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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN FOR PALLO-IIROT

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ABSTRACT:

This thesis is about making a social media marketing plan for local football club Pallo-Iirot. Problem is the width of social media marketing in the club and especially the ladies' side of the club. The purpose is making the club's social media more effective and spread the good name of ladies' football in the club and overall.

The method used in the thesis qualitative method. Intention is to use valid interviews to back up the theory and find out about the current situation of the social media marketing and ladies' football.

Key results in the thesis were the lack of social media platforms being used. There is lot of available platforms and options not being used which is the main concern and a place of improvement. Ladies' football itself is not marketed enough and for that there should be also a specialist focusing on that. Without the person in charge, the marketing for both genders is too big of a job.

To conclude the thesis, the problem of the organization and issue of the thesis is the lack of social media marketing concerning the women's football in the club. There are easy options how to fix the problems which are explained above and also in the thesis itself. Social media marketing plan will be given for the organization also.

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Abstrakti:

Tämän opinnäytetyön aiheena on sosiaalisen median markkinointisuunnitelman teko paikalliselle jalkapalloseuralle, Pallo-Iiroille ja erityisesti sen naispuolelle. Ongelma-kohtana ja käsiteltävänä aiheena on nimenomaan naisjalkapallon sosiaalisen median markkinointi ja sen puutteet. Työn tarkoituksena on tehdä seuralle tehokas suunnitelma sosiaalisessa mediassa markkinointiin liittyen naisjalkapalloon.

Työssä käytetään kvalitatiivista metodologiaa. Kvalitatiivisen metodin tueksi työssä käytetään haastatteluja, jotka antavat oikean kuvan nykytilanteesta ja naisjalkapallosta ja sen ongelmakohdista.

Opinnäytetyön selkeä tulos ja havainto on eri sosiaalisen median alustojen käytön puute. Eri alustoja jää käyttämättä paljon, joka näkyy puutteena eri kohderyhmien tavoittamisessa. Naisjalkapallon markkinointi itsessään on myös puutteellista, joka vaatii selkeästi henkilön vastaamaan itse tuotteen sosiaalisen median markkinoinnista.

Tiivistettynä seuran ongelma liittyen naisjalkapalloon on sen sosiaalisen median markkinoinnin puute, jolloin itse tuotekin pysyy tuntemattomana, Ongelmaan löytyy usea helposti lähestyttävä ratkaisu, jotka käsitellään itse opinnäytetyössä, Sosiaalisen media markkinointisuunnitelma tullaan myös antamaan seuralle itselleen.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this degree program thesis is to make a social media marketing plan for local football club Pallo-Iiro. This social media marketing plan focuses on the women and their different age teams in the club. Marketing plan could be also adjusted to both genders, but this plan focuses on the female football because of the gap in marketing in that side in the club. The thesis will search the issues and possibilities in the area of marketing going through the different channels of social media. There is used both books and internet articles as sources in the thesis. The thesis itself is made by using the qualitative method to base the theoretical part of it. Theoretical part of the thesis also consists interviews. Aim of the thesis and marketing plan is give guidelines and observations with guidance for Pallo-Iiro how to advertise ladies' football in different social media platforms. All of the used platforms are going to be reviewed in the thesis.

2 PURPOSE OF THE THESIS

Purpose of the thesis is to find a solutions and proposals for local football club Pallo-Iiro about social media marketing concerning directly women`s football. The thesis area is decreased to the ladies` side of the club because otherwise the area would be too wide. The club also has social media marketing covered already but it is pressured to the men`s first team. With the social media marketing plan there is an objective to find different solutions concerning the social media platforms to gather the target audience in all of them.

2.1 Research questions and research objectives

In this thesis there is being used three crucial research questions to fulfill the research objectives. The research objectives are developing their social media marketing, reaching the targeted audience in different social media platforms and developing the ladies` football`s overall stage in the club. The research questions below are going to be used in the `recommendations` forum as a tool to improve their overall social media marketing. The recommendations are attached to the questions and the answers from the interviews.

Research questions in this thesis are:

- 1.What different social media platforms are used and in what purpose?
- 2.What is the stage of women`s` football at the club?
- 3.How branding affects social media marketing and in what meters these are measured?

