



**A Marketing Plan for Loru Games Ltd to enter the German market
with an educational gaming product**

César Calvo

Christine Rodrian

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

Bachelor of Business Administration

2022

<p>Author(s) César Calvo Christine Rodrian</p>
<p>Degree Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)</p>
<p>Report/Thesis Title A Marketing strategy for Loru Games Ltd to enter the German market with an educational gaming product</p>
<p>Number of pages and appendix pages 51 + 31</p>
<p>The following thesis was commissioned by Loru Games, a Finnish company in the EdTech industry that offers a gamified learning platform for the K12 sector. Gamified learning is a big trend right now, and there are many start-ups in the EdTech industry in Finland and Germany. The goal of the thesis was to create a marketing plan for Loru Games to enter the German market in 2023.</p> <p>The thesis combines the approach of a product-based thesis with the approach of a research-based thesis. To understand the German EdTech market, primary sources were combined with secondary sources. Primary sources include interviews, events, and a survey targeted at teachers in Germany, mainly focusing on the state Baden-Württemberg. Secondary literature comprises news articles, blogs, and the latest reports and statistics about the EdTech industry. The results were used to develop a marketing plan for the company. All suggestions in the marketing plan are based on the company's current situation, its marketing strategy, and findings from the research.</p> <p>The results of this study show that Germany, though still behind Finland regarding digitalisation, has been developing fast in the past two years. Rapid changes and significant investments in the digitalisation of education make the German EdTech market ready to be explored and approached. Entering the German market comes with many opportunities and challenges. According to the research, Germans value Finnish education and might therefore appreciate a Finnish EdTech product. Germany's division into 16 states and its complex educational system can be challenging for a foreign company. However, it can also be seen as 16 different opportunities. The key is to be there, grow networks, connect with German EdTech stakeholders, involve German speakers, and be patient.</p>
<p>Key words: EdTech, marketing, Germany, Finland, gamified learning, education</p>

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Objectives, purpose & limitations.....	3
1.3	Research methods	3
1.4	Thesis structure.....	4
1.5	Introduction commissioning company.....	5
2	EdTech and Education	6
2.1	Education in Germany.....	6
2.2	Definition key EdTech terms used.....	8
2.3	The EdTech industry: numbers, trends, and facts	8
2.3.1	EdTech Europe and benefits of online learning.....	8
2.3.2	EdTech Finland.....	10
2.3.3	EdTech Germany.....	15
3	German market	21
3.1	Country introduction	21
3.2	Macroeconomy.....	22
3.3	Legal and political considerations.....	24
3.4	Business culture (EdTech sector in particular).....	25
4	Elements of marketing plan	28
4.1	Concept of marketing	28
4.2	Definition of Marketing Plan (vs. Marketing strategy).....	28
4.3	Target market.....	30
4.4	The 4 P's.....	30
4.5	Our Marketing Plan in this thesis.....	31
5	Developing the marketing plan	33
5.1	Results of the survey.....	33
5.2	HubSpot Marketing plan template	35
5.2.1	Business Summary	35
5.2.2	Business initiatives.....	36
5.2.3	Target market	37
5.2.4	Market Strategy	38
5.2.5	Budget/ Funding	39
5.2.6	Marketing channels.....	40
5.2.7	Marketing Technology.....	41
6	Evaluation / conclusion.....	42

Sources 44

Appendices 52

 Appendix 1. Interview questions 52

 Appendix 2. Survey questions 56

 Appendix 3. Survey results..... 60

 Appendix 4. Marketing plan.....61

1 Introduction

The Topic of this thesis is “A Marketing Plan for Loru Games Ltd to enter the German market with an educational gaming product”. This thesis is a mix of a research-based and a product-based thesis. Therefore, it includes research used for background information in the theory part, but also as a basis for the final product – the marketing plan. The idea behind combining research with a product is to gain a deeper understanding of the German market and possible customers within the educational technology market, before drafting a marketing plan.

We have selected Germany as our target market because it is the fifth largest gaming market in the world and the largest in Europe (International Trade Administration, 2021). We consider Germany one of the biggest and best markets for an educational gaming company, such as Loru Games, to expand within Europe. In this thesis the term state is used for the German term “Bundesland”. In some quotes the German states are also referred to as “Länder” or “Bundesländer”. Germany, as a whole, is referred to as Germany or “Federal Republic of Germany” for the German term “Bundesrepublik Deutschland” or “Bund”.

