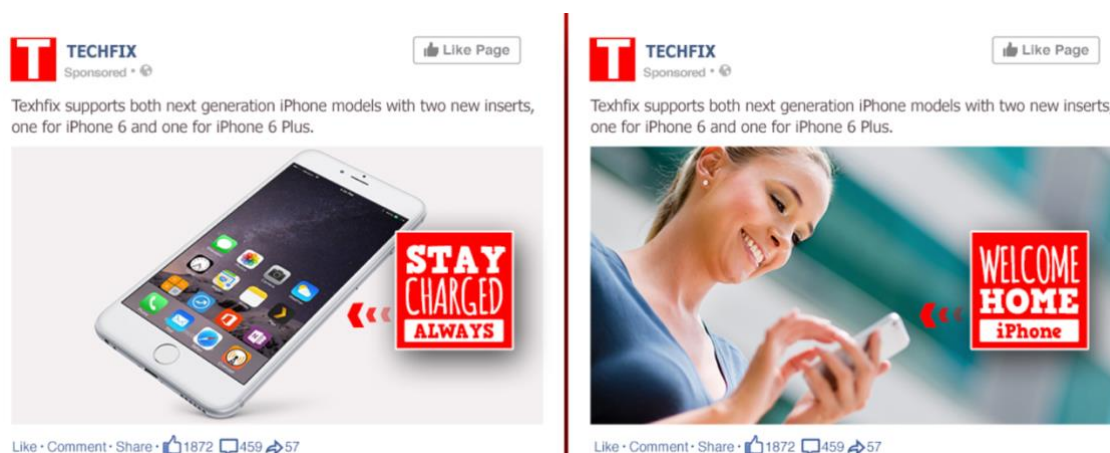


Figure 10. Example of a A/B-test in Facebook (Jeff Bullas, 2020)

When choosing A/B-testing as part of marketing analyzing, choosing the right indicator for results depends on what the company is trying to achieve with the testing. Indicators can be, for example, clicks on the advertisements, user interaction on the social media platform, or conversion that the advertisement has created (“A / B Testing,” 2010).

Optimizing the advertisements in the best possible way helps to target the advertisement to the right target group. Facebook offers a tracking code, called Facebook Pixel, that tracks conversions and target groups from the advertisements that you have set up on Facebook. The Facebook pixel is placed on the company’s website. The pixel helps to get data from users that have clicked the company’s advertisement and ended on the company’s website. It also helps to measure conversion that has been obtained from campaigns. Through the Pixel, Facebook gathers data of the people who have clicked on the advertisement and ended up on the web site. This information is valuable, since the Facebook algorithms then help optimizing the advertisements to the right customers. Facebook learns a lot from advertisement’s that have been set up.

In all simplicity, it helps to count the profits that have been made with Facebook advertisements but also helps to create the right target group for the company’s products. Every business has an individual Facebook Pixel (Facebook Inc., 2020).

```

<!-- Facebook Pixel Code -->
<script>
  !function(f,b,e,v,n,t,s)
  {if(!f.fbq)return;n=f.fbq=function(){n.callMethod?
  n.callMethod.apply(n,arguments):n.queue.push(arguments)};
  if(!f._fbq)f._fbq=n;n.push=n;n.loaded=!0;n.version='2.0';
  n.queue=[];t=b.createElement(e);t.async=!0;
  t.src=v;s=b.getElementsByTagName(e)[0];
  s.parentNode.insertBefore(t,s)}(window,document,'script',
  'https://connect.facebook.net/en_US/fbevents.js');

  fbq('init', '215450655589152');
  fbq('track', 'PageView');
</script>
<noscript>
  
</noscript>
<!-- End Facebook Pixel Code -->

```

Figure 11. Picture of a random Facebook Pixel (Jon Loomer, 2020)

5.4 Marketing strategies

5.4.1 Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing means that a company incorporates, for example, a social media influencer into its marketing strategy. By choosing a suitable influencer for the company, the company can reach the right target group. The followers of a social media influencer identify with this person and are thus able to influence the buying behavior of their followers (Suomen Digimarkkinointi, 2020). According to research, 71% of purchasing decisions are made based on the media of social media recommendations (Hubspot, 2020).

The influencer must be a person who matches the company's values and brand image. Thus, potential influencers of Mustavuori could be a skier or snowboarder living in the Pirkanmaa region, whose followers form one of Mustavuori's target groups. Collaboration with an influencer is usually limited to sharing sponsored content with followers. Such content may include, for example, a presentation of the ski resort, advertising of possible products with pictures and videos.

Clear rules need to be established for working with an influencer so that marketing is in line with the company's expectations. Followers also expect transparency in the context of sponsored publications.

