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B2B Marketing Plan for Punnu Games

Business Economics
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ABSTRACT

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The presented thesis examined the marketing environment of Punnu games – a small mobile game company based in Turku in the pursuit to fulfill the aim of the research – create a practical B2B marketing plan with the consideration of the industry standards and specificities.

The theoretical part of the thesis is presented by basic marketing theory with the emphasis on B2B marketing and marketing planning. Additionally, marketing environment is discussed in a dedicated chapter. The case-specific chapter provides the theory in regards of the case company's offerings. Empirical part of the study uses qualitative research method in the form of the individual interviews. The interviews conducted with the similar-sized domestic companies that provide similar to the case company offerings revealed meaningful insights on the gaming industry in Southern Finland.

The research process revealed the ineffectiveness of traditional B2B marketing tools in the selected industry for small- and medium-sized companies. It has also revealed that performing marketing in the industry requires not only marketing knowledge, but also knowledge of the technical side of the activities. The need in educating clients about both sides as well were also considered as a necessity for closing B2B deals.

Based on the collected knowledge, the B2B marketing plan was drawn and presented to the case company.

Keywords Marketing, marketing plan, marketing planning, gaming industry, gamification

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1 INTRODUCTION

One of the key processes that determines the success of the company is strategic marketing planning. A fully realized marketing strategy can provide the company with a competitive advantage and give a clear view of the company's opportunities. A successful marketing strategy is a product of a comprehensive in-depth analysis of the company and the market environment that the company operates in.

The prime focus of this thesis is building a B2B marketing plan – a detailed step-by-step guide to the implementation of the marketing strategy. Creating a marketing plan is not an easy process as it cannot be based on the one-size-fits-all approach. This statement is especially relevant when talking about the gaming industry in Finland as business practises may not fit with the traditional understanding of marketing.

This research proposes a marketing plan that would provide B2B solutions for a small company from Turku operating in the gaming industry – Punnu Games. The practises suggested for the company are tailored for a young small domestic start-up.

1.1 Company Profile

Punnu Games is an indie mobile game company created by business partners Eeva Vuorinen, CEO, and Susanna Ilmonen, CTO in Turku in February 2019. It specializes in creating value-based mobile games that combine educational elements with entertainment. The focus values of the company are sustainability and equality as it reflects the personal values of the founders themselves. Although the main concept of the company is educational mobile games for younger generations, Punnu Games is adapting to the demands of the industry and developing B2B projects that provide gamification services for companies as well as AR-experiences. In the future, the company is also looking into transitioning towards PC games.

The team for the moment consists of two company founders as well as seven devoted interns: 2D and 3D artists, visual artists, and programmers. There is a constant flow of staff as the company aims to

become a steppingstone for young talented specialists in the industry, providing aid for their professional growth.

1.1.1 Community

The company was established in Turku in one of the gaming centers of Finland called the Turku Game Hub, also referred to as the Hive. Turku Game Hub is a shared space for game studios in all stages of development: from startups to established companies. Apart from physical space, The Hive offers numerous workshops and learning experiences in collaboration with visiting experts and industry veterans for the members of the community. Being a part of the Hub allows companies and game enthusiasts to build a strong network within the industry. Every team residing in the Hive offers mutual support for each other in pursuit of success.

1.1.2 Projects

Punnu Games creates both individual games and customer projects. Due to the non-disclosure agreements, Punnu Games representatives were not able to provide information on new upcoming projects.

The current focus of the company is a location-based AR game called Fantastic Energy. The player's objective is developing a home base where all the achievements in energy consumption are recorded. The game currency used for the development is Fantastic Energy and it is equal to the saved energy. To earn the Fantastic Energy, one must make green choices or participate in an AR battle with Energy Monsters. The AR experiences are mapped in certain locations in the city and the strength of the Monster directly correlates with the energy efficiency of the building it is linked to. The game aims to educate players on energy efficiency along with reducing one's carbon footprint. It offers the possibility for companies and cities to reach out to new target groups and activate them to take a path of responsible, sustainable choices.

Punnu Games is also currently working on the AR entertainment experience development for a private client.

1.2 B2B

Independent game creation is a time-consuming process, therefore the B2B side is an important part of Punnu Games operations – the customer’s projects generate the main income. The customer projects can include creating an AR experience for a physical location, adding gamified features for a website, as well as creating gamification concepts for internal use for businesses. Punnu Games team has acquired extensive knowledge in those areas, and they are looking for ways to educate businesses on the opportunities that the features provide.

Punnu Games is successfully marketing their B2C projects, however the B2B side requires a different approach. Now the company does not have an established marketing strategy for their B2B side, so in the search for new customers they turn to “cold calling”. The natural next step in the development of the B2B side is exploring the marketing opportunities and discovering superior ways of attaining customers.

1.3 Aim of the Thesis and Research Questions

As mentioned above, Punnu Games is looking for exploring the B2B marketing opportunities, therefore the thesis aims to create a functional B2B marketing plan for the case company based on the company analysis implemented through the application of marketing theory to the case, and findings derived from the interviews with the industry specialists to aid their mission.

The marketing plan will feature marketing tools that are the most suitable to the case company’s size, environment, and objectives. The research will also explore the benefits of gamification and AR for businesses of varying natures.

To meet the main objectives the following are chosen as the research questions:

- How are B2B operations and B2B marketing approached by local companies in the gaming industry?
- What environmental influences can the company benefit from?
- What marketing tools are the most beneficial for Punnu Games to acquire B2B clients?
- How can businesses of various natures be educated on the benefits of gamification?

2 MARKETING

2.1 Marketing

For a young company such as Punnu Games marketing is a beneficiary practice that assists successful development. Marketing covers multiple aspects of attaining customers, it is important to perceive it as a revenue-generating asset. It helps companies understand the demands of the market and successfully fill in the gaps with their products and services.

The modern definition of marketing is a managerial and social process of customer engagement, the objective of which is building a value-laden profitable relationship. (Kotler, Armstrong 2017, 29) It also can be described as a process of adding value to the product or service by transferring them to the place of demand. (Sherlekar, Nirmala Prasad, Salvadore Victor, 2009, 2)



Figure 1. The Marketing Process: Creating and Capturing Customer Value by Kotler and Armstrong.

Value is an objective of both parties in the process of the exchange, it is the core driving force of the process. (Drummond, Ensor, 2005, 2) The value created by the company based on customer's needs is exchanged for the value captured from consumers in the form of profits, equity, and sales. (Kotler, Armstrong 2017, 29) The value for the customer derived from the product or service offering is determined by the customer's benefits for the price paid. (Palmer, 2004, 16)

There are various different definitions of marketing, however the majority of them agrees on the primal role of the customer in the exchange process. (Palmer, 2004, 3) Marketing is often viewed by the general public in a negative light as it is perceived as a practice of pushing customers into buying things, they do not need in an attempt to increase profits. However, in fact the main priority of the marketers is customer's satisfaction. An average consumer would not return to the company that

cannot provide the desired products and services at an acceptable price and it is marketer's responsibility to tailor to those requirements. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 5)

A company that adopts a marketing approach to its business operations recognizes the importance of long-term relationship building and focuses on customers orientation, setting the goal of achieving their satisfaction in a superior to competitors' way. That approach requires a deep analysis of the customer's desires and needs as well as the integration of marketing practices revolving around the customer. (Kotler, Armstrong, 2017, 36; Jobber, 2001, 3)

Christian Grönroos (2015, 291) uses a three-stage model to demonstrate how customer relationship lifecycle develops during the long-term marketing process.

Stage	Objective of Marketing	Marketing Function
Initial stage	To create interest in the firm and its services	The traditional marketing function
Purchasing Process	To turn general interest into sales* (first purchase)	The traditional and the interactive marketing function
Consumption (usage) process	To create resales, cross-sales, and enduring customer relations **	The interactive marketing function

*Making promises
**Fullfilling promises

Table 1. The three-stage model. Grönroos, C., *Strategic Management and Marketing in the Service Sector*. Cambridge, MA: Marketing Science Institute, 1983.