2.2 Conceptual framework

Before starting the demonstration of the cause-effect relationship, it is important to choose the variables it is going to be used in the conceptual framework and in the thesis itself. The characteristics can be simple, but they must be helpful and relevant in addition to the actual framework. The variables themselves can be two different types: independent and dependent. Basically, the independent variables are characteristics which effect directly to the dependent characteristics. When having the actual independent and dependent characteristics, it is possible to begin the actual framework. The framework consists normally of boxes, arrows and lines. Boxes indicate the variables and their meaning which are then pointed out the cause-effect relationship by arrows. Lines must be used when there is a relation between variables but no cause-effect relationship (Scribbr 2020).

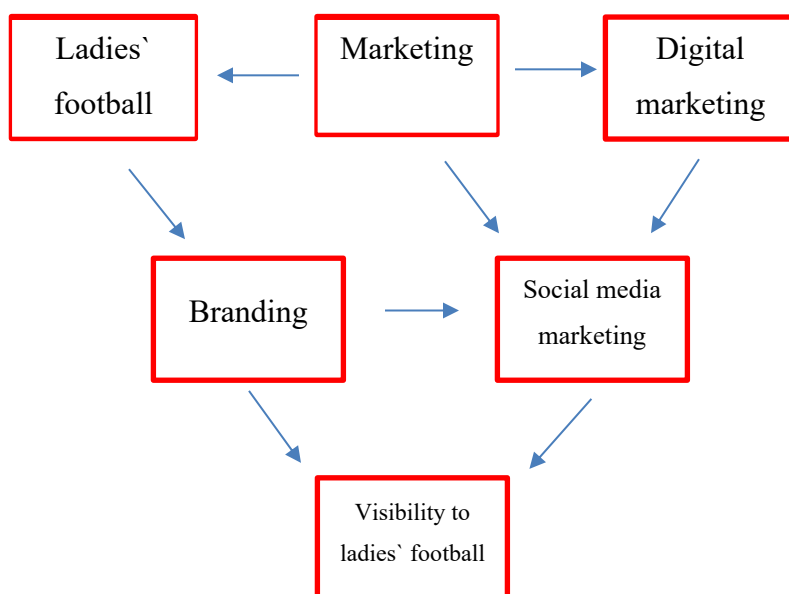


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

As the conceptual framework above illustrates, the final product of the thesis is to get their social media marketing plan as effective as possible to increase their visibility.

Visibility is a total of many different variables. It is crucial that the highest variables above the others are also well known because without those the conceptual framework is not as effective as with them. By knowing about the social media platforms, the sport itself and advertising the events, then the result is on its way to what is expected. These three variables affect the effectiveness of the social media marketing in different platforms and the brand of the club itself. When marketing the brand in a right way in the right platforms, the result will eventually be more visibility to the club and most importantly; to the ladies' side of the club. By knowing about football and marketing and advertising along the brand, ladies' football will take a bigger role alongside the men's team in the club. The final visibility of the brand and the women football will increase the number of girls beginning football early on. And that is the goal the club is aiming for.

3 MARKETING

Marketing means actions, institutions and processes which makes the communication and supply between customer and organizations possible. Through this, all parties will benefit from the process. (AMA, 2017).

American marketing association lists the four P's in marketing. These are product, price, place (or distribution) and promotion. These four P's are critical for the company's marketing (AMA, 2017).

Product is usually defined as an idea or service, or the combination of these two. The meaning is that the product is to be the thing that companies offer to the costumers in exchange for money. Price on the other hand is the amount that is given in the exchange. Place or distribution means the market coverage that the product is given. The fourth P according to the American marketing association is promotion. Promotion includes different kind of tactics that are used to sell the product. Example for this is special packaging and different kinds of coupons (AMA, 2017).

According Meriläinen (2017), the most important tools in marketing are segmentation, targeting and positioning. The steps between the marketing planning has to be executed in the mentioned order. When executed as planned, the STP-analysis (segmentation-targeting-positioning) will work and provide wanted results.

The segmenting provides a base for the marketing and without it the targeting and positioning will be impossible. The meaning of segmentation is to make a wide and overall picture of the marketing aspect. The overall picture of the aspect is made by taking the trending things in consideration. With this, it makes it possible to identify different organizations the customer segments. After this analysis is reached a point when it can be moved to the targeting. The essential thing in targeting is to find the groups which will benefit it the most but keeping in mind that it has to be beneficial for the organization. As a third step in the STP-analysis is the positioning (Meriläinen 2017a). Positioning refers to how a customer group sees the company and its products

compared to the rivalries. Its purpose is to create a picture of the product to the customer group as the company wants them to see it. Essential in positioning is to make the brand as unique as possible (Meriläinen, 2017b).