5.4.2 Viral marketing

Viral marketing is strategic marketing where the business uses social networks, for example, Facebook or Instagram to spread out information about their product or operations. This information can be distributed out by word of mouth tactic, sharing content, or subscribing to a newsletter. Usually, the viral marketing benefits the

customer and gives them value for taking action. This could potentially be a Facebook post where the customer has to tag a friend or share the post to gain a prize. Mustavuori used this kind of marketing tactic on their website, by offering the customers a promotional code they could use in their web shop (Marketing-Schools.org, 2020).

6 ANALYSES

The author has utilized two background analyses in this thesis, the SWOT-analysis and, Online presence analysis.

SWOT-analysis is a strategic analysis technique that is used to determine the company's internal and external environment's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and, threats. The analysis was developed by Albert S. Humphrey, as part of his researches between 1960-1970. SWOT is an abbreviation from the words Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (Humphrey, 1970).

The online presence analysis is conducted by analyzing three web platforms that are being used by the case company. The goal of this analysis is to enlighten the current online presence of Mustavuori Oy, how marketing is implemented through these platforms, and how to improve them. The platforms that were used in this analysis were the case company's website (www.mustavuori.fi) and their two social media channels Facebook and Instagram.

6.1 SWOT-analysis



Figure 12.

SWOT-analysis Template (Nulab Inc., 2020)

6.1.1 Strengths

Mustavuori Ski Center's **location** is one of the most significant strengths. Mustavuori is located approximately from the city center of Tampere. This means that public transportation routes reach the area, which lowers the threshold of movement for the customers that don't have a private vehicle in use. The location of Mustavuori is also near to other cities in Pirkanmaa region and the transportation flow between these cities is easy.

The area is very **versatile**. Mustavuori slope area is very versatile in comparison with the size of the ski center. There are four slopes and they range from beginner slopes to advanced level slopes. The development opportunities of the area outside of the winter season also bring strength to the company and is a way to maintain customer relationships throughout the whole year.

Mustavuori has a **long history**. The operations history goes back to the 1960s and has established its reputation as a home slope for many consumers that live in the area. Mustavuori is also known between the active skiers and snowboarders that live in the area. Even though the ski center was closed for few years, active skiers and snowboarders used the slopes and built their 'do-it-yourself' freestyle tracks.

6.1.2 Weaknesses

The **geographic profile** of Mustavuori is not big. The longest slope is approximately 360 meters long, which means that the time skiing or snowboarding down is relatively short. By all means, the short profile might be ease for families or beginners. The more advanced skiers and snowboarders might get bored of the slopes quicker. The ski competitive ski centers in Pirkanmaa region have longer slope profiles.

6.1.3 Opportunities

A **restaurant / café** is operating in the Mustavuori area by an outsourced entrepreneur. The opportunities for cooperation are broad, as well as enlivening the area on weekends. There is a prevailing "after ski" culture in skiing culture, which, as the name implies, means the time after skiing. The facilities can be utilized, for example, for small music gigs, in which case both the restaurant and Mustavuori Oy will benefit from the event. The facilities can also be utilized for educational use, as well as for various events.

Mustavuori can also serve as an **event area**. For both skiing and snowboarding competitions and leisure events. Through competitions, even consumers who don't ski or snowboard may arrive on the spot. The competitions can be combined with so-called test days of ski and snowboarding equipment manufacturers, where customers can try equipment free of charge. Leisure events, on the other hand, create a sense of

community among skiers and snowboarders, which strengthens Mustavuori's position as a brand.

6.1.4 Threats

The **activities of the competitors** are one threat to Mustavuori, as the competitive ski centers located in the Pirkanmaa region may form an agreement with Tampere Public Transport for possible driving to the centers. A private bus is operating Saturdays and Sundays from Tampere to Sappee. The operation is not free of charge (Sappee Ski Resort, 2020).

Climate change brings its own threats to the ski resort. According to forecasts, snow-free winters will become more common in Central and Southern Finland over the next thirty years, and in Switzerland, for example, 44% of centers are estimated to be snow-safe in 2030 (snow for at least 100 days during the season), compared to 85% today (Protect Our Winters Finland, 2020).

6.2 Online presence analysis

Mustavuori Oy online channels are at the moment their website (www.mustavuori.fi) and two social media channels: Facebook and Instagram @mustavuori.fi. This web presence analysis was conducted analyzing those three platforms. The goal of a web presence analysis is to provide information about the company's online visibility. This is important information since this is a social media marketing plan, which is focused on marketing actions done online.

6.2.1 Website

Mustavuori.fi is the company's website. It contains information about the operations, prices, and events. This is where the customers are directed when the company is running ads in their social media channels and pursue. The website is providing all the information and tools that are valuable for customers. The target customers are consumers who buy tickets and the website offers a straight link to an online ticket store.

Many other ski centers also have a webcam installed so the consumers can see live video or live pictures of the state of the slopes. This is something Mustavuori is missing. In the near future the website should also be available in English since tourism is a growing aspect in the city of Tampere. Mustavuori Oy website is protected with an SSL certificate.