The first stage holds the objective of creating awareness about the company and create interest in company's offerings. The objective is best achieved with traditional marketing function in a form of advertising, sales promotions and creating a positive word of mouth. For B2B markets it is also beneficial to utilize sales at this stage. Second stage aims to turn the interest into sales, that includes the

promise of commitment from the company and acceptance of one from the customer. At this stage interactive marketing activities in addition to the traditional ones brings great benefits. In the duration of the third stage the trust should be established, and the enduring relationship achieved. At this stage, the role of traditional marketing function decreases as it loses the power of influencing customer preferences, when interactive marketing process is determining the success. He also states that marketing is a continuous process, in which customer relationships have to be maintained through all the three stages.

2.1.1 Marketing Mix

Marketing mix is the central concept in marketing management that can be used to develop both short- and long-term strategies. It is a framework that features marketer's principal decisions in a pursuit of configuring offerings that match customer's needs. Marketing mix can be viewed as a blend of ingredients that marketers use to achieve their objectives. (Palmer, 2004, 19)

Traditional marketing mix consists of 4 elements, or 4Ps: product, place, price and promotion. Product stands for the company's offerings, whether it is physical product or service, that aims to satisfy customer's needs. Product decisions include quality, packaging, styling, branding, designing special features and variety. The range of the products is highly influenced by the marketing environment and therefore needs to be adaptable to changes. Pricing stands for determining the revenue generated from the offering. Setting too high of a price may prevent the company from achieving the sales targets, when too low of a price may not generate enough profit. Pricing decisions are influenced by the production costs, customer expectations, and competition prices. Based on those factors marketers tailor the price to individual products. (Kotler, Armstrong, 2011, 50; Palmer, 2004, 20) Place refers to activities of transferring the product to the customer. The decisions include the choice of distribution channels as well as logistics. Those decisions determine the availability of the product for the customer at certain quantities, time and place. Finally, promotion stands for raising awareness of the product and communicating its benefits among the target audience. Online marketing, sales promotions, sponsorships, public relations and direct marketing are important promotional tools used to achieve the objective. Promotional decisions include the choice of communication channels, the message conveyed, budget of the campaign as well as evaluation of investment. (Palmer, 2004, 21; Jobber, 2001, 15) The table below demonstrates the marketing tools that belong to each of the Ps.

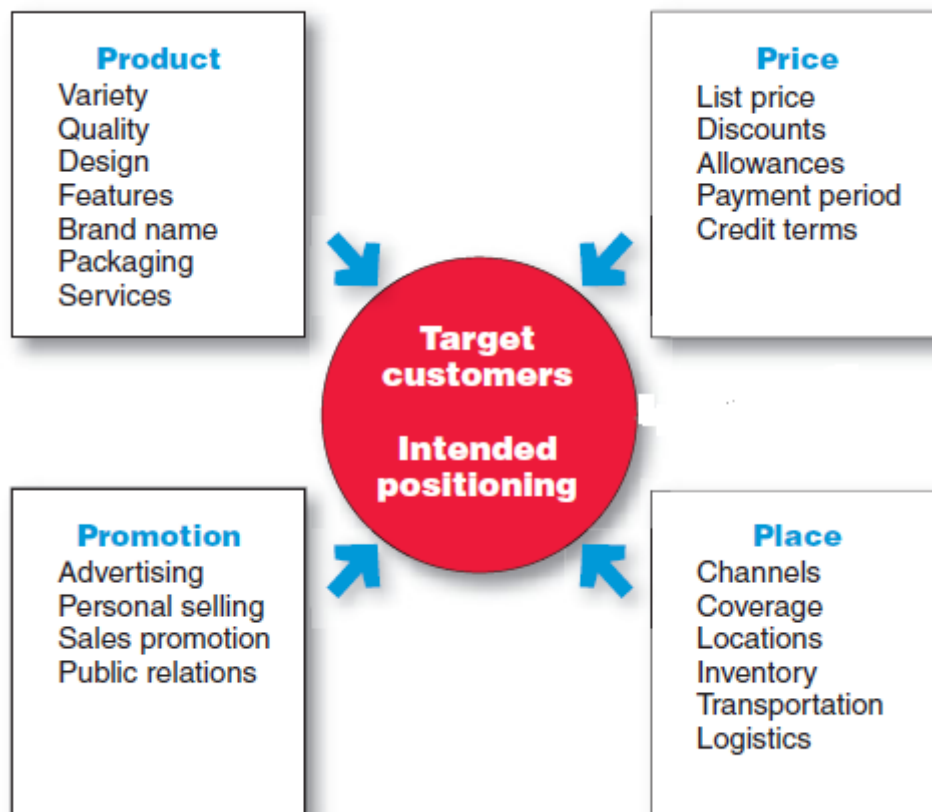


Figure 2. The four Ps of the marketing mix. Kotler. Armstrong. 2011.

Traditional marketing mix is a general marketing model but while being effective for some companies has been criticized by marketing researchers who found it restrictive and oversimplified when taking in account numerous marketing variables especially in the service marketing. The extended version of the approach was introduced by E. Jerome McCarthy in 1960 that consists of three additional Ps: people, processes, and physical evidence. (Grönroos, 2015, 279; Jobber, 2001, 19; Hanlon, 2021) People decisions refer to determining the level and quality of interaction of staff with the customer by setting the key employee's competences and skills. The company should ensure that its employees are able to portray company's image and values as well as provide quality experience for the customer. Processes decisions refer to the ways product or service is delivered to a customer. Marketing

managers in collaboration with process managers should aim to create a customer handling process that is not only effective, but also cost-efficient. Physical evidence stands for the visuals a customer receives during the interaction with the company. That can be referred to such aspects as employee's appearance, environment in which the service is provided, packaging, and design that are able to provide evidence of service's nature and quality. (Palmer, 2004, 21-22; Queensland Government, 2016)

An efficient marketing mix can be determined by conformity to four characteristics. First is the match to customer needs, as sensible marketing mix decisions are only made if the customer is well-understood. Psychological and economic are the evaluation criteria of the products that customers consider, analysis of which will reveal their key requirements that when met or exceeded create the competitive advantage. Creating the competitive advantage in the market is the second characteristic of efficient marketing mix. Through utilizing the 4Ps (7Ps) a company should be able to differentiate in a beneficial way from the competitors. The next characteristic is being well-blend. Marketing mix across all components should create consistent theme that reflects strategic position of the company. Lastly, it should match company's resources. Marketing mix decisions should be made in regards of company's finances as well as its internal competence. (Jobber, 2001, 15-19)

2.2 B2B Marketing

The main goal of the thesis is building a B2B marketing plan, therefore for the purpose of the study it is important to identify what business markets are and how do they differ from B2C.

2.2.1 Business Markets and Products

Business markets are local and international markets for products and services purchased by commercial enterprises, institutions, and government bodies for further resell, incorporation or utilization. B2B exceeds the B2C market in dollar value, making it the biggest existing market. Entering business market, a company should possess an ability of sensing the market as well as close customer relationship management or "customer-linking capability". (Hutt, Speh, 2010, 4-8) B2B marketing is based on the general principals of consumer marketing however the marketing techniques are prosecuted in a unique way due to the defining differences in demand, products, buying units and their decision process. (Marketing Schools, 2020, Claessens, 2015)

B2B demand is derived from consumer goods demand, therefore its increase or decrease creates a chain reaction that endorses changes in business market. (Sarin, 2010, 38) B2B demand is also prone to higher level of fluctuation due to the bullwhip effect. Bullwhip effect is essentially exaggeration of demand up the supply chain due to the deviation of orders that are often higher than the final product sales. (CIPS) Another characteristic of demand in B2B market is its inelasticity. Most of the products in B2B market are purchased based on the productional needs of the client company, therefore short-term and often even long-term price changes have little impact on demand. (Claessens, 2015)

The scope of B2B products is very broad, however this variety can be classified into three major categories: material and parts, capital items and supplies and services. The first category stands for raw materials, parts for the equipment as well as manufacturing materials. Capital items are used in the end product manufacturing, those are tangible and intangible items with higher costs and higher life expectancy as well as items with lower purchase value, for example computers and printers for the office. Maintenance and operational supplies would belong to the third category. (Sarin, 2010, 30-31)