In this thesis these four P's are considered in the area of women's football. Product is obviously the women's football itself. Product needs to find to be good enough to find the markets and its place on them. Price as a term means its value concerning the product; how much it is going to cost and in what price point. In this case it is going to be the cost of the advertising etc. to make the product as well-known as possible. Place as a third P means the amount of market coverage the product is going to have. In this thesis it is going to be examined how much the club must find market coverage concerning to the men's side of the club. Promotion is the final P in the four P system. Promotion is the most important P in this thesis, because of the whole social media marketing plan. It is crucial that they will deliver the best possible alternatives to sell the actual product. Within these four P's the product will find its marketplace within the right price and place with the promotion the women's sport needs.

3.1 Digital marketing

Digital marketing is nowadays more a rule than an option because of its rise from the 1900's century. By the end of the 1900 century, digitality has become a great tool in marketing and its effective options are being used in multiple ways. It is not a phenomenon anymore in marketing but more an effective centric way in it. Digital marketing has multiple ways as so many digital channels exists already and there is coming more as we speak. The ways of using the digital marketing channels are several because of their multiple options; digital marketing channels can be for example web sites, online advertising, email advertising and mobile marketing. These channels are important ways of gathering customers in digital marketing. The channels can be used in customer acquisition as the information is easy to spread throughout these channels by telling about the products, brands, offers and leads (Merisavo, Vesänen, Raulas & Virtanen, 2006).

Even though the digital marketing becomes more popular within time in the area of marketing, the breakthrough will come later in customer acquisition; how to gather customers and how to develop the process of cherishing the customer already existing and the ones becoming. Digital channels offer new ways to customer acquisition by changing the leads to effective sales. It is very important in digital marketing to recognize the areas and opportunities online. Organizations have lot of problems within this concept recognizing the online surfers from the actual interested customers concerning Merisavo, Vesanen, Raulas and Virtanen. The digital marketing also gives opportunities within channels and the actual advertising to stand out from the rival organizations. Advertising and additional offers are easier to handle throughout the digital marketing channels. Digital marketing is a modern way of marketing for example because of its cost effectiveness. Even though of its low cost, big organizations have not activated the area of digital marketing as much as they could have been concerning Merisavo, Vesanen, Raulas and Virtanen (Merisavo ym., 2006).

3.2 Branding

Brand is a very large concept that includes many different areas. There are also many ways to define the word brand. Will Kenton has defined the word brand as a unique design, logo, symbolic and the combination of all these. The meaning of a brand is to distinguish their product from other products and firms. It is wise to protect your brand name. This legal protection given to a brand is called a trademark (Kenton, 2020).

As I already said, the brand has a great meaning on the firm. Kenton (2020) claims that a brand is the most valuable asset of the company. It represents the company, and therefore it is so important that the logo and the slogan is recognizable.

Before a company decides what kind of brand to choose for itself, they must decide what kind of public image they want to give to the brand. The brand must reflect the company's idea. The main goal is to make the brand as appealing and memorable as it

can be to the costumers. If branding is done right it can increase the value of the company (Kenton, 2020).

Branding started to have a big impact on firms in the 90's. In this century many companies started their business and they had to stand out with their products. The names had to be universal and short so they would be easier to remember. At this time, it became common to have several products under one brand. This way the new product got more attention in the first place (Hertzen, 2006).

While the product and the price are one of the most important tools make a good sale on a product, you can't forget about the focus group and branding. While branding companies must think about their focus group and how they can find them and make them interested in the product. One of the most important things in branding and selling is how is the product been sold. The staff behind the brand needs to be informative, pleasant and they must know everything about the product and the brand behind it. In this time when people can get a lot of information about products from the internet, they can look up everything their self. They can see that there are very similar products and the only thing separating can be the person selling the product, and therefore it is so important to sell the product well (Hertzen, 2006).

After the company has gotten customers, they need to think about how they are going to keep them and make sure they are going to get their next product from the same company as well. This is where starting companies have difficulties, they don't already have customers. This is why they need to think so much about their company's branding (Hertzen, 2006).