6.2.2 Facebook

Mustavuori has 2864 followers on their Facebook site (Mustavuori.fi Facebook, 2020). The company shares two to three times a week content to their followers. When creating a business profile on Facebook, companies can follow their statistics on how the advertising reaches out to the customers. By adding paid adverts Mustavuori could

reach potentially more customers since one of the issues the company has is that potential customers still don't know about the new operations Mustavuori is doing in the Ski Center area. By using Facebook's site advertising options, they could promote just the company's Facebook site and publish posts which would work as a free option for advertising. The company can set the paid adverts for a certain target group, for example using their competitor's Facebook page followers as one, customers living in the Pirkanmaa region, and skiing and snowboarding Facebook group followers (Facebook for Business, 2020).

Facebook is a good tool to maintain customer relationships since interacting is easy through Facebook. Companies should react to their followers' questions which they might ask in the company's shared posts since it enhances the image of a customer satisfaction-based company.

6.2.3 Instagram

Another social media platform Mustavuori uses is Instagram. They have 1197 followers and they post once or twice in two weeks (Mustavuori.fi Facebook, 2020). Like on Facebook, the company can also create advertisements for free on Instagram by sharing content for their followers in their feed and also by updating their Instagram Stories section. Followers can comment, like, or share these posts. To these actions, the company should react so that the engagement towards the company stays high. Consumers often follow brands which shared content is relatable, so Mustavuori should share content that is related to their services.

Instagram offers companies also the opportunity to create and share paid advertisements.

7 METHODOLOGY – RESEARCH

7.1 Quantitative research method

The research method that was used in this thesis is quantitative. Two surveys were conducted, the first one at the beginning of 2020 and the second one at the end of 2020. The advertising was researched through an A/B-test that was done with Facebook Business Manager.

The quantitative research method involves data that is either numerical or statistical. The research method is being used to determine averages, find a pattern, and make predictions (Williams, 2017).

One of the research methods in quantitative research methodology is survey research. This means collecting data from a group of people. In this thesis, the target groups have been divided by their consumer behavior. Survey 1 was distributed to all Mustavuori Ski Centers customers who follow them on social media. Survey 2 was targeted to skiers or snowboarders who prefer going to the snow park. These targets

were determined in social media posts by appointing them to the right customers. The surveys were conducted in Finnish because over 70 % of the company's social media followers speak Finnish (Facebook Analytics, 2020).

7.2 Survey 1

This research survey was published to Mustavuori Ski Center's social media followers in March 2020. The survey was open to answers for the whole month. The objective was to gather information on the overall customer satisfaction and to determine who were the customers of Mustavuori in the winter season 2019-2020.

71 people, between the age of 8 to +56 years old, answered the survey. The survey was published on the company's social media channels, which at the time had 1859 persons following. The answering rate to the survey was 3,8 %.

56,8 % of the customers who answered were from Tampere and the rest were from Pirkanmaa region. This determines that the geographical location of Mustavuori customers in the winter season 2019-2020 was Pirkanmaa region.

Kuinka usein kävit laskemassa kaudella 2019-2020 Mustavuoressa
71 vastausta

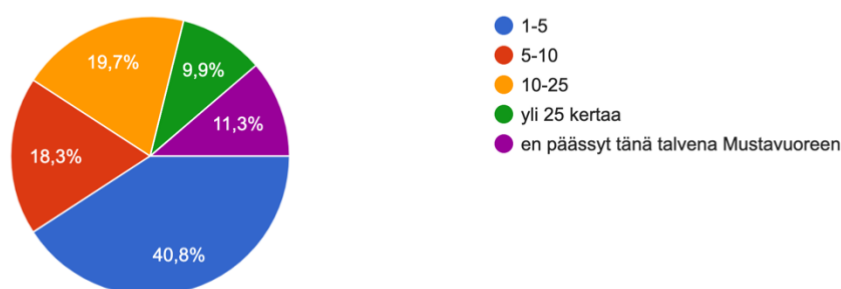


Figure 13. Alt pie of question 5 "How often did you go skiing or snowboarding in Mustavuori in the season 2019-2020?"

As Figure 5 shows, over half of the customers who answered the survey visited the ski center either one to five times or, not at all. A little bit under 10 % of the customers visited the ski center over 25 times.

Millaisella hissilipulla laskit Mustavuoressa?