Oral sources, including interviewees and speakers at visited events, referred to in this thesis are as follows and are always referred to by their last names: Heini Karppinen, Lotta Westerlund, Caroline Renker, Olli Helamaa, Werner Glowka, Arne Ruhr, and Dennis Birkhoelzer. All pictures, graphs, tables, and illustrations used in this thesis are either created by the authors, or are under creative commons licence, or used with permission by Heini Karppinen from EdTech Finland association.

1.1 Background

Mobile and video games have become part of our lives and our entertainment. With lockdowns during the pandemic, video and mobile games soared. A recent article published by the World Economic Forum from July 2022, shows that the gaming market expanded by 26% between 2019 - 2021, and it will keep booming in the following years (Read 2022). Read (2022), calculates that by 2026, the global gaming industry will be worth \$321 billion. A survey carried out between March and June 2020 revealed that European gamers believe playing video games have a positive mental effect on them, with an overall of 16% feeling this way (Clements 2022). Games and gaming will continue rising, and public perception will keep improving.

The fast rise of gaming and technology has also impacted students and schools. We now see fewer books and more smartphones, tablets, and computers. Teachers needed to adapt to these steady and rapid changes. The COVID-19 pandemic forced schools and teachers to change their teaching methods very quickly and drastically. Schools and teachers had to modify the educational

approach and evolve the use of technology and devices. When teachers notice they cannot reach their students with traditional methods and resources any longer, how can they use modern technologies and devices to improve this?

One way of learning is by playing games. An article published by Edutopia (Nguyen 2021), revealed important benefits of using games in teaching, such as an increase of students' participation and motivation. In a world full of electronic devices, and especially during the pandemic, teachers have adapted to new ways of educating. Online games are now used to connect and engage with students. The Kahoot platform is just one example of online tools students and teachers commonly use. Research made by Kahoot with a study group showed that students using gamified learning reported a better perception towards learning, showed preference in sharing theoretical lessons with Kahoot and improved their academic performance (Fuster-Guilló, Pertegal-Felices, Jimeno-Morenilla, Azorín-López, Rico-Soliveres & Restrepo-Calle 2019).

The blogger Nina Weber thinks that the trend of using more digital educational tools will continue to grow also after the Pandemic. Weber sees several reasons for that. She thinks, there has been a shift in the way we think about education, due to gained experiences during the Pandemic. Weber discusses that even parents are more positive towards digital ways of learning nowadays. (Weber 24 November 2021.)

Lockdowns and the rapid growth of technology have changed and will furthermore change the way how we behave, interact, and learn. The EdTech market is a new, fast-growing, and promising market that should be explored, not only for the benefit of small start-ups and the education industry, but also for teachers, students, and future learners. EdTech is the future of learning, and the more we understand it now, the better prepared we are to benefit from it in the future.

Loru Games provides a browser-based product. When looking at the use of online education, specifically within the German market, one notices a definite trend. During 2021, 12% of Germans had enrolled in at least one online educational course (Eurostat 2022).

A study by the Bündnis für Bildung in April and May 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, showed that teachers rapidly adapted to online teaching. Teachers recognized the benefits of digital tools, which led to a rapid acceptance of digitalization by the public and education centres. As a result, there was a more significant demand for more of these digital tools. This study also shows that when asked if these digital tools would continue to be used after the end of the school year, 76% of teachers said they would continue using them. Additionally, the study points out expectations for the future and feels that the obstacles to digital education have been removed in Germany.

(Bündnis für Bildung 2020)

1.2 Objectives, purpose & limitations

There has been a rapid rise in gaming and games in the past few years, which is also true for educational games, and many Finnish EdTech companies have been part of this rapid growth with great concepts. However, the Finnish EdTech market is rather small, therefore internationalisation plays a key role. When expanding to other international markets, the possibility to gain a greater number of customers offers many opportunities. With our thesis we would like to provide Loru Games with ideas, what might be possible when thinking about expanding to the German market from a marketing point of view. With the help of research, interviewing experts on the German business market and experts from the Educational Technology sector, we want to find out how a small start-up could enter the German market.

As Loru Games currently has a very low budget, we will pay special attention to things, that would be possible for free, for a very little price, or how to get funding for different services.

The objectives are to find out what an EdTech company, like Loru Games, should take into consideration when planning to enter the German market. Therefore, our main research question is: "What do Finnish EdTech start-ups have to consider before/when entering the German (EdTech) market?" We added two sub questions, which are: "What is the German EdTech market like?" and "How prepared is the German educational environment for the use of online educational games?".