3.3 Social media marketing

The term social media consists internets new services and applications, which combines users' own productions and communication to other users. Even though social media has grown very fast, there is still no settled definition to it (Hintikka, 2020; Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). The reason for this might be that it is still new term and still evolving (Sloan ym., 2017). The word social is usually referred to interaction that

happens between people. The media on the other hand means the channels that it is used to share all the information (Hintikka, 2020).

Over half of the world's population uses the internet and by this some of them use social media. It is said that every third person on the planet uses social media services. In the year 2016 88 percent of Finnish population used internet. Almost everyone under 50 years used internet and over 72 percent of the users used the internet daily. The online environment changes very fast and there are new services and channels all the time (Hananen, 2018).

Social media has become the most important marketing tool. It has given the opportunity for the companies to communicate with the costumers directly and personally. Social media gives the companies opportunity to communicate with costumers without spending a lot of money on it (Hananen, 2018).

Social media is known for different things. It's free for users, easy to use and easily absorbable. It offers many different channels that give the user access to videos, music, tools for working and information searching (Hintikka, 2020). Example for these kinds of channels are Instagram, facebook and twitter (Sloan ym., 2017). Some people might even include different kinds of game environments as social media sides.

Social media is such a good way of making business for individuals as well as companies. In either of these cases the people behind the social media need to involve all the time and think ways on how to make their content more appealing for the consumers. For example, bloggers have begun to make content for YouTube.

It is important to understand what kind of different social network platforms there are and how do these different platforms shape possible consumers idea of brands. There are many types of social presences and in this thesis, these have been categorized into six different categories. The categories are social networking, social knowledge, social sharing, social news, social streaming and company user-generated content and community (Chaffey, Hemphill & Edmundson-Bird, 2019).

Social networking is important, and the most important thing is to share engaging content and listening to customers. According to Chaffey, Hemphill and Edmundson-Bird (2019) Facebook is the most important for customers and LinkedIn for business audience. Social knowledge means all those pages where you can find some information. Many people want to see how some product has been reviewed by others and social knowledge platforms such as Quora helps with this (Chaffey ym., 2019).

Social sharing pages on the other hand can help you find and understand best content for you. By social news Chaffey and others mean channels like Twitter. Social streaming pages are the platforms in which people can share pictures and audio and videos (Chaffey ym., 2019).

3.3.1 Instagram as social media marketing tool

Instagram has been launched 2010 and after that it has become one of the most popular platforms on social media. It reached one million users in only two months after the launch (Mottola, 2016).

Patel (2018) claims that Instagram is the most popular application for sharing pictures. It has over 8000 million active users all over the world. People post over 60 million pictures per day. According to Statista (2020) a lot of Instagram users are women between the ages 18 and 24. In addition to this more than half of the Instagram population are 34 or younger.

The point of Instagram is to communicate with other users by following, liking, sending private messages and marking other people to pictures (Moreau, 2020). Many companies have started to share pictures there to get more people attention. Instagram has given companies the change to build up their brand in a new way. Pictures are a good way to get costumers attention if they don't have the time or interest to read about the product or company (Kadziolka, 2015).

The pictures often tell a story about a product, service, staff or company. The point is often to show the reality that goes on behind the commercials and branding. Consumers get to see for example how some product is really done. One of the best sides of Instagram use to a company is that it is easy to share the same pictures to other social media platforms, like for example Twitter or Facebook (Kadziolka, 2015).

Companies that use Instagram often use hashtags. The meaning of these are that they help focus group to find the pictures and web sides. Therefore, it is important to use the right hashtags in pictures (Kadziolka, 2015).

3.3.2 Twitter as a social media marketing tool

Twitter is a Web-based social networking service that started 2006. The driving question in Twitter is what you are doing, or how are you doing. People answer this question via "tweet". Other people who have registered in Twitter will see this tweet and they can answer to it. The meaning of Twitter has been that it would be an easy way to keep in touch with family and friends. Twitter has been said to be effective tool for marketing and communication (Sullivan, 2009).

Muurinen (2014) has listed ways to make your Twitter more interesting and more appealing to followers. Number one on the list is to make your Twitter profile as interesting as possible. Companies need to think carefully what kind of message they want to send to other twitter users. While making a Twitter profile it is important to this about how people are going to find the profile. People often find a profile by the main words or hashtags.