71 vastausta

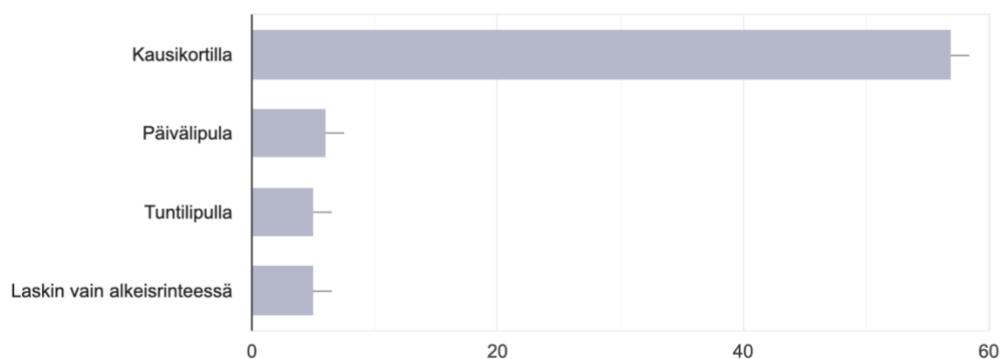


Figure 14. Chart of question 6 “What kind of season ticket did you ski or snowboard in Mustavuori?”

In Figure 5 it was seen that most of the customers either did not visit the ski center or only visited there 1 to 5 times. Customer activity was not active, but like Figure 6 above shows, most of the customers (80%) had purchased the season ticket to the ski resort. There are numerous reasons why the customer has first made a purchasing decision to visit the ski center actively but, in the end, has not reached that goal.

One reason for this could be the climate that was in Pirkanmaa the past winter season. The average temperature from January 2020 to March 2020 in the region of Pirkanmaa was + 0.23°. This means that the winter was warmer than usual and the possibilities for good snow conditions were low (Finnish Meteorological Institute, 2020).

Kuinka hyvin Mustavuoren laskettelukeskus vastasi odotuksiasi?

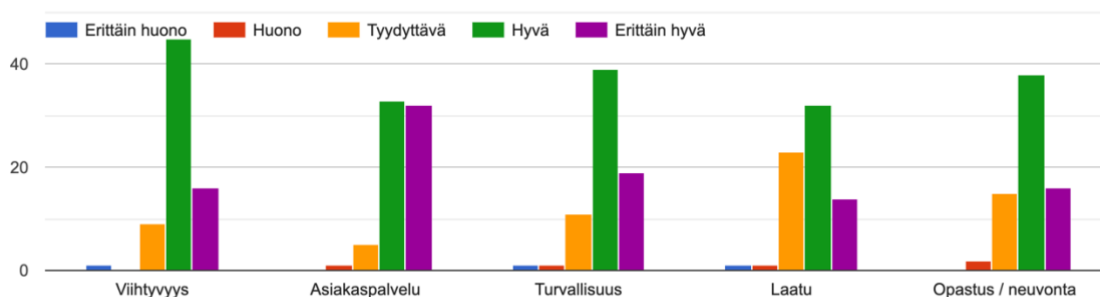


Figure 15. Bar chart of question 7 “How well did Mustavuori Ski Center meet your expectations?”

Figure 7 shows a picture of the surveys question 7 bar chart which was to determine the overview of Mustavuori Ski Center’s customer satisfaction. The Blue bar is very

poor, and the purple bar is very good. From left to right the topics were: *amenity of the area, customer service, safety, quality, and guidance.*

As the chart shows, the overall satisfaction was good. This could determine that the reason for the low customer engagement was not due to the ski center but rather due to external reasons, like the climate.

At the end of the survey, there was a possibility to leave feedback about services that the customers might have missed in the ski center and open feedback.

“It is hard to say since the snow conditions were what they were, so it was not possible to get the full picture. You did your best in these conditions. Because of that, I cannot demand more. Luckily the season ticket was not expensive although I did not use it at all, but many well invested. I hope there is more snow next season” – Male, 26 to 35 years old (Customer satisfaction survey 2019-2020, 2020).

“Bad luck with the snow. Let’s hope next winter is better” – Male, + 56 years (Customer satisfaction survey 2019-2020, 2020).

As the quote citations above show, customer satisfaction towards the ski center was good but the climate conditions did not make the season ideal.

7.3 Survey 2

The second survey’s objective was to collect data from Mustavuori social media followers, who use the snow park. This is a smaller customer group and the target of this survey was to find out their preferences for the upcoming setups. This also creates a feeling of togetherness which is part of building the brand image stronger.

The survey was published in Mustavuori’s Facebook and Instagram channels and it was open between the 19th of October to 26th of October 2020. The survey collected 26 answers, from people between the age of 10-44 years old. The largest age group was 25 to 34 years old which was 76,9% (20 answers) of the total. Mustavuori had at the time 4061 followers on their social media channels which makes the answering rate 0.6%. The rate might be relevantly low, but it has to be taken into consideration that this survey was targeted to only a certain customer group and it is not possible to calculate how many followers actually are in this group.