Finally, based on our background research and findings from our interviews and survey we aim to develop the most suitable marketing plan for our commissioning company.

1.3 Research methods

While doing the plan for our thesis, we noticed that the best way to gather data and information about the EdTech market, in Finland and Germany, was by using a qualitative approach. According to Drake and Salmi, "Qualitative research [...] aims to describe, understand or interpret phenomena and to answer questions such as what, why and how" (Drake & Salmi 2018).

The research was done by conducting four semi structured interviews, three of them being video-call interviews and one being a written interview. Semi-structured interviews allowed us to focus on specific subjects depending on the answers we got. (Drake & Salmi 2018)

We mostly had the same kind of themes/questions for all our interviewees, but as their backgrounds varied very much, we changed questions depending on what we thought the interviewee would know best. For the analysis of the interviews, we organized each interview into

topics/themes so that we could find patterns and similarities between them. We did our best to respect all data gathered so that we can give the most honest interpretation of the results.

The interviewees were individuals that work within the German and Finnish EdTech, educational and business sector. As the EdTech industry is still rather new and growing fast, we wanted to find out first-hand what the market is like and where it is going.

Additionally, we wanted to gather data from a larger group of teachers. Therefore, we also used the survey-method. The survey was carried out by sending an electronic questionnaire, designed with Google forms. The population of the survey consists of teachers from different states in Germany, (mostly Baden-Württemberg), and some teachers from the German school in Helsinki, Uusimaa.

The educational business market in Germany can be divided into the public and the private sector. Through a survey targeted at German teachers working in the public sector, we aimed to find out more about the opportunities and challenges within this sector – what is or isn't possible. Within the scope of this thesis, it is not possible to look at all of Germany. Therefore, we mainly focus on one state (Baden-Württemberg), including only some answers from other states. Baden-Württemberg was a natural choice, due to private connections to teachers from this region, which made it more likely to get answers to the survey. The focus of the survey was to gather information if and to what extent German teachers use browser-based educational games. We aimed to find out what challenges they face and how the digital infrastructure is affecting their choices.

We aimed to better understand and explore the educational, business and gaming market in Germany and compared the findings from the interviews and survey with the literature gathered.

1.4 Thesis structure

In chapter one we introduce this thesis by providing background information about the topic, outlining the objectives and purpose of this thesis, as well as the research methods used and shortly introducing our commissioning company.

Chapter two discusses the EdTech industry and education in general. It provides information about this industry in Finland, Germany, and Europe as a whole, outlining challenges, opportunities, and differences between the regions. Further, we will also define terms related to the EdTech industry used throughout this thesis.

In chapter three, we take a closer look at the German market and explain important differences within the country due to a division into states. After a short country introduction, we will look at the

German macroeconomy and discuss legal and political considerations. To finish this chapter, we look at German business culture and aspects regarding the EdTech sector.

Chapter four is about marketing theory relevant for this thesis, looking at the theory regarding a marketing plan. In chapter five, we use this theory, in addition to the results of our interviews and survey to explain the development of our marketing plan.

Finally, in our last chapter we will conclude this thesis and provide an outlook to the future.

1.5 Introduction commissioning company

Loru Games is a small Finnish start-up company, operating in the educational technology sector. It was founded by a small group of teachers to improve everyday learning at schools through gamified learning. Loru Games' product is a "gamified learning platform that enables teachers to see students' progress in real time, both in the classroom and remotely" (Loru games 2022). It offers a variety of online games, that adapt to whatever content the teacher (or another adult) enters to the platform. The games also adapt to the level of the student, depending on given answers, speed, etc.

Loru Games does not have any full-time employees at the moment. However, a group of seven people are currently actively working for the company, whenever they have the time and capacity to do so. Some work on a voluntarily basis, with no pay, some on an occasional pay basis (hourly or per item). Those people working for Loru Games have various backgrounds: education (teachers), business, tech, and marketing. As the company is not making any real profit yet, the budget is also very limited, mainly relying on funding. Therefore, Loru Games has hardly invested in marketing so far. However, they have spent some time building up a community in several social media channels, as for example in Facebook.

As mentioned, the core of the company's philosophy is to improve everyday learning at schools. Loru Games rather wants to have a real impact on evolving the educational system than making much profit and growing fast. They prefer to build slow, do small things but do them consistently, instead of growing fast and then fail.

2 EdTech and Education

“Education is one of the world’s single largest industries, making up more than 6% of GDP (HolonIQ). With the population growth rate there is also a great need to deliver better education to the global population” (EdTech Finland 2022, p. 5).