2.2.2 Buyers Behavior and Decision-making Process

In B2B customer categorization institutions stand for non-profit organizations, such as hospitals, charities, social welfare organizations, student unions among others. This category of B2B customers generally has constant demand for supplies and services. However, those organizations also value their resources and the opportunity of keeping the costs low as those factors may determine how many people are able to receive their services. (Tanner, Raymond, 2010)

Government agencies of multiple levels generate a great volume of purchases from various categories of goods and services. Government procurement is a longer process often accompanied by a vast amount of additional paperwork as the purchasing process is highly influenced by the outside parties' approval and contractually should be based on the law and governmental purchasing regulations. Government contracts are usually signed with the companies that sent their proposals in the response

to the agency open call. Companies of all sizes are able to receive a contract, it is also common for the government to support small or minority-owned businesses. (Hutt, Speh, 2010, 40)

Based on the objective of the purchase, B2B commercial enterprises can be divided to dealers and distributors, Original Equipment Manufacturers, and users. The first group aims to purchase goods in the final form to further resale in distribution points such as stores to the end consumer. Manufacturers are purchasing goods that can be incorporated in products that are sold by the company. (Hutt, Speh, 2010, 21) For example, BMW, a German car manufacturer famous for its engineering solutions becomes an OEM purchasing parts from numerous different companies: Bridgestone is a tires supplier, Harmon and Kardon for audio systems, Dräxlmaier Group for interior panels, among others. (BMW Group) The third group aims to purchase goods that become a part of manufacturing process. (Hutt, Speh, 2010, 21) For instance, Finnish company Wärtsilä that provides marine and energy solutions uses the ERP system purchased from SAP for internal processes control, that while not being incorporated in company's final product becomes a supporting service for production process. (SAP)

For most companies in B2B sector the customer base is narrow. Limited number of customers enhances company's ability to identify individual customer needs and take more personalized approach towards them. In B2B market the sustainable relationship building is valued higher than the opportunities of a one-time sale. (Sarin, 2010, 38)

In B2B marketers are challenged with the decision of to what extent is going to be put into relationship-building program. The theory states that the process brings benefits for both parties of the process. A productive method of relationship building is providing customer services in variety of forms: before- and after-sales services and staff training, expertise consulting, expended credit facilities, advanced service provision, and reduction of risks through contracts, guarantees, try-out possibilities and follow-ups. (Jobber, 2001, 111) Maintaining customers' needs above the immediate transactions is a way to build a strong, loyal customer base. Satisfied customers essentially mean satisfied stakeholders. (Wood, 2010, 6)

Across the majority of B2B customers four specific characteristics can be defined. Firstly, regardless of the company size, companies are obliged to follow a laid-down procedure from both the buyers and sellers. Secondly, B2B buying process requires multi-person involvement. The buying arrange-

ment is controlled by a group in which each participant is assigned a specific role that is called decision making unit. Thirdly, Due to the previous characteristics, there is a delay between the marketing effort implementation and the results. Multi-personal involvement, specificity of the process in a larger than B2C scale eliminates the possibility of impulsive purchase. Additionally, despite the complexity of decision-making units' structure, the decisions are eventually made by human beings, which makes the buying decisions not just rational, but also emotional. (Sarin, 2010, 40)

2.3 Marketing Planning

The process of creating a correlated set of marketing decisions and activities for an organization over a determined period is called marketing planning. All the choices regarding marketing in the process are based on company's marketing objectives, analysis of marketing environment, internal company's capabilities, and marketing actions control. Documented action course resulted from the marketing planning is called a marketing plan. The figure below represents the seven-step approach to marketing planning. (Wood, 2010, 2)

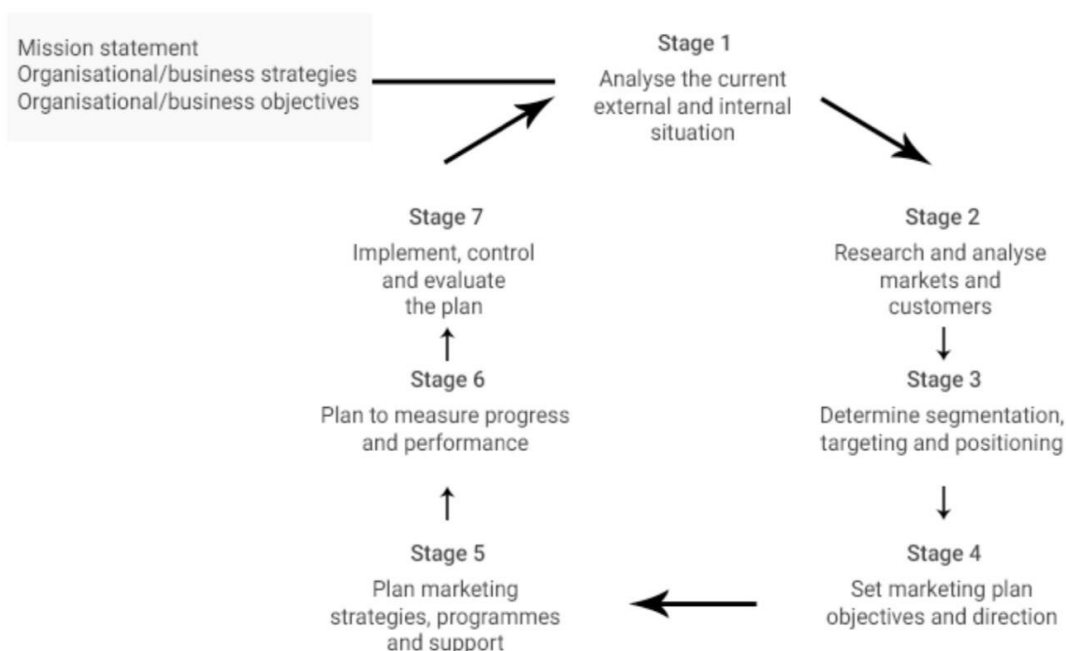


Figure 3. The Marketing Planning Process. Wood. 2010.

Establishing company's goals and objectives is a significant part of marketing planning process. It is advised to concentrate on one objective; however, it is possible to have more as long as there is no conflict between them. Objective stands for what is one attempting to achieve in the end of the process, where the company needs to be. (Cohen, 2006, 26)

Analysis of the current situation can also be referred to internal and external audit. Essentially, it is a review of company's present objectives, performance, strategy for the purpose of distinguishing company's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Internal audit is used to evaluate the present internal state of the company: mission, resources, capabilities and offerings. A marketer uses external audit to analyse trends of the surrounding the company environment. Once performed, managers have a clearer vision of what changes should be made to meet the firm's objectives. Following the marketing audit, goes the analysis of customers and markets. That step reveals customer's demands, purchasing power, buying patterns and market trends. (Wood, 2010, 5-6; Blythe, Martin, 2016, 247) The next chapter of the thesis opens up the concept of marketing environment analysis in greater details.

Step three covers market segmentation and brand positioning. The company is not able to tailor its offerings for every single client; however, it can increase the efficiency of marketing towards certain subgroups – segments. Customers are segmented based on the characteristics that essentially affect the demand for a company offering. After the segmentation process, targeting approach is chosen. Company has a freedom to decide which segments will become the target for its marketing efforts. While some companies may choose a singular customer segment, some companies are able to tailor their marketing for one entire market. (Wood, 2010, 8)

Brand positioning stands for the strategy of building a strong brand and differentiating the company from the competition through positioning company's brand in customer's minds in an attempt to make it more favorable and reputable. The company should choose a brand positioning strategy based on its objectives. (Patel)

Branding is playing a big role in any industry. In "Kellogg on Branding" (Tybout, A. M. Calkins, T. 2019) brand is defined as a set of perceptions and associations identified with company's or product's name, logo, or symbol. All types of companies, including B2B can benefit from branding, however

only brands that create strong storyline or add significant value to the product are meaningful and best resonate with the customer. Building trust and maintaining reputation over time is a way to secure future earnings and customer attention. (Kapferer, 2012, 1-3)

Marketing plan is based on company's mission statement and high-level objectives and serves as a support to company's growth towards the desired direction. However, in some cases companies choose the objective to preserve the current profit and preserve the spot in the market over the driving for growth.