Lipputyypiksi Mustavuoreessa

26 vastausta

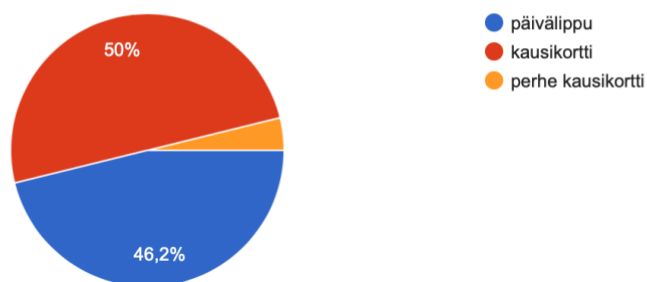


Figure 16. Pie chart of question 4. 'Ski ticket type'

Figure 16 shows that the dividing of the ski ticket types was not drastic. Half of the answerers have a season pass (red). The blue section is day ticket buyers and orange indicate customers who own a family season pass. As the season has not started yet, the volume of season pass owners is low. The upcoming winter climate is going to affect this. As survey 1 answers said, the biggest flaw the customers saw in the company's operations was the lack of winter days.

Parkki - Laskutyylit

24 vastausta

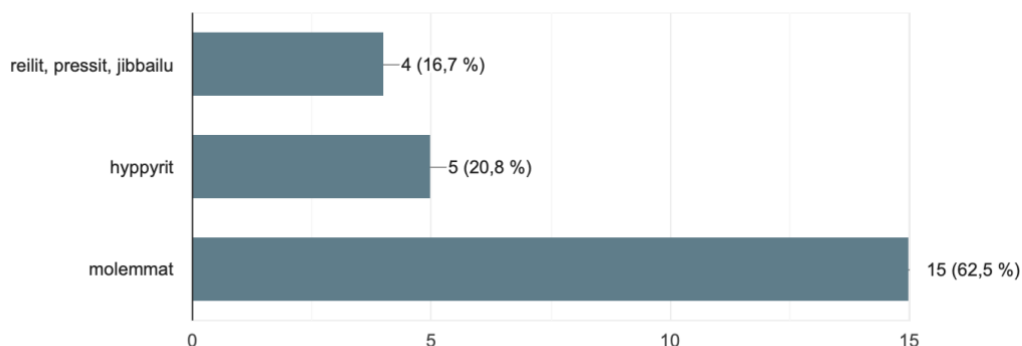


Figure 17. Chart of question 8 'Park skiing/snowboarding style'

Question 8 was to determine what kind of park-style the answerers preferred to practice. This answer gathered 24 answers since it was not mandatory to answer this question. The answerers were given three options, rails, kickers, or both. The majority of the answerers (62.5%) chose both. This tells that the snow park should be versatile enough, including both obstacles and kickers.

Parkki - Jos saisit vaikuttaa laskettelukeskuksen tarjontaan, mikä vaihtoehdoista olisi sinulle mieluisin?

26 vastausta

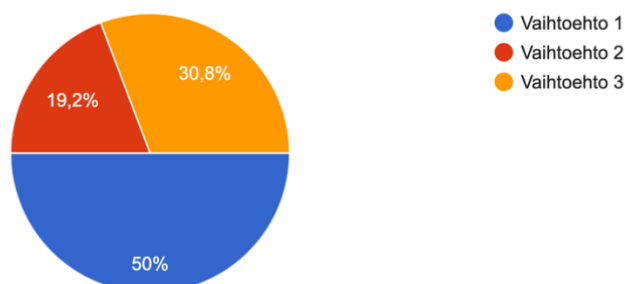


Figure 18. Pie chart of question 9 'Park – If you could affect the ski centres selection, which of the following options would be the most preferably for you?'

Parkki - Minkä kokoisia hyppyreitä lasket mieluiten?

26 vastausta

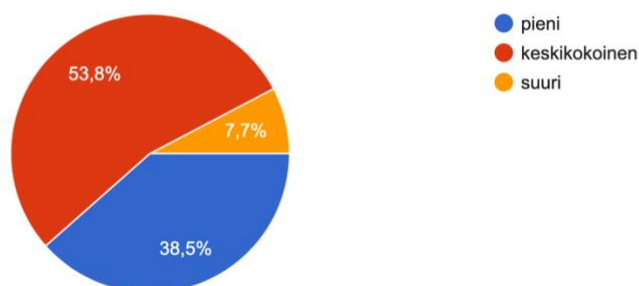


Figure 19. Pie chart of question 10. 'Park – what size kickers do you prefer'

Figures 18 and 19 show the preferability of the obstacles and sizes customers want. This helps to determine the selection when the ski center is building the snow park. Choosing obstacles and sizes, in which the customers have had a possibility to influence, creates engagement and a feeling of togetherness (Power, 2013).

The last question was the open feedback section. Below are a few of the most useful ones quoted. ("Asiakaskysely Mustavuori Snow Park 2020/2021," 2020)

"As Mustavuori is a small ski center located in a city, expectations are not the highest. I wish there were jumpers in the park, so to speak, for everyone, big and small. Wide and narrow presses and a good rail line are a plus. Kids and beginners could have their own small obstacle track on the beginner slope."