The above quote from this year’s Finnish EdTech report shows the importance of the education industry, but also the importance of developing and improving it. The EdTech industry plays a big role in this development.

In this chapter we will first look at Education in Germany in general before diving into the EdTech industry. We will discuss the EdTech development in Europe and the importance of digital learning, but we will also take a closer look at the EdTech industry in Finland and Germany, and the differences between those countries.

2.1 Education in Germany

The German educational system is very complex and complicated, and we won’t be able to go into detail in this thesis. However, some aspects must be considered when planning to enter the German market with a product related to the education sector.

When looking at Germany as a whole, one will notice, that Germany consists of 16 different states. This plays an important role, when it comes to education in Germany. The “Responsibility on education issues in Germany is shared amongst Länders [=states] and the Federation (which has a minor role)” (Inquero.com 2022). This means there are some rules and regulations for all of Germany, e.g. respecting the Basic law, also known as Grundgesetz. However, the main responsibility and legislative power, when it comes to education, lies in the hands of the individual states, or as is often said “Schule ist Ländersache”, meaning “school is a state matter” (BMBF 2022). We will explore the state division and its legal aspects and terms further in the Law sub-chapter in chapter 3.

Due to the above-mentioned regulations, each state has their own curriculum and educational system. Some states have remarkable similarities, whereas others are completely different. For example, some types of schools only exist in some states, but not in others: In the illustration below the division between the so-called “Hauptschule” (Secondary general school), “Realschule” (Secondary school) and Gymnasium (Academic Secondary school) does not exist in some states, where there is only one “Gesamtschule” (Comprehensive school). As a result, there is not one German school system, but 16 different school systems.

Germany's education system						
		Fachhochschule (University of applied sciences)	Universität (University)			
		Grade				Age
Secondary level I-II	13	Berufsschule, Fachoberschule (Vocational school, technical college)		Gesamtschule (Comprehensive school)	Gymnasium (Academic secondary school)	18/19
	12					17
	11		16			
	10	10. Klasse (tenth year of school)				15
	9	Hauptschule (Secondary general school)	Realschule (Secondary School)			14
	8					13
	7					12
	6					11
	5					10
Primary sector	4	Grundschule (Primary school)			9	
	3				8	
	2				7	
	1				6	
Elementary sector	Kindergarten, Tageseltern und Kindergrüpe (Day nurseries, daycare staff)				5	
					4	
					3	
					2	
					1	

Figure 1. Germany's education system (adapted from Inquero.com 2022)

Further, this phenomenon lead to the fact that some schoolbooks are used in one state but are not accepted in another because it doesn't match their curriculum.

For our thesis, this might play a role when planning to adapt the ready material for teachers on Loru Games' platform, according to a German curriculum. It might also need to be considered when looking for possible cooperation with schoolbooks or business partners. What works in the Northern German states, cannot be exactly copied to the Southern states.

As discussed, the educational system in Germany is very complex. This could make it very challenging for a small start-up to enter the German market in the public sector. It will be kept in mind when looking at the EdTech environment in Germany, and while developing the marketing plan in chapter 5. With the help of interviews and research, we aim to learn more about the differences between the public and the private education sector and to get more insights into possible challenges and opportunities in both industries.

2.2 Definition key EdTech terms used

In this thesis we use the terms “EdTech”, “educational games”, “online or browser-based educational games” and “gamified learning” and “K-12” according to the following definitions. These definitions are based on definitions by tagesschau.de, one of the biggest German news channels, a blog about educational games by King and a definition of term K-12 on TechTarget by Hanna.

EdTech is short for “educational technology”. The term refers to the industry developing educational technologies, such as software solutions, services and tools that support learning or teaching. (Hiltscher 2021) This includes learning and teaching for all ages, from early childhood to adult education and training.

Educational games are games used for educating. These games communicate or mediate a certain topic or skill and aim at a specific learning goal or outcome. They are mainly directed at children and students, from kindergarten to university. Educational games are to be used within and outside the classroom. (King 2021)

Browser-based or online educational games are educational games that are played online, through a learning platform or website. (King 2021)

Gamified learning refers to “the act of learning information or skills through a game [...] Game-based learning occurs in educational games, making educational games an umbrella term for both the act of learning and the method of education” (King 2021). This includes all types of games: serious or just for fun, offline or online, digital, or non-digital. (King 2021)

K-12 is a term used to describe education or educational tools for children from kindergarten up to the last year of high school, focusing on students from year 1-12. In the EdTech sector this term is used to describe the customers or users a EdTech company is providing for. The term originates from the United States and Canada but is also commonly used within the EdTech industry in Europe. (Hanna 2022)

2.3 The EdTech industry: numbers, trends, and facts

2.3.1 EdTech Europe and benefits of online learning

As Germany and Finland are part of the EU, we would like to take a quick look at the development of the EdTech market around Europe before looking at the German and Finnish markets.