On stage five company is planning marketing strategy and tactics for achievement of the objectives. On this stage decisions regarding branding, ways of delivering value and marketing mix are made. (Wood, 2010, 11)

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Another focal point at this stage is developing marketing communications and promotion strategy to reach the target groups and establish a two-way communication. Traditional marketing tools include PR, sales promotions, direct marketing, specialized events. In the modern business environment, traditional tools however have lost the influence as they proved to be costly and less effective than social media marketing. Those decisions however directly depend on the target audience, the company is

not restricted on the marketing tools usage 'it can be beneficial to create multiple marketing messages across multiple platforms.

Second to last comes the decision on measurement used to track the performance and progress on the way to achieve the marketing objectives. That requires development of budgets, deadlines, forecasts and distribution of responsibilities plan. The last step is implementation, evaluation and control. The company by the step six has a measurement system and is able to compare results to the objectives. After the implementation, the company is able to utilize the marketing plan information for tracking the discrepancies. (Wood, 2010, 12; Cohen, 2006, 7)

David Jobber in "Principles and Practice of Marketing" (2001, 48) identifies multiple benefits of marketing planning. Firstly, marketing plan allows a better action coordination and consistency over time and with multiple people in charge as it gives a clear common objectives and tactics, that also impacts employee's motivation. Secondly, managers in charge of the process are also situationally forced to look at a bigger picture and monitor the change of business outside their day-to-day action tasks. Furthermore, a more profound analysis of the company and its capabilities can give a new view on company's strengths and efficiency or resource allocation that consequently provide the company with the competitive advantage. Additionally, marketing planning promotes the necessity of adaptability. In business environment changes are quick and inevitable, and marketing planning encourages the increase of adaptive capabilities.

3 MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

Recognising the significance of the relationship between the company and the marketing environment is an important step to successful marketing planning. Marketing environment stands for a variety of threats and opportunities for organisation, that can be generally divided into two equally important areas: external and internal. The company must prioritize recognizing those threats and opportunities and respond to them accordingly, adapting either reactive (environmental factors are considered uncontrollable) or proactive approach (the factors are regarded as controllable or influenceable to some extent). (Palmer, 2004, 66; Blythe, Martin, 2016, 24)

3.1 Situational Analysis SWOT

To evaluate the current state of matters and make sensible marketing strategy decisions it is beneficial to analyze the internal state of the company as well as external environment that company operates in. Generally, for that purpose managers conduct SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is a tool used to evaluate strengths and weaknesses that are specific to the company, as well as threats and opportunities that emanate from the external environment. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 24; Corporate Finance Institute)

External factors can be influenced for example by the market situation, suppliers, customers, competitors, government. Opportunities are the possible positive outcomes of the influence: for example, a new opening in the market or new beneficial technology. When looking into opportunities, the main question a manager should consider is: “What environmental aspects can the company exploit to its benefits?”. Threats on the other hand are the negative influences coming from the external environment. To identify threats, the question: “What environmental aspects can damage company’s interests?” should be considered. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 25, Corporate Finance Institute)

Strengths and weaknesses belong to internal category and represent the characteristics of the company that gives it competitive advantage, and the obstacles that prevent the company from improving its performance, for example company image and culture, company brand, organizational structure, finance, efficiency, or market share. Simplified, strengths represent things that company does best, when weaknesses represent the opposite. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 25, Corporate Finance Institute)

In order to the analysis to be considered as a significant input in marketing planning process, a vast amount of information must be processed and summarized in a meaningful way through the evaluation process. SWOT analysis done in this way gives the opportunity to create alternative strategies as it aids to distinguish and minimize potential hazards and possibilities of failure, as well as raise awareness of the aspects that makes company superior to the competitors. (Palmer, 2004, 67; MindTools)

3.2 Micro-Environment

Micro-environment is represented by the assembly of individuals and companies that have power to directly or indirectly impact the company and its activities. (Palmer, 2004, 41) Those can be assorted into five major key groups: competitors, customers, suppliers, intermediaries and general public. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 25)

- Competitors

Regarding competitors, the company should recognise not only direct competitors who have similar to the company offerings, but also indirect ones who offer different ways to satisfy similar customer needs as the company attempting. The company needs to take in the account the way they are selling as well as their sales prices and analyse how do these factors affect the company and the activities that needs to be adjusted to get ahead of the competition. (Palmer, 2004, 43; Oxford College of Marketing)

- Customers

Commercial organizations existence depends on its customers. A company should understand the possibility of fluctuation of their demand and needs. Those changes may have both positive impact for example potential sales growth, and negative impact like complete disappearance of the demand altogether. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 30)

- Suppliers

Suppliers are the providers of goods that are put through value-adding process by the company before it gets to the end customer. Suppliers can directly affect quality and cost of the final product. Good research before the choice of suppliers and maintaining good relationship with ones chosen is the key for the company to have a stable supply. (Palmer, 2004, 44)

- Intermediaries

Term intermediaries stands for any agents and organizations that stand between the company and the end customer and aid putting the product out, for example distribution agents like wholesalers and retailers or even research and advertising agencies. Company should not fail to understand and consider the needs of intermediaries and maintain a good communication with them as they are an important link of delivering the product to the customers. (Palmer, 2004, 43; Blythe, Martin, 2016, 31)

- General Public

Public opinion, especially when enforced with the power of media, has an aptitude of either aiding the company in achieving its goals, or creating obstacles for the company. Considering that fact, it is beneficial for the company to take in consideration public view of the situation and how they are affected by the company's decisions. (Oxford College of Marketing)

3.3 PESTLE

A company does not exist in vacuum therefore it is important to acknowledge the forces of external environment influencing the target market. Baines, Fill and Page (2013, 37) defines two main characteristics of external environment:

- The impact on the company: may not be immediate but long-term.
- The change in the environment is out of control of the organization.



Figure 4. The External Marketing Environment (Baines, Fill, Page, 2013)

As shown on Figure ?, there are defined variables that constitute the external environment: political, economic, social, technological, legal and ecological (environmental). Although external environment cannot be influenced, to create a successful marketing mix, the company needs to analyze these factors and understand what influence each of them have on company's activities. PESTLE analysis is a beneficial tool that can influence the marketing planning and decision-making process with regards to the following external environment factors.

- Political factors

Political are one of the less predictable factors, they determine the degree to which the governmental activities influence the industry or economy. These factors include tax policies, environmental law, trade tariffs, labor law, consumer protection law. Those also cover the general political stability of a national market. Monitoring those factors creates the possibility for a company to proactively respond to changes by adapting its policies and altering marketing activities. (Palmer, 2004, 55; Pestle Analysis)

- Economic factors

Economic factors determine the degree to which economy changes impact the company. Those can be categorized further into macro-economic and micro-economic factors. The first category deals with demand management of the economy mostly initiated by the government such as interest rates changes, exchange rates fluctuation, economic growth. The second category deals with the consumer spending patterns, those include for example an increase of average living standards. Economic factors would potentially resonate long-term effects that could affect company's pricing strategies or change consumer's buying power. (Blythe, Martin, 2016, 32; Pestle Analysis)

- Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors determine social environment such as public behavioral attitudes, demographics, and trends. The key demographic factors include the growth of population, age distribution, as well as distribution of income within households. Cultural factors are mostly concerned with cultural differences within internationalizing world. Together socio-cultural factors are of the interest of the company when analyzing customers' behavior and the drivers of their interests and demands. (Pestle Analysis; Jobber, 2001, 127-130)

- Technological factors

Technological factors determine to which extent the industry is influenced by innovation. New technology affects company's activities on multiple levels starting from production and distribution to marketing communications. New technologies allow companies to offer a whole range of new services and distribution methods, as well as giving opportunities for direct communication with the end consumer. The power of the internet gave customers freedom of choice as they are able within a few clicks compare the prices, quality, pictures, reviews and make decision based on the company that is best presented online, therefore companies that are able to keep up with the technological trends are getting a significant competitive advantage against less advanced rivals. Close observation of innovations may lead to discovery of new opportunities and major beneficial investments into novice technologies. (Pestle Analysis; Palmer, 2004, 63; Blythe, Martin, 2016, 35)