“I wish there were a lot of longer rail/jib lines! So it would be really good to invest in them at every ski resort, they can go a long way. I recommend listening to customer opinions and ideas.”

Using a questionnaire to sort out the needs and wishes of Mustavuori Ski Center’s customers helps decision making in the future. This survey can be used as a reference for the upcoming seasons. It can be re-done after the season as a satisfaction survey and determine if the company achieved to meet the customer’s needs.

7.4 A/B-testing

To scope out a base for the case company’s social media advertisements, an A/B-test was implemented during the 20th and 31st of October 2020. The chosen elements for the test were visual. The advertisements were named ‘Ad A’ and ‘Ad B’, using the same titles, accompanying text, and CAT’s. The differentiating element was the advertisement image.

The image that was chosen for advertisement A was a picture of a snowboarder. With this selection, the case company wanted to convey the customers a relatable feeling and create excitement towards the upcoming winter season. For advertisement B, the company chose an image with striking graphics and text. The idea was to catch the customer’s attention.

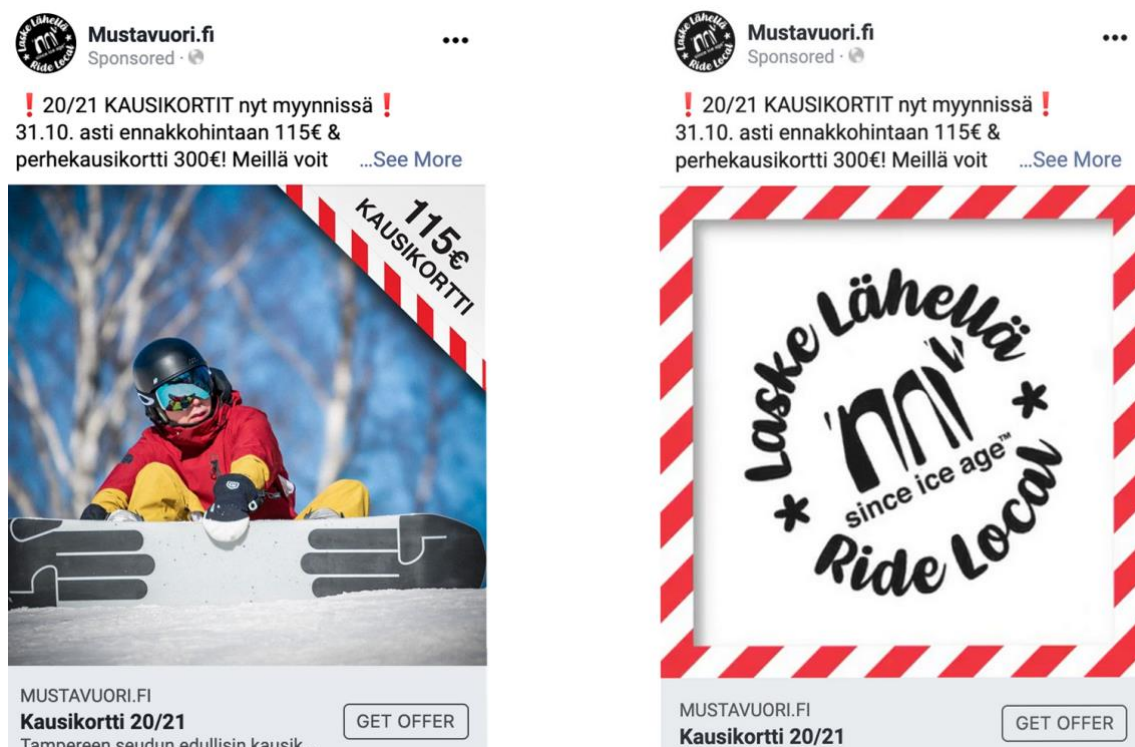


Figure 20. Advertisement A and Advertisement B (Mustavuori.fi Facebook, 2020)

7.4.1 Results

Table 4 Overall performance of both advertisements

	RESULT	REACH	IMPRESSIONS	COST PER RESULT
AD A	266 Link clicks	36,896	92,355	€1.12
AD B	14 Link clicks	2,914	3,914	€1.76
TOTAL	280 Link clicks	37,823	96,269	€1.15

Table shows the overall results show both advertisements overall results. Advertisement A received 266 clicks and advertisement B 14. This result tells that the advertisement A was a lot more engaging and interacting with the company's social media followers.

The reach numbers tell an estimation of the number of people who have seen the advertisements. As Facebook uses algorithms to determine the target audience for the advertisements, the results tell that the algorithms have learned what kind of customers interact and started showing advertisement A more to the target audience.

Impression numbers are number of times the advertisements have been shown on a screen. The advertisements might have been shown on a customer's screen multiple times.