After creating the profile, it is time to think what kind of tweets get people's attention. Muurinen (2014) says that mentioning and tagging people to tweets is a great way of getting their attention. This way the persons or persons are already involved to the tweet. It is also important to direct your tweets to influencers and use pictures in tweets (Muurinen, 2014).

In tweeting like other social media channels, it is important to use hashtags in a smart way. For example, company must think carefully what kind of people they wish to reach, and after this decide the hashtags. In addition to these the timing of tweeting and the number of tweets you send per day is linked to your success in Twitter. The more you tweet, there is higher chance of people seeing the tweets (Muurinen, 2014).

3.3.3 Youtube as a social media marketing tool

Youtube is a video-based platform where users can download their own videos for everybody to see or they can just watch videos that have been made by someone else. Youtube is the most popular streaming platform in the world and it has up to 2 billion logged-in users per month. Anybody can sign into YouTube and download their videos there. Youtube is often used to get fame but to some people it is also a way to express their self (Hootsuite2019).

3.3.4 Snapchat as a social media marketing tool

Snapchat is social media service where you can take pictures or videos and send them to your friends. Users can also put the content to their own wall where people can see it for 24 hours. You can also add some text to the pictures or videos (Laajavaara, 2017). Snapchat was founded in 2011 but in Finland it was used the most in 2014-2015 (Laajavaara, 2017).

3.3.5 Tiktok as a social media marketing tool

Tik Tok is a short video social software. People can download 15-second lasting videos with music in it. Tik Tok is favored by young people due to its unique communication strategies and clear audience positioning. Users can pick their favourite music to the video and they can use all sorts of special effects to make the video more appealing to others (Yang, Zhao & Ma, 2019).

3.3.6 Facebook as a social media marketing tool

Facebook is one of the platforms that is used for social media marketing. It has 900 million users all over the world. You can log into Facebook with your own personal account and through it you can create an account to your company. Company can see how many followers and likings competing companies have and think if they should change their strategies. It is also possible to see how big and successful companies do have made their pages (Harju, 2012).

It is possible to add pictures, videos and links to Facebook. It is an excellent place to promote your company (Harju, 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

In the thesis it is important to find a methodology to use to back the research. There can be two kind of methodologies; qualitative or quantitative. Quantitative bases on the numbers and statistics and qualitative is based on the meaning of things and words especially. In quantitative research numbers and graphics plays a big role concerning the outcome. With these graphics and numbers, it is easier to confirm the consumptions in the quantitative research. Qualitative research is not about the graphics but more expressing the consumptions and findings in words. Qualitative research is based on explaining the thoughts and experiences to back the actual research and the concept in it. While quantitative research focuses on the hypothesis testing, qualitative is more about playing with the ideas and theories and then using them to create a theory. Quantitative way is also playing with the mathematical and statistical theories while they are not important in the qualitative research at all. Difference is also in the questions backing the theory; quantitative research is made with the closed multiple choice questions and the qualitative research can be made with open-ended questions which is lot more open way to open the thoughts basing the research. This can be explained by the example of the methods in data collection in each research. Quantitative data collection method consists of surveys and experiments which consists numbers and statistics while the qualitative research can be based on interviews and discussion groups. If needed to the test or confirm something, quantitative research is better one of the methods. If research is about understanding concept, then the qualitative research is the method to use (Scribrr 2020).

In this thesis the chosen method was the qualitative method and research. The method was chosen mainly because the method can be expressed by words. Statistics and numbers are not important in this thesis. That is why the qualitative research fulfills the methodological expectations by interviews and the by the data inside the words of the people interviewed.

4.1. Pallo-Iirot

In this thesis the focus is on marketing and the brand “Pallo-Iirot”. Pallo-Iirot is local football club from Rauma. It is very traditional organization and its roots grow into the early 1900`s. It has not been always under the name “Pallo-Iirot” but the principals and traditions have always been the same. Roots grow the time there was only one football club in the town under name “Rauman Pallo”. The organization took the name Pallo-Iirot in the 1980`s and started the journey which still keeps going on. Even though the clubs figure head name has been changing during the year`s multiple times, the organization has been always under the same name; Pallo-Iirot ry (Pallo-Iirot, 2020).