According to an article by Hiltscher (2021) on the tagesschau.de website in 2021, the market for digital education has huge potential. Worldwide the investment in innovative learning solutions and

business models has doubled from 2018 to 2020, with 16 billion US dollar in venture capital in 2020. According to HolonIQ these investments are estimated to rise to 404 billion Us dollar in 2025. However, Hiltcher sees Europe, especially Germany, as lacking way behind the US and China. However, the industry is developing fast, and things can change rapidly within only one year. We will further discuss the fact of Germany lacking behind in the EdTech Germany chapter.

In 2020 Europe invested \$785 million in EdTech companies. The following year, in 2021, investments increased to \$2 500 million (Brighteye Ventures 2021). Online education and EdTech companies saw investment increase exceptionally in just one year. The main cause for this sudden rise was the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The illustration below from the Finnish EdTech report 2022 clearly shows this global trend:

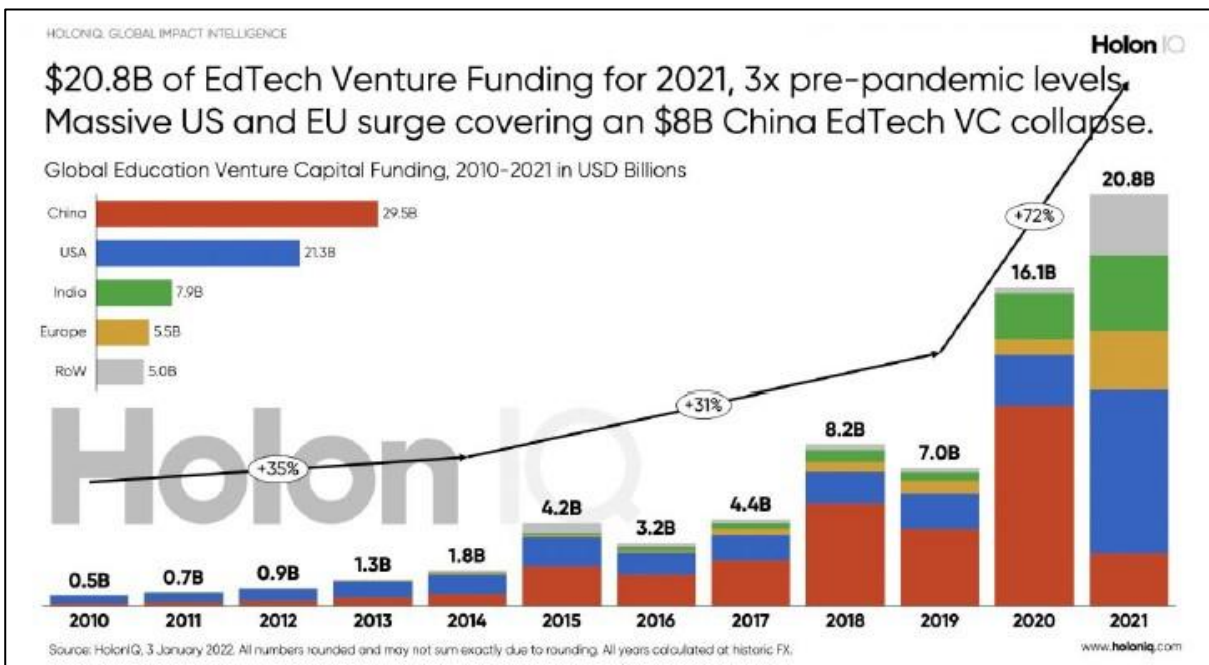


Figure 2. Global Education Venture Capital Funding, according to Holon IQ (in EdTech Finland 2022, 75)

A study by Eurostat showed that 18% of Europeans had taken at least one online course, on any subject, in 2021 (Eurostat 2022). Even though we are starting to live in post-pandemic times, and people are looking again for a sense of normality, online learning has come to stay. For the past years, online learning has been seen as the future of learning. It started quite slowly some years ago, but COVID-19 accelerated the process. Big and small companies, as well as local authorities are betting big on this new business. Online learning is flexible, accessible, more cost-effective,

and over 85% of students consider it equally effective or even better than traditional classroom learning. (Josep 2022)