The results tell that using a picture with a skier or snowboarder is more engaging for the target audience than using a graphic image. Using a picture that is more identifiable is the best option for a ski resort.

As mentioned before, with an A/B-test, companies can get more information of their target group.

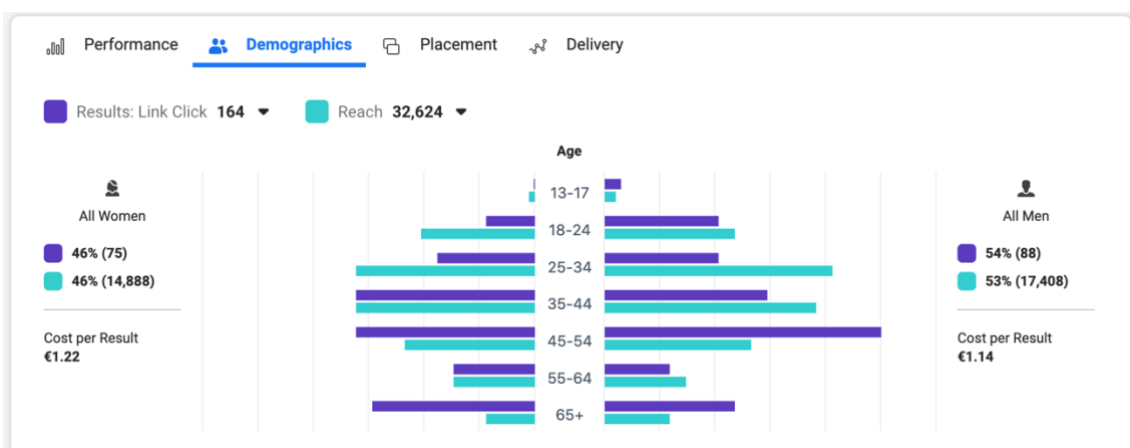


Figure 21. DEMOGRAPHICS OF AD A

Figure 22 shows the demographical data of advertisement A. As it shows, 54 % of the audience of who clicked were men and 46 % were women, and the biggest age groups were 45 to 54-year old.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

A marketing plan will serve the company in the short term as no previous plans for the company have been implemented. If there were previous plans, a longer-term marketing plan could be drawn up using the data collected in them. The purpose of this marketing plan is to provide the company with a comprehensive analysis of the operating environment and the factors that affect it, such as the market and customer groups. Possible expansions to the company in addition to current market operations have also been highlighted and their impact on the future has been assessed.

8.1 Controlling and evaluating

There is a plan to carry out two customer satisfaction surveys for Mustavuori Oy in the beginning of 2021, from which comprehensive information will be collected, which will enable wider development opportunities. The surveys also provide comprehensive information on customer groups. The first survey should be conducted in February 2021, taking into account customers' current views and expectations. The second survey would be carried out in the spring, for example in May 2021, when customers will get an idea of which areas the company has been successful in and in which areas there is still room for improvement. A new marketing plan would be implemented on the basis of these two surveys and this marketing plan.

The case company's marketing is being controlled by documenting the process into the project management tool Trello.

Further recommendations would be taking more and more platforms into use. There are various amount of social media marketing management tools available for companies. In this thesis one of them, Hootsuite, has been introduced. Social media marketing should be extended to other platforms, such as Youtube, that Mustavuori Ski Centers target customers use.

8.2 Digital marketing tools

Trello

Trello is a free browser-based tool for project management. It is based on Kanban-style boards and list making. Kanban-boards were developed in the 1980's by Toyota. The idea of a Kanban board is a useful tool to document visually the different steps of a project. Trello is based on this kind of project management where users can create different kind of boards with lists. Usually the concept is to make boards that follow the projects timeline. This boards could be named 'to-do', 'in progress' and 'done'. It is a simple tool to follow the progression of a project.

The user can create different boards for different projects. The boards can either be set as private or they can be shared with certain work groups (Trello, 2020).

Mustavuori has been using Trello since October 2020 as part of their seasonal pass campaigns. Mustavuori has boards that are distributed monthly, starting from October and ending in December. These two months are the prior months that the season pass campaigns are being displayed in their social media channels. Trello helps everyone who is working in marketing department to stay on track of the campaigns and projects.