The organization has had a determined goal to be a top 10 club in Finland concerning the growth of the youth. Although the goal aims for growing the club to be well-known educator of young footballers, the action model of the club is “from baby to elderly” which means to provide a great deal of activities to all kind of age groups. Organization goals are also divided to smaller objects which means that while targeting to become the top 10 club as an educator, they need to be also top 10 as coaching and player development. Also, financially the organization has a target to become stable and grow the number of registered players in the club as reaching the goal first mentioned (Pallo-Iirot 2020).

4.2 Interviews

Interviews were made by me and the questions were introduced for journalist who has a great knowledge about Pallo-Iirot itself and about the local football (Janne Rantanen, Länsi-Suomi). Another person who was interviewed was a female player for the Pallo-Iirot ladies first team (Laura Ketola, Pallo-Iirot). There were four center questions

about the status of female football, about the social media marketing options and the organization branding.

Status of the female football is still lot lower than men`s and it was quite clear answer on behalf of both interviews. There are not that many people in he matches as attendance which keeps women football status still lower. Sponsors are also difficult to find according to Ketola which makes the marketing lot more difficult. Also the financial side was brought up by Ketola because they do not make any money from football but the men playing on the same division might make.

Other questions were about the social media marketing and about the platforms where the marketing would be wisest. Many platforms were brought up and it was clear that there is different kind of marketing for each platform. Twitter is obviously more formal platform which keeps the information flow also formal. There is option to gather interest of other organizations and audience itself according to Rantanen. Ketola says that for the young people to get more interest about women football, Instagram might be the most attractive option now because of its high use.

About the brand of Pallo-Iirot there is quite clear answers from both persons answering the questions. Brand has been quite low but now the organizations has made right kind of plays how to make it better. According to Rantanen, brand itself has been brought up all over Finland because of the fine work educating young people concerning football. Iirot is well known nowadays because the youth development has been brought to high level which makes the young teams to play in high divisions in Finland with all other good development clubs, for example HJK, Ilves etc. Ketola also mentions that Iirot has made good decisions inside the club, for example Iirolandia which has been positive for the brand in Rauma itself.

This part of the thesis is made by interviews which are reliable because of the chosen interviewee and their knowledge about the subject. The interviews are made by using theme interviews. Interviews are valid and made by email questionnaire.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN

This thesis is about a marketing plan for a football club and organization Pallo-Iirot. Marketing plan focuses especially on the social media marketing. It is also focusing on the female side of the club. The thesis will content a scheduled plan for the different aged ladies' teams inside the organization when to market what, where and how. The scheduled plan is annual and will have suggestions and ideas during the year and can be modified for any other sports organization. The thesis will also content information about the different social media platforms and instructions how to use them as effective as possible.

The subject of the thesis has been agreed with the representatives of the club. The marketing plan itself will focus on the year 2020 but it can be modified to later use also because of the current situation (Covid-19 pandemic).

The meaning of the thesis is to help the organization concerning the marketing itself and especially in the field of social media. The organization has been improving their marketing by huge steps during last few years and has been using different platforms in social media as well. They made a request that the thesis would focus on the female side because it has not been as thorough as the male side of the club, for example the men`s senior team. The focus and the meaning are to make a marketing plan and at the same time flourish the state of female football in the organization and overall, in Finland as well.

5.1 Social media marketing plan for Pallo-Iirot

The actual social media marketing plan for Pallo-Iirot is found as an attachment which they are going to adjust to organizations women`s teams and possibly add to their overall marketing plan. As the picture above tells, the marketing plan itself is in Finnish as agreed with the organization itself. The marketing plan is explained step by step

divided to monthly “tasks” which are going to be explained below. The plan has suggestions and guidance about what to market in which social media platform below the actual schedule. The schedule is more about what to market and the platforms can be decided by the organization itself inside the suggestion frames.

The schedule for the organization consists of suggestions concerning how to market their services and events in an interesting and topical way. Every event must find its marketplace at the right time to reach as big an audience as possible. With the right kind of social media platform and moment, the events will catch the audience they want. As an example, *Pallo-Iirot* provides an opportunity for younger people to start or try football during the summer in “*Nappulaliiga*”. It needs to be presented and marketed during spring to make sure parents and grandparents have time to discuss and sign up before summer.