The pandemic came to change the landscape of online education and EdTech drastically. Not only can we see a big increase in investment within the industry, but we can also see huge support not only from teachers and institutions but also from students and users. We are now beginning to understand all the benefits of online learning, like availability, personalized participation and reaching more students while using fewer resources. Other activities and demonstrations can be more varied and engaging, lets learners interact directly with the material, and so much more. (Galvin 2022)

The EdTech industry is often dominated by start-ups, developing adaptations for new technical solutions, such as virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), mobile apps, etc. for educational use. The number of registered start-ups related to EdTech is constantly rising but varies according to country, region, and city. (Hiltscher 2021)

Finally, it is good to know that EdTech companies have formed various alliances and groups throughout Europe. The most important on the European level is the European EdTech Alliance (EEA). This alliance helps EdTech companies connect, but also provides information and support. The EEA is essential when wanting to find other country specific EdTech alliances or EdTech companies from a particular region, when, for example, planning to partner up with another EdTech company from Germany. (European EdTech Alliance 2022)

Further, one needs to mention the Ed Tech Garage, a network targeting early-stage European EdTech start-ups, providing peer-support and matchmaking. EdTech Garage is also an associate of the EEA and is in partnership with Brighteye Ventures. Brighteye Ventures is the leading EdTech venture capital fund in Europe. EdTech Garage is functioning as a non-profit organisation, wanting to lower the barrier accessing EdTech ecosystems across Europe. (EdTech Garage 2022)

2.3.2 EdTech Finland

As our commissioning company is in Finland, it is important to first look at the Finnish EdTech industry, before continuing with the German EdTech market. What is the Finnish industry like? How is it developing? Where are the strengths and challenges?

The information in this chapter is mainly based on the recently published Finnish EdTech report 2022 by EdTech Finland ry, commissioned by the city of Helsinki and data gathered from our interviews.

EdTech Finland, was founded in 2019 and is the most important association for EdTech companies in Finland, helping and supporting small companies and start-ups to grow and export to foreign markets. It provides peer support and opportunities to find like-minded people and connect to other companies interested in similar foreign markets, making collaborations easier. EdTech Finland currently has over 60 members, including our commissioning company Loru Games. (Karppinen 3 October 2022.; EdTech Finland ry 2022)

Next to EdTech Finland, the Helsinki Education Hub also plays a vital role for EdTech start-ups. It is a start-up and innovation Hub, and incubator, but it also offers co-working space and a community. The Hub informs, helps, and supports EdTech start-ups by offering various trainings, events, and networking support to connect to investors and peers. (Helsinki Education Hub 2022)

The Finnish EdTech industry is small and mostly placed in the capital region, in and around Helsinki. According to the Finnish EdTech report 2022, Finland currently lists 280 EdTech companies with an overall turnover of 176 MEUR. However, it seems to be challenging to list EdTech companies and to define what can be classified as an EdTech company. According to the Finnish EdTech report 2022, “[...] it is not exact how to define an EdTech company. The EdTech Finland association accepts companies as members if they conduct business related to and choose to identify themselves with the Education Technology” (EdTech Finland 2022, 5).

Furthermore, most companies have only been recently founded, with many companies still being start-ups, that haven't reached the break-even point yet (EdTech Finland 2022). According to Karppinen, the break-even point is also one of the biggest challenges, with many companies reaching it only after 8-10 years (Karppinen 3 October 2022.). Therefore, most companies are still small with an average of 7 people working for one company. The illustration below from the Finnish EdTech report 2022 shows the characteristics of a typical Finnish EdTech company. (EdTech Finland 2022)