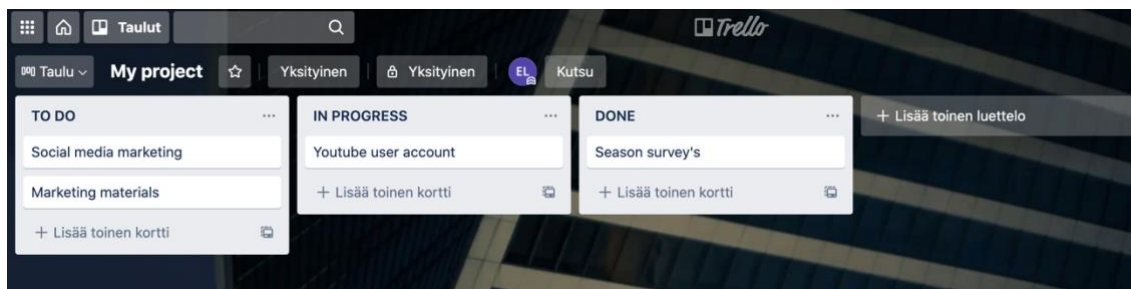


Figure 22. Overview of a simple Trello board

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is a social media management platform. It is created for a company's social media teams to track, plan, measure and publish content to their social media channels. Companies can add multiple social media channels to one user in the tool and it simplifies the workload. This one account can be used by many users, which is helpful if a company has many people working in their social media department. In the tool, it is also possible to delegate responses to different users, which makes it also ideal for a managerial tool.

Hootsuite has various plans, fees ranging from free to €500 per month. The fee depends of need and number of users the company has. For a smaller company like Mustavuori the best option would be a plan with 3 users and +20 platforms. Hootsuite

also offers a free plan, but the functions are limited and are not suitable for professional use (Hootsuite, 2020).

This is a tool that the author of this thesis strongly recommends for Mustavuori to take into use. Having a business whose market area is quite hectic and weather dependable, the workload can be from time to time stressful, and using management tools would help the ease of managing different social media channels.

8.3 Social media platforms

8.3.1 Youtube

Youtube is a video sharing social media platform. Users can create an account, add videos, watch and comment another users' content. It is the most popular video streaming service. Companies can create organic marketing material by sharing videos on their channel, which is free marketing for the company. Companies can change their Youtube channels into brand accounts, which allows multiple users to manage the material (Youtube, 2020).

There is also paid advertisement option in Youtube. The platform uses a cost per view (CPV) model, where the company pays for the advertisement only when a consumer engages with their advertisement video. There are different advertisement types on Youtube. They can either be displayed on the search stream or during a video the consumer is streaming (Hubspot, 2020).

Youtube would be a good social media channel for Mustavuori to expand. Winter sports are a form of sport that is often videotaped and this way the company could create free marketing material. Mustavuori could create a video-series to Youtube where they present step by step how a ski resort operates. This would help growing their brand and make the customers feel like they are being involved.

9 CONCLUSION

This thesis investigates the integration of social media into company's digital marketing. Including Social media as part as company's marketing is an action that every company should take into use. Social Media is where the customers are. Using relevant platforms means focusing on the right target customers. Doing an evaluation of the company's products and customer segmentation helps to figure out which platforms are most valuable for a company.

Segmenting customers and meeting their needs was analyzed through two surveys and a A/B-test. With the results of these tests, the company can now even more specify and target their advertisements for their customers.

Social Media marketing might sound simple, and there are also options for an easy way of implementing it. But using the marketing programs and options for more precise targeting helps the companies to achieve the right customers. Making the marketing steps easier, by using programs designed for it, leaves more time and energy for the actual visual planning, and choosing the right titles and texts.

As the case company's operations are tied up to the climate, considering actions against climate change is an important part. If the climate continues to warm every year, there might not be winters without snow in the future. This affects the case company's operations, and if such conditions would occur, they would need to change their objectives.

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SURVEY 1

Customer satisfaction survey for Mustavuori winter season 2019-2020

1. Respondent's age
2. Gender
3. Hometown
4. How would you describe your experience level in snowboarding or skiing?
5. How often did you go skiing or snowboarding in the winter season 2019-2020?
6. What kind of ski ticket did you use?
7. Did you visit Ukkohalla ski resort?
8. What is your opinion about the cooperative season ticket (Ukkohalla x Mustavuori?)
9. How well did Mustavuori Ski Center meet your expectations?
10. Slopes - How well did Mustavuori Ski Center meet your expectations?
11. Customer service - How well did Mustavuori Ski Center meet your expectations?
12. How well did Bistro Mustavuori meet your expectations?
13. Do you or your family members have the need to store your skiing or snowboarding equipment in Mustavuori during the winter season?
14. If you need to store your skiing or snowboarding equipment in Mustavuori, what do you think would be a suitable price for the service?
15. What events or services did you miss?
16. Open feedback

SURVEY 2

Customer survey for Mustavuori ski center customers, snow park

1. Respondent's age
2. Hometown
3. Gender
4. Ski ticket type in Mustavuori
5. Level of skiing or snowboarding
6. Are you skiing or snowboarding?
7. Skiing or snowboarding style
8. Park – Style
9. Park – If you would be able to influence to the range options of the snow parks obstacles, which of the following options would be most suitable for you?
10. Park – What is the size of the kickers/jumpers/boxes you prefer to ski or snowboard?
11. Open feedback – We would love to hear your ideas about your park preferences in Mustavuori Ski Center Winter Season 2020-2021.