- Legal factors

Legal factors do not only cover certain country's regulations, but also regulations the company sets for its activities. Those factors include health and safety, consumer laws, labor laws, among others. Those involve not only domestic laws, but also international regulations in global market, for example in the EU countries apart from the national regulations, the company also has to be mindful of the EU law. (Pestle Analysis; Blythe, Martin, 2016, 33)

- Environmental factors

Environmental factors are determined by the surrounding environment and include climate, geographical location and environmental policies and restrictions. In the past decade the pressure on the natural resources, especially used in production, has increased as well as societal awareness of the ecological issues that are often associated with harmful productional practices. A company needs to monitor the issues, environmental requirements and societal position and be able to adjust its activities accordingly in order to achieve marketing success. (Pestle Analysis, Palmer, 2004, 65-66)

4 CASE SPECIFIC THEORY

When it comes to B2B, Punnu Games customers are free to submit their requests upon the contents of the projects. Punnu Games is providing digital solutions of various natures, however, for this specific research, the focus is narrowed down to two main services that the staff is most experienced in and interested in marketing: AR experiences and gamification. It is important to get acquainted with the concepts and terminology for full understanding of company's offerings.

4.1 Gamification

Gamification is a universal term for the concept of applying the elements of the game and game-design techniques in a non-game context. It is also described by Werbach and Hunter as a “process of manipulating fun to serve real-world objectives” (Werbach, Hunter, 2012, 26-36). In game design game mechanic stands for the method of interaction of the player with the game, therefore another way to define gamification is a concept of integrating game mechanic within non-gamified processes. (Jackson 2016) To understand gamification, it is important to understand the main aspects composing it: game elements and non-game context.

4.1.1 Game Elements and Non-Game Context

Werbach and Hunter (2012) refer to game elements as characteristics of games that can be applied for gamification. Game elements are used for the purpose of encouragement, engagement, and entertainment. Some of the most commonly used elements are Achievements (in a form of points, badges, leaderboards), Rewards (in a form of collectables elements, bonuses, and power-ups), Story (narrative arc), Time (countdowns and schedules) and Personalization. (Jackson, 2016)

The core purpose of gamification is taking game elements and apply them beneficially to the real world. Three prominent non-game contexts that benefit from gamification: internal, external, and behaviour change. (Werbach, Hunter, 2012, 20)

Internal gamification or enterprise gamification is used by companies to enhance productivity through the employees – from fostering innovation to improving inter-employee relationships. There first important attribute of internal gamification is a defined community for the players – the organization.

The second attribute is directly connected to the first: the motivational dynamics are aligned with the existing management and reward structures. (Werbach, Hunter, 2012, 20)

External Gamification is usually driven by marketing objectives and engages the company's customers or potential customers. External gamification is used as a tool on a way to create identification with the products and strengthen customer loyalty, which ultimately leads to the revenue increase. (Werbach, Hunter, 2012, 22)

Behaviour-change gamification is used to instill new beneficial habits in the population, generally to create desirable social outcomes, and usually is sponsored by non-profit organizations or government. Such habits can be making healthier choices, saving money, attaining interest in education, and can lead to improvement of the economy, educational system, healthcare. (Werbach, Hunter, 2012, 23)

4.1.2 Application

Gamification can be used in businesses of any nature, most of the leading companies in their industries have been implementing gamification in their processes for years: Nike, Microsoft, Samsung, Domino's, Cisco, and Google, among others. (Gamify) However, the most exposure gamification received in marketing, health, and education.

For example, Nike + Run Club is an app that exploits a competitive mechanism in order to keep athletes motivated. It allows the user to enter the community and track personal results, share the statistics, and participate in events and competitions to earn rewards like trophies and badges. Nike + Run Club is an example of successful gamification implementation as it increases population's interest in athletics as well as provides exposure to the brand and improves brand image in sports community. (Leclercq, 2015)

One of the leading providers of Enterprise Resource Planning systems SAP is using internal gamification for training purposes. SAP sales representatives are required a deep knowledge of the system, that also includes the newest additions to products and services. To keep them motivated to stay on top of the latest updates, SAP is using "Roadwarrior" - an application that simulates a meeting with a customer in a multiple-choice game form. The app allows the user to advance in a leader board with each correct answer, as well as provides the opportunity to challenge the colleagues to a quiz battle.

The achievements in the app are symbolic, however the main benefit for the sales representatives come in a form of engaging learning process. (Chou)

4.2 Augmented Reality

4.2.1 Definition and characteristics

In Information Technology Gartner Glossary Augmented Reality is defined as follows: “The real-time use of information in the form of text, graphics, audio and other virtual enhancements integrated with real-world objects”. Augmented Reality has the defining characteristics that help understand the concept and separate it from similar technology such as Virtual Reality.

The first key characteristic is the presence of digital information. There are no restrictions on the nature of digital information: it can represent both copies of real objects or synthetic creations, be static or dynamic and evolve through the experience, as well as pertain to different senses (visual, audio, smell, taste, or touch). (Craig 2013, 16)

The second key characteristic is the attachment of the information to the physical world. The digital information in AR is spatially registered - it has a physical space or location that is independent from the location of the viewer. The change to the information can be achieved in the same way as in the physical world – by direct interaction, however, AR offers the participant a much wider range of actions. (Craig 2013, 17-19)

The following aspect of the AR is also based on the dependency of the information on the position and location in the real world. AR is designed to emulate the experience similar to the physical world, therefore the concept of participant’s perspective is always taken into the account. The information displayed would change with the change of participant’s point of view. (Craig 2013, 19-21)

Lastly, the Augmented Reality is interactive – to be part of the experience the participant is required to engage in. One can sense the information and mold it in a way desired from changing the physical perspective to modifying and creating new information. (Craig 2013, 17)

4.2.2 Applications

The prime example of an AR-based application is Pokemon Go. The game created by Niantic in 2016 has found great success due to the combination of the novelty concept of AR and the use of favored by many characters from the eponymous television series. The players are moving in a physical world that is mapped in the application using the mobile device's GPS in a search of Pokémon as well as the pop-up challenges. Through the smartphone camera, the gamer can encounter 3D dynamic characters that are available for interactions. (Niantic Help shift)

Entertainment, however, is not the only application of the technology - it has the potential to add value to any industry. AR can be used for education and job training, field service, tourism, logistics, design. It can also serve as a strong marketing tool.

A good example of using AR for boosting sales in retail comes from the world-famous Swedish company – IKEA. The app called IKEA Place features over two thousand items from the catalog that with the help of technology can be placed in the customer's room scaled according to the surroundings.

The company stated that over seventy percent of buyers are struggling with identifying the size of products and over fourteen percent have previously bought the wrong-sized items. (MarketingWeek, 2013) The leader of Digital Transformation at Inter IKEA systems Michael Valdsgaard announced that the app is serving as a tool for customers to get inspired and ease the buying decisions, especially when it comes to larger furniture items. (Architect Magazine, 2017)

5 RESEARCH PROCESS

5.1 Research Methodology

Scientific research is a process of performing systematic inquisition in order to discover and interpret facts of a certain reality. As for approach, it can be quantitative – systematic, objective, numerical data focused – or qualitative. Qualitative research has an objective of producing extensive illustrative information to understand the different dimensions of the analysed problem. (Almedia, Faria, Queros, 2017) It uses non-quantitative methods of data collection and analysis to get in-depth insights on the subject based on reality described by the respondents. (Adams, Hafiz, Raeside, White, 2007, 26) Some of the techniques applicable are in-depth interviews, case studies, participant observations and document analysis. (Sachdeva, 2009, 165)

In order to meet the thesis objectives and sufficiently answer the research questions qualitative research method was chosen in the form of individual interviews.