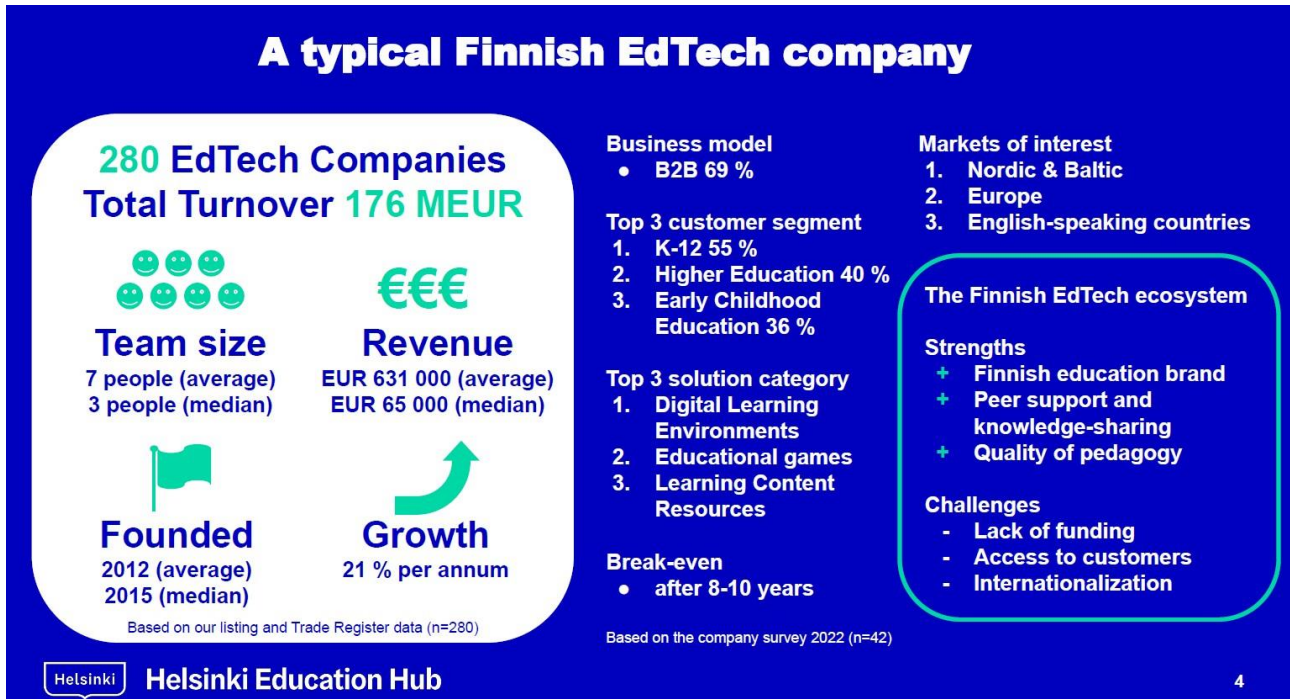


Figure 3. A typical Finnish EdTech company (EdTech Finland 2022, 4)

The illustration suggests that most business models focus on B2B (69% of all EdTech companies). According to a 2022 EdTech survey, “For the Finnish EdTech companies the paying customer is most often an organisation” (EdTech Finland 2022, 6). Therefore, B2B here is usually a public or private education provider, a corporation, or an education company (EdTech Finland 2022, 6).

The customer segment K-12, which Loru Games has chosen, seems to be the most common with 55% of all companies in the industry. Loru Games focuses on educational games, which come second within the top 3 categories.

Further, the strengths and challenges of the Finnish EdTech ecosystem are mentioned. These aspects are particularly interesting to keep in mind when developing our marketing plan. As one of the strengths mentioned here is the Finnish education brand and the quality of education, we included this aspect also in our survey to find out more about German teachers’ opinions on Finnish education.

One important strength mentioned is also “peer support and knowledge-sharing”. According to Karppinen, there is no tough competition between companies. On the contrary, there is a strong peer support spirit. Companies are cooperating and sharing information, and experiences with each other. This is strongly related to the fact that many start-up founders seem to have high ideological standards. Making a lot of profit seems not to be the most important goal, but rather having an impact and improving the landscape of education and learning. (Karppinen 3 October 2022.)

When looking at the challenges mentioned, especially the lack of funding and the aspect of internationalisation, are relevant to this thesis. According to the report, this also impacts the mindset of a Finnish EdTech start-up: “Founding a start-up company in a small country like Finland often means to have a “born global” mindset” (EdTech Finland 2022, 5).

With the help of our interviews and research, we aimed to get more insight into funding possibilities and limits and kept that in mind while developing the marketing plan – where to get funding and what requirements do they come with? But also, what is possible for free or with very little budget?

It seems that especially the K-12 sector is struggling in Finland. There appears to be “no money in K-12” (EdTech Finland 2022, p. 58). Renker also mentioned this fact about the German market, which will be discussed in chapter 2.3.3. about EdTech Germany (Renker 17 October 2022.).

The local market is described as small and weak and the attitude towards Finnish EdTech seems to be sometimes rather negative, as shown in this statement from the Finnish EdTech report 2022: “Finnish schools eagerly spend money on Google and Microsoft but consider Finnish EdTech solutions too commercial” (EdTech Finland 2022, 58).