The schedule begins naturally from January which is a great time to gain interest among people by keeping the possible posts as positive and attractive as possible. It can contain an overview of the *Länsi-Suomi -Tournament* and *Iiro-Cup* which will wake up the interest of the youth by posting the standings and results of the tournaments. January is also a great time to begin the marketing of the season tickets concerning the first teams. While the marketing focuses on the men’s senior team, it is crucial for the organization to take notice of the ladies’ team as well. The season ticket for the women’s games could be marketed as a side product which could increase the interest in women’s football and the income of the organization itself.

February is also about making the organization known among the citizens. A great way to do that is to organize school visits. The team itself is almost every time gathered during the winter, so it is easy to find players to visit the schools before summer. On the side of the actual visits, social media plays a big role in getting known. Instagram is a great platform to provide pictures and videos of the first team players which will gather the interest of young girls. This will make them consider beginning football in the summer with friends. Instagram is especially a big opportunity here because it is very popular among the youth and it is getting more known and used meanwhile. It is important for young people to have role models and this is a great way of making them.

March could also be time to continue the school visits because of the same reasons as explained above. Marketing of the “Nappulaliiga” could also start during March to make sure there is enough time to sign up and wake up the interest. While marketing the services of the youngsters, it is great time to market the season tickets and begin for example a campaign for the whole family. This may increase the number of players in the organization.

April is mostly about continuing the hype about the “Nappulaliiga”. It is crucial to the marketing the event and increasing the amount of people attending to it. The hype could be done by posting the possible teams and information about the coaches. It is important to gather the teams early enough to make sure that coaches have time to organize the training and events for the team. Also, the marketing for the “Nappulaliiga” needs that the teams are ready early enough to post the team rosters to the social media. With the social media posts, organization encourages the youth to follow their teams and most importantly their friends.

May is important time because the “Nappulaliiga” marketing is going and this time of the year is important for it. May is also good time to begin the marketing of the spring tournament, “Puulaaki” and the football school for young players. The spring tournament is important to begin at least in May, but it could also have begun already in April. “Puulaaki” is a summer long tournament for older people who can adjust their own team for the season. It can be marketed in several social media channels but also in the newspaper because the age variation is quite wide. Football school also applies the same rules than spring tournament; it could be marketed already in April if the organization sees it necessary. Football school is set to last for a week in the summer-time and it must have time for the families to enroll their children in. That is why it can be marketed also in the newspapers to find also the target group of elderly people.

June, July and August are the busiest months as they almost all the events mentioned earlier. These are important months because the “Nappulaliiga” is going on and families need to stay on track of the events. While it goes on, it is nice for the young players to know what is happening and how the games are going so the marketing might consist some standings and greetings from the ongoing season. At the end of the July there could be a summing up of the past season. It could be more interesting than the past

years because even though everyone can play in the season, children love to hear who won etc. because they are competitive. That might be right kind of motivation to enroll again next year. In August there could be advertising of the next year. Even though it is only August, families need to know early enough that the children are interested or not.

In September there are the rewards of the past season and standings of it. There are always have been a match between a youth team against substitutes of the men`s team in some home match. It could be good advertising to have also a lady`s team to play against women`s substitutes in some of their home matches. It could also be a “Nappuliiga” -team because normally there has been also a team where young girls can play. In September there could be also a visit to school with a women player to tell about the football as a hobby.

In October there is the “ending event” of the season. It is crucial to market the event itself and after the event the successful performances of the season. The performances can be gathered to the social media with pictures and videos because they interest the audience.

November and December are about advertising the becoming season and the special events. Skill contest and the “Iirolandia” are main events to advertise. Skill contest can be advertised within the teams and the “Iirolandia” within all the social media platforms and newspaper because of its importance and popularity. In December there could also be marketing with the Christmas theme. This kind of advertising is seen to be quite popular and effective.

5.2 Suggestions and observations

The advertising is crucial in customer acquisition and it must be interesting. In different organizations there is lot of theme marketing; for example, Easter, Halloween and Christmas are good holidays to use them in the marketing.

In player acquisition there could be used for example interviews of the known players in the organization to tell younger beginners what the football itself has brought them and for example “Nappulaliiga” especially because it is normally the first event young boys and girls begin their hobby. Videos are great way to publish these interviews in social media because they get the attention of the young customer group.