5.1.1 Interview

In research process one-on-one interaction between an interviewer and a participant is called individual in-depth interview. The interviews of that format on average take an hour to complete and the participants are usually provided with the materials in advance. There are three types of individual interviews: unstructured, semi-structured and structured. (Sachdeva, 2009, 169) Semi-structured approach is usually adopted by researchers for interviews – during the process base questions are followed up by other questions that arise on the spot creating a variety between the responses. (Adams, Hafiz, Raeside, White, 2007, 145) Participants of individual in-depth interview are chosen to present their opinions based on their own experience and attitudes, rather than representatives of a collective opinion. (Sachdeva, 2009, 169)

5.1.2 Sampling techniques

Participants of the interviews are chosen using sampling technique. According to Adams, Hafiz, Raeside and White (2007), “Sampling is a process of selecting suitable sample for the purpose of deter-

mining parameters or characteristics of the whole population”. (p. 87) Sample is represented by sampling unit or units, for example an individual or an organization. The researcher is responsible for choosing most appropriate to the research and the chosen methodology sampling method – probability or non-probability sampling, as well as determining how “representative” the sample is. (Adams, Hafiz, Raeside, White, 2007, 87) Non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research and it is characterized by objective choice of samples by the researcher rather than random selection.

There are several types of non-probability sampling, however for current research purposive sampling was deemed the most suitable. Purposive sampling refers to the process of sample selection based on its unique characteristics, skills, perceptions, attitudes, and experiences. Participant categories are emerging throughout the interview process and the new participants are chosen to challenge developed patterns. (Sachdeva, 2009, 167)

5.2 Interview Process and Participants

The interviews conducted throughout the research process aimed to determine the practices that game studios have been successfully using for their B2B marketing efforts. Another focal point was to determine the best markets for AR and gamification in the opinions of knowledgeable professionals highly familiar with the market trends in the industry. The first interview was with the case company – Punnu Games, as it was important to see the company’s current B2B activities and their perspective view on the subject and the industry in general.

The total of eight interviews has been conducted during the research process. Due to the global pandemic the interviews were hosted online to meet the safety guidelines. Google Meet video call service has been used for every interview, which allowed the closest to face-to-face interaction. The adopted semi-structured format allowed the possibility of higher diversity between the participant’s responses as well as creation of additional discussion topics. The questions were divided into three categories: industry experience and background of the represented company, B2B marketing, and gamification. AR based questions have been added later in the process due to the increasing focus of the case company on the technology. The question template for the interviews can be found in the appendix.

To reach the interviews objectives domestic game studios were targeted in the search of participants. Smaller game companies with smaller teams put focus on the technical side when it comes to human

resources, therefore marketing responsibilities often fall on the CEO. In the local scene it is common for the developers and game designers to hold the position of CEO and be in charge of the business side. Six of the eight interviewees are holding that position in their respective companies, one of the company representatives holds the position of CFO, in addition one interview was conducted with a game industry consultant. Apart from the position in the company, experience in the industry was taken in consideration, as for most of the participants the journey in the gaming industry have started from freelance and personal projects. The full list of interviewees, their experience, position and the companies represented can be found in the table below.

Participant	Company represented	Participant Background
Participant A	Punnu Games	- 3 years in the industry - Background in business
Participant B	Add Inspiration	- 14 years in the industry - HUBs lead in IGDA Finland - MA - Digital Culture
Participant C	Morrow Games	- 8 years in the industry - Board member of Turku Game Hub - Background in IT
Participant D	MiTale	- 7+ years in the industry - Board member in IGDA Finland - Founding board member of Turku Game Hub - Formerly Game Design teacher in University of Turku - Background in Arts
Participant E	JS Games	- 14+ years in the industry - Software consultant - Background in software development
Participant F	10th Muse	- 12+ years in the industry - Master's Degree in Internet and Game Studies - Former game designer at Colossal Order - Former game producer at Veikkaus
Participant G	Indium Games	- 10 years in the industry - Former senior developer in Snowfall Ltd - Background in IT
Participant H	Helsinki Games Capital	-10+ years in the industry - Startup mentor - Game industry advisor

Table 2. List of Interview Participants.

5.3 Findings

Gaming industry has its own ways when it comes to B2B marketing due to the uniqueness of its offerings and the variety of clientele. The findings from the interviews however are not covering the state of the industry as a whole or even country-wise, but rather concentrated on Southern Finland,

more specifically the Turku scene. The companies elected for the research participation were independent startups that are able to match the size of the case company as well as relate to their journey of finding the exposure in the industry.

5.3.1 B2B and B2B Marketing

B2B in a gaming industry is viewed as revenue generator, most smaller companies are not able to gather sufficient funds or find an investor and conducting personal projects are a way to keep the business running and sponsor own projects. Participants E and C have admitted that if funding was not an issue, the companies would potentially stop working customer projects as it would give them more creative freedom and time to concentrate on own projects. When across the board all the participants agreed that B2B mostly serves the as a revenue generating activity, some other benefits of conducting B2B in the industry have also been brought up. Participant H have noted that B2B gives a new perspective of the industry, when participants A and D added that B2B is a way to challenge one selves' skill and create a professional portfolio. Doing B2B is also a way to spread the word about that company and expand professional network, importance of which is discussed later in the chapter.

Representatives of all the companies have stated that marketing responsibilities for startups are usually assigned either to CEO, or the person handling a particular project. It is a rare occasion that a smaller company is able to have a dedicated person with marketing or business background to handle the matters, the majority are software developers or game designers that are learning on the job. In such situation the company is forced to follow the trial-and-error way when it comes to marketing decisions. Nevertheless, none of the participants has denied the importance of marketing or marketing planning. Participant H have stated that combination of game knowledge and business knowledge in this particular industry can give a significant competitive advantage over the companies that are either neglecting the marketing as all, or the companies that are attempting to follow traditional B2B business models without considering the specificities of business nature. Another statement from participant D have also supported that point of view: in their company case outsourcing company's marketing efforts to a specialized marketing agency have not brought the company any clients as while the agencies had the marketing knowledge covered, they were not able to communicate the offerings due to the lack of understanding the technical part of it and its capabilities.

When it comes to B2B customers, the theory suggests that B2B companies are most likely to have a narrow customer base, especially the companies of a smaller scale. However, in gaming industry it is not always the case. It is of importance for a company in the gaming industry to be on a constant lookout for new B2B customers as while some customer projects, especially governmental, can be long-term and require constant updates, due to the nature of the offerings and the view of B2B as a side activity for keeping the cash flow stable the majority of the projects are short-term based on a one-time request.

Comparing to industrial goods, digital offerings do not require creating a distribution system and therefore give opportunities for even the smallest companies effortlessly go global. As noted by participant B, freedom from the restraint of operating only in domestic markets, companies are able to expand their customer base on the account of international clients. From traditional marketing perspective such freedom also brings some challenges as theoretically any company operating in any industry regardless of the country is able to utilize digital solutions, that makes it quite challenging to define exact target groups and therefore customize marketing based on that knowledge.

Participant H, being startup mentor suggested that joining a Game Hub and therefore its community is an important step for a company, especially in early development stage. In Turku Game Hub, for example, startups are able not only to receive an office space, but also financial support and educational experience. However, not only new startups are able to take an advantage of being a part of a community – more established companies by being in the presence of younger studios are getting the benefits of receiving fresh ideas and having a new perspective on the industry and their approach.

Traditional B2B theory provides a vast amount of information regarding the company-customer relationships, but it neglects recognizing the importance of inter-companies networking. In the theory companies that are operating in the same industry and provide similar to the company offerings are viewed as direct and indirect competitors that are often presented in a negative light with a presumption that they are “enemies”. While in majority of industries that involve B2B operations it is a standard way of viewing other companies, small and medium-size companies in the gaming industry show almost a comradery spirit. One example of that is the cross-referencing between the companies in Turku Game Hub. All the six representatives of The Hive admitted that it is a common practice for a company to allocate their customer requests to other companies within the community if they possess the right skills and qualifications for the project. That, however, does not mean the absence of the

competition as it all, as well as it does not mean that joining the community automatically guarantees effortless success. While having an access to supportive resources, companies in the community are forced to work on marketing and branding twice as hard and actively participate in the community life getting the required exposure as their goal is not only to impress the customer, but also receive the recognition from the peer companies.

Multiple participants mentioned the difficulty with which small startups are getting recognized by big companies in the domestic market. Participant B expressed an opinion that small Finnish companies for collaborations should address international companies. The only way to open the door to bigger Finnish companies is presenting impressive portfolio of collaborations with big international names.

An efficient way to achieve desired exposure is event participation. All the interviews admitted the importance of different types of events for the industry, both domestic and international. Participant C additionally stated that to acquire desired connections a company must not restrict itself with attending only gaming conventions, but make its way to the target groups-oriented events, for example educational fairs, fitness conventions e.g.

In the past year due to the global pandemic the majority of the events were held online. Participant D have noted that online events open doors for the developers that are not usually able to afford to travel to events and gives opportunities to bring more international participants. Online events also proven to save money for organizing parties. On top of that conducting events online is a more ecologically aware decision. Both participants B and G expressed the opinion that even in after-pandemic times the online events are going to be the new routine that would substitute most physical events. Despite all those benefits online events have been a downside for small startups networking. Participant B have stated that smaller companies seeking for new connections through the fairs are struggling to make themselves visible and effortlessly find new contacts online, when physical events gave them the opportunity of getting to know companies' representatives on a more personal level and have one-on-one conversations. Participant H have added that online negotiations are more likely to hit a dead end.

Although, not planned, branding has become a discussion topic in the interview process. As theory suggests, branding in a modern business environment is of importance for any industry, and that statement have been supported by the participants. Brand helps the company to stand out in the community and consequently it can be a decision-making factor during project allocations. In the gaming industry company branding is often in a direct correlation with personal branding. For small startups it is necessary not only to keep the company exposed, but also individual members. Participant B stated that often in the industry well-established and branded person on the team of even just established company is rapidly increasing the chances of the company getting recognition and chances of acquiring significant projects.

The nature of the industry dictates the superiority of digital marketing use over traditional marketing. While companies in the gaming industry are still using marketing agencies, “cold calling” and sending the mailing lists, all the participants were unanimous on admitting its ineffectiveness. In addition to physical presence, online presence is equally important when it comes to marketing. From the interviewee's responses it was evident that in the industry it is more common for a customer to approach the company with a request for a project, and therefore quality content and professional portfolio presentation from both the company itself and its individual members across all the available digital platforms is the areas to which marketing efforts should be directed. Both participants B and D have stated that for B2B side the most efficient way for them to communicate with potential customers, stay active in the community and present company's project developments is to use LinkedIn platform.

5.3.2 Gamification

One of the research objectives was to explore the benefits of gamification for the companies in pursuit to distinguish the main selling points and target groups for the particular case company offering. The gamification theory presented in the research was up to date and in accordance with the interview participants responses.

During the discussion of potential target customers for gamification, all the participants unanimously agreed with the thesis statement regarding the possibility of any process being gamified. That said, when the participants D and C expressed a strong opinion that companies should have an open mind

and not single out particular types of companies, some other participants were able to provide examples of industries that would derive more benefits in gamifying their processes. Sports industry, HR, education and any activities that require training were named across participants F, B and E.

The interviewees were also asked to name the obstacles that companies face in the sales process. All the participants have agreed that client companies often lack knowledge of both technical and business side of gamification. When it comes to technical side, participants B and D have admitted that they have received impossible for implementation requests before: often customers would not be willing to change their idea even when presented with the evidence of physical impossibility of its implementation. Customers also tend to underestimate the amount of work that goes into such projects, which consequently makes them underestimate their timing and costs. That arises the problem for young startups. In the pursuit of attaining customers, smaller startups are often taken advantage of by the client companies, when they are forced to implement costly timely projects with no budget.

However, all the company representatives also agreed that customers can be educated about gamification, its benefits and costs. Participant H strongly promotes sharing across-organization experience, when it comes to individual cases, he recommended for the companies to draw the budget with all the numbers behind every micro process that goes into gamification. Participant C advised companies to have an open conversation with clients, deploy soft skills and stand their grounds when it comes to adjusting the client's vision for reality. Participant D have agreed that client companies require professional guidance. Participant E have expressed an opinion that bringing the concept of gamification to the general public requires investment. While there are topical educational portals existing, a larger scale process should be started by influential marketing agencies.

5.4 Validity, Reliability and Limitations

In academic research reliability stands for consistency and repeatability. The research is considered reliable if conducted in the same circumstances it brings similar results time after time. Validity in the research refers to the degree to which the intended measurements were measured. (Sachdeva 2009, 54-70)

The research was focused on small- and medium-scale companies in Southern Finland operating in the same industry as the case company. All the respondents hold an executive position within their respective company. However, while all the participants were qualified to answer the questions, companies represented differentiated based on their professional focus: software development, mobile gaming, VR, AR. Additionally, participants were also not restricted by explicitly express company's point of view, but also share personal opinions based on the experience. That arises the issue of participant bias.

Little distortion in the responses were noted when the same question was asked a smaller startup companies in comparison to more established ones during the discussion about marketing approaches. These variations however were noted on the questions that implied the possibility of deviation; therefore, the research cannot be considered unreliable. However, there is a possibility of the improvement of the reliability of the research. Only eight interviews were conducted, therefore one way is to increase the sampling size. Another suggestion is using more homogenized sample group by determining strict limits to the company size and its activity focus.

Interviews were conducted online through Google meet service. Although not technically being considered as face-to-face meetings that was the closest safest possibility in the circumstances of the global pandemic. That way allowed to ensure that the participant fully understands the questions and is not deviating from the direct answer. All the participants were provided with the list of questions for the interview during the first contact when the participation inquiry was sent. Interviews were following the semi-structured approach to assure the comfort of the participants. Participants freed from the restriction of only answering direct questions brought up new discussion topics that were not considered in the original question script. That led to expanding and modifying the original question list within the process. The validity of the research could benefit from a more structured approach to the interviewing process.

Lack of reliable data and prior research on the subject can be considered the research limitations. While B2B marketing and marketing planning is well-covered in academic publications, the research has proven that specificity of the industry requires more than traditional approach. The lack of academically acclaimed research focused on the industry creates a gap that future researchers can consider investigating.

6 MARKETING PLAN BASE

Marketing plan is an outcome of situational analysis, organizational planning, and marketing activities controlling that covers the summary of marketplace analysis and marketing activities to be done for a certain period in documentary form. (Wood, 2014, 4) This chapter presents the marketing plan outline for the case company as well as the focal points that were considered in the marketing planning process.



Table 3. Marketing Plan Template for Punnu Games.

On the starting stage marketing plan structure must be developed. Depending on the organization and its goals, the sections and their importance and the position may vary, however a well-structured logical outline is required universally. (Cohen, 2006, 1) In “The Successful Marketing Plan. A disciplined and Comprehensive Approach.” (Hiebing Jr. Cooper, 2003, 90) authors have presented a ten-step disciplined marketing plan outline that covers all the areas that marketers generally need to take in consideration throughout the marketing planning process. The ten steps included business review,

problems and opportunities, sales objectives, target markets and marketing objectives, plan strategies, communication goals, tactical marketing tools, budget, payback analysis, calendar, execution and evaluation. Although not used as a whole, that outline has served as a strong point of reference for the marketing plan template for the case company. Some of the steps from the guide template have been merged or removed to create the template at the beginning of the section that represents the areas of focus significance for Punnu Games.

Further the chapter presents environmental analysis and important factors that served as the base for the marketing planning decisions.

6.1 Industry Facts and Numbers

- Over 2 billion euros yearly turnover since 2016 in Finland (equal to metal ores production and industrial minerals)
 - Biggest content creation industry in Finland with active powerful community, globally networking hub and creative minds
 - In 2019 estimated export share of game development was 98%
 - In 2019 the industry accounted over 220 companies with over 3200 employees
 - Increase in number of foreign game developers employed by Finnish gaming industry, as well as increase of interest from foreign investors
 - In 2017 domestic market was valued at app. 190 million euros
 - Public funding is available for game studios from Business Finland (form. Tekes) since mid-nineties
- By 2018:
- The average age of active gamers in Finland is 38, however even among Finns above 50 over a half plays digital games
 - 60,5% of adults play not less than once a month
 - On average, Finns spend 11 euros a month and 5 hours a week on playing games

(Business Finland, NeoGames, This is Finland, Foreigner, Finland Toolbox)

The information about the industry have been collected through Neogames (non-profit organization for game industry in Finland) annual industry reports and additional sources. The Neogame reports are the lead sources of information about the industry, many other sources are referencing the information from Neogame researches. That said, the last published report was for the year 2018, and therefore the numbers presented are not covering year 2020 and 2021.