Social media marketing might consist more videos and pictures with a larger margin. By that meaning that the videos and pictures in the social media might be also more humoristic because it is great way to gather more followers and by that more customers.

During the season it is important to keep the momentum in the marketing area as well so it needs to consist something interesting for the followers. During the season, organization both men`s and women`s team could publish line-ups with interesting photos before the games and pictures of the chosen best performance -player after the games. Videos and pictures of the games are for all of the youth teams as well because they are very effective and interesting way to market the team and its performances. Ladies football has to be put up and the marketing could consist mentioning of the Finnish A-team called “Helmarit”. By marketing the events of the best finnish women football players, the audience grows up and the stage of the women football gets better. It is also important in the social media to follow other accounts and in this case Finnish women football teams. By this, you get more followers for the Pallo-Iirot ladies` team and the interest of the ladies` football grows as well. The other accounts can be mentioned also while advertised the games for example in Twitter and Instagram, so the other teams have also a possibility to “spread the word” by posting themselves.

One very important observation is the collaboration between the “Nappuliiga” and the age group teams. While the young players begin their journey in “Nappulaliiga”, it has to advertised more to the families that the age groups are good way to continue the hobby. By doing the advertising in social media as mentioned in the marketing plan, young people will see the fun also in it. While the other hobbies and organizations are doing it also, Pallo-Iirot could also take an advantage in the field by keeping the young players from the “Nappuliiga” inside the same sport and organization.

Social media is important during the whole year, so it is crucial to keep the attention of the followers high. This could be done exactly with the videos and greetings from the players continually during the year. Videos and pictures can be very simple way to maintain the interest among the followers. Especially social media platforms which contain videos of the games are probably going to be very popular.

5.3 Meters and indicators

To measure success in the area of social media, there must be guidelines in different platforms. The social media platforms are bit different, so the monitoring is difficult with one meter.

In Instagram it is obvious that the meters to follow the success are follows and likes in the posts. Follows for the actual account and likes for the posts of the account.

In Twitter there are also followers to the accounts which is important meter for it. By posting in Twitter, it is easy to measure success by likes and retweets. Twitter is the most proper channel to discuss about things so optional measurement might be also the answers to the tweets of the account. More the answers, more the views of the tweet.

By posting in Youtube, it is obvious that the content consists of videos. The measuring happens by following the likes and shares.

Facebook has friend -feature so the other account members can be friends with each other. This is one measurement of the platform. The posts and the likes/reactions within can be measurements to gather the information of success.

Snapchat and Tiktok are only video/photo platforms where the measuring happens by views and followers. Main target is to get followers and only after that the views are important.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The thesis is about making an effective social media marketing plan for Pallo-Iirot. Football club already has a social media accounts, but this social media marketing plan is about making their women side also flourish. To make their ladies` side as attracting as for example the men`s first team, the social media marketing must be interesting. To make the social media marketing interesting, different platforms must be used in multiple way. To answer to the first research question, Twitter must be the official and rational channel where the tone of the tweets must be reasonable. Twitter is the channel to gather respect of the other similar accounts and organizations. Video and picture-based platforms; such as Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat, are for gathering audience and followers. By doing that, the content of the posts must be interesting. Interesting does not mean especially humoristic but as one of my recommendation the content might be humoristic once a while. When the account has followers and the content is interesting, the spreading of the popularity happens itself.

Stage of the women`s football at the club was the second research question and the stage of it is lower than men`s but it can be improved with the social media marketing itself. When the marketing of the product is good enough, it will improve the product as itself.

Branding was the third issue researched and obviously social media marketing of the ladies` football has also a big aspect to the branding. When branding of the product is well known, the audience in the social media will be bigger easily. For example, HJK is big football organization in Finland and it is a huge brand in the area. When the brand is good and respected, they have follower`s despite of the platform in the social media; followers in Twitter, friends in Facebook etc.

7. CONCLUSION

This thesis consists a social media marketing plan for football club called Pallo-Iirot. Social media marketing plan is in the thesis and will be given to the organization also separately. The aim of the social media marketing plan is to find solutions for the organization how to be more effective in the area of social media marketing and especially how to market their women side of the club. The guidance and suggestions are given with meters to follow the success in the project. With the meters the organization can follow the interest and success in different social media platforms. The meters will give guidance what social media platform works best for them.

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