6.2 SWOT

SWOT Analysis Punnu Games	
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Portfolio Marketing Awareness CSR approach Representation of both business and technical side on the executive positions 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff liquidity Lack of experience comparing to established companies Budget fluctuations No stable customer base
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship management Becoming marketing ambassadors for the industry Educational ambassador for gamification and AR technology Collaborations with government and non-profit organisations Growth within the community 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition from big companies Networking complications Reduced customer interest due to the pricing

Table 4. SWOT Analysis Punnu Games.

SWOT analysis is used to evaluate the external opportunities and threats that can positively or negatively influence the company together with strengths and weaknesses of the company itself. Punnu Games, being a young smaller startup, has a lot of potential for growth. Already after two years of activities the company has a strong grasp on B2C projects and managed to develop a solid profes-

sional portfolio. While other companies in the community are distributing their marketing responsibilities among developers and coders, Punnu Games is able to utilize the advantage of having a business background person aware of its importance in charge of those decisions. The research revealed the necessity of customer's education regarding digital offerings and their business sides. There are a few portals that inform AR or gamification benefits, however most of them do not cover the amount of work that goes behind it and what customer should expect regarding schedules and budgeting. Punnu Games have a potential to fill in this gap and become go-to company for the respective education. Focus on inclusion is a smart and conscious way to build the brand around. The benefits of CSR approach to business is discussed further in the chapter.

On the negative spectrum, the company still lacks the experience of the other established companies. For some interview participants being a founding member of a company or community or being on executive positions was not the first-time experience, when for both CTO and CEO of the company it was the first experience of that sort. That fact makes company's journey to being considered as a serious company longer than others. While not having professionals with a well-known name on the team yet, the company works with eager enthusiast, mostly represented by students looking for training opportunities. When it comes to B2B, the company has not yet established itself in the area, therefore the process of acquiring the customers takes a lot of marketing efforts. Additionally, the lack of opportunity to predict the success of B2B long-term is creating obstacles in regard to budgeting as Punnu Games, following the pattern of the industry, is considering B2B as the revenue generating activity.

6.3 PESTLE

The table below represents the potential factors of influence on the case company operations.

Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stable political situation in Finland and the EU - EU rising interest in digitalisation and startup support (Startup Scaleup Initiative, Innovation Radar Platform, Digital innovation and scaleup initiative) - Finnish governmental startup support
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of global game spending - Public Sector Support - Increase of games share of GNP in Finland - Increase of games share in national export
Socio - Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of interest of general population in gamifying processes - Broadening of the age group utilizing games and other digital solutions - Societal expectations of quality from digital produce - Customers Purchasing Power
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wild spread of voice-control technology - Wearable technology (suits, glasses, gloves as controllers) - Mixed reality - Increase of the algorithm role in content creation - Internet of Things becoming an ultimate game platform - Personally tailored content
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU trade agreements - Customer Protection Regulations - Data Protection and Privacy Regulations - Data transparency
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing awareness of carbon footprint - Increasing need in hardware recycling - Universal digitalisation of processes to increase environmental sustainability

Table 5. PESTLE Analysis Punnu Games.

6.4 CSR

CSR stands for Corporate Social Responsibility. Company's actions have a significant impact on the environment it operates in, not only in ecological sense, but also social. Companies that are conducting business responsibly are aware of the possible negative impact it may cause and attempt to prevent or minimize it, while also positively contributing to the society are living up to CSR standards.

Socially responsible company operates according to the law and integrates into its activities as social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer rights concerns.

CSR does not just benefit the society; it also provides company with new opportunities and potential competitive advantage. The modern society as well as public authorities and most trade commissions are encouraging companies that practice CSR. While responsible business conduct enhances the society and creates more sustainable economy, the company is able to maintain a good image in customer's and investor's eyes, receive financial benefits, reduce risks, innovate and eventually grow and increase its profits. (European Commission)

Punnu Games is an inclusion- and sustainability-aware company. The premise of the B2C activities is creating value-based games that spread awareness through entertainment. Although in B2B area the company often is forced to build their product around the customer company values, it is still of high importance for the company to produce content in a socially responsible way.

6.5 Branding

Punnu Games is branding itself as the socially conscious gaming company that creates games with impact. Company's logo and mascots are punnus – little creates ideas for which were born in CTO's sons head. These factors attribute to customer's emotions and creates the sense of sympathy towards the company.

Just as the company, an individual can create a personal brand. Personal brand can affect individual's value, increase their influence as well as impact the company the individual is associated with. (Gynn, 2020) Most company representatives that participated in the presented research have noted that the value of the company and customer's interest would be significantly higher when the specialist with a strong personal brand is an employee or a founder of the company. Punnu Games is yet to utilize the full potential of personal branding.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of the thesis was creating a B2B marketing plan for a small Finnish mobile game company operating in the domestic gaming industry, Punnu Games, by investigating the case company's marketing environment and marketing academic sources with accountancy of the industry specificities. Through the B2B marketing plan the company seeks to achieve the desired exposure and expand the B2B customer base.

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of basis of marketing, B2B marketing and marketing planning theory. Additionally, the research also provided theory that explains the digital offerings that Punnu games provides to the client companies. Marketing environment analysis is presented as a base for the marketing plan in a dedicated chapter in the empirical part of the study. The results of the interviews conducted within the research process revealed important insights and unique perspective on the current situation of the domestic industry as well as the extent to which marketing is implemented among the companies.

Punnu Games operates in the industry that has revealed to require specific approach when it comes to B2B operations and B2B marketing. Among the companies that work not only B2B, but also put out own projects, B2B is universally considered the revenue generating side activity and therefore the intentional marketing effort input is minimized in the area. When domestic companies are missing out on utilising marketing specialists, the case company is drawing benefits from having a person with business background in charge of marketing decisions. The market analysis has revealed the prosperous state of the industry, societal interest growth in gaming and technology and potential opportunities that come along the world's technical advancement. Based on the findings the B2B marketing plan was drawn for the company.

The Finnish gaming industry is a globally acclaimed rapidly growing industry that requires more research and support. The results of the interviews indicated the need to appraise the role of B2B marketing in the industry and potentially create an industry tailored B2B marketing guide. In the pursuit of the goal, the author suggests expanding the research nation-wise with the larger, but more homogenized samples.

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Interview Questions

Background

- What's your experience in the gaming industry?
- What company are you representing? What's your position within the company? Provide some background information on your company (mission, vision, specialty, team).

B2B sales

- Do you work B2B cases in addition to company's independent projects? Why?
- If you do B2B, what are the proportions between B2B and B2C? Are your projects long-term or short-term (under a month in the making)?
- Are most of the projects you work on B2B or B2C, as in what is the scope of one B2B project compared to one B2C project on average?

B2B Marketing

- How do you approach B2B sales? Do you conduct B2B marketing? Do you have a designated person/team?
- If you do not do B2B, why?
- If you did B2B marketing, do you think it would influence your sales? Why or why not? If yes, how? What is the motivation? How does it influence your image/sales?
- What tools do you use for B2B marketing? Which proved to be the most effective?
- How does remote work during pandemic affects you B2B marketing approach?

- What events, support platforms are beneficial for getting acquainted with customers? Now?

- If you had the choice, would you work B2B cases at all? Why or why not?

- Do you find B2B marketing beneficial in the industry? If no, why? If yes, what are the benefits? For Whom?

Gamification

- What types and size companies are most likely to show interest in gamification? Is it possible to narrow down to buyers' personas? What is the interest?

- What do you think is the biggest obstacle that the clients who might be interested in gamification face when making a purchase decision? How to potentially overcome them?

- Do you think that the buyers can be “trained” into understanding the benefits of gamification while also accepting the price and how?