According to this year’s Finnish EdTech report, Finnish EdTech companies can be divided into 13 categories. Our commissioning company Loru Games belongs to the third biggest category in the industry, “Educational games”. (EdTech Finland 2022)

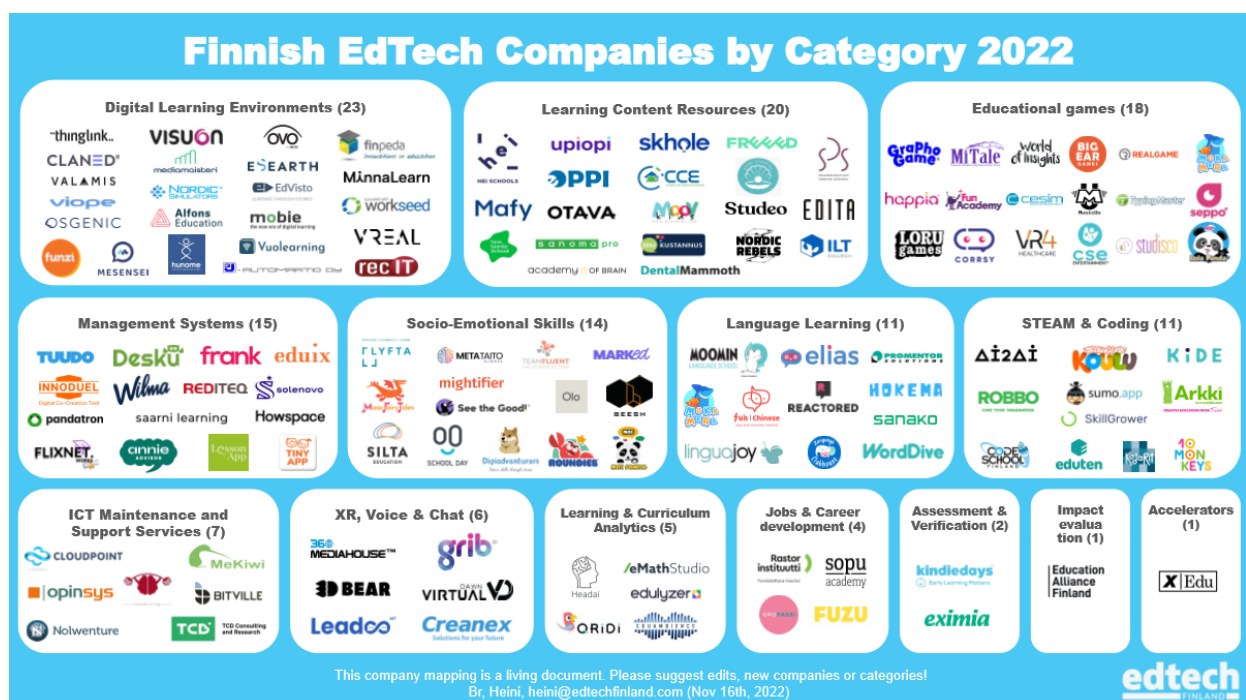


Figure 4. Finnish EdTech company mapping 2022 (EdTech Finland 2022); here: updated version by Karppinen available on LinkedIn (Karppinen 2022)

The picture above also illustrates how small the Finnish EdTech industry is – with only 18 companies listed under “Educational games”. According to most of our interviewees, the key to success is to stick out, be different, and define what makes your company unique. For instance, according to Westerlund, “If your product is not unique, if it is not somehow way more amazing than all the other products then it’s not worthwhile” (Westerlund 5 October 2022.). This, however, does not only apply to the Finnish market, but also the German market, or any other market within the EdTech industry.

According to Karppinen, there are yet no EdTech unicorns to be found in Finland. She sees one possible reason for that in the fragmentation of Europe, with many different languages and national policies. (Karppinen 3 October 2022.) Finnish is a very extreme example, with only few native speakers within Europe and worldwide.

To round up this chapter, we would like to give an outlook on what things a Finnish EdTech company needs to keep in mind when planning to internationalise and look for foreign investors. First, the Finnish EdTech report 2022 quotes Peer-advice from Finnish EdTech companies who succeeded with a positive cash flow from their core product. Two quotes mentioned play an important role in this thesis: “Grow in Finland to make business sustainable first” (EdTech Finland 2022, p. 70) and “Don’t hurry to start selling your product and raising funds” (EdTech Finland 2022, 72).

This was also one piece of advice given by Renker. According to Renker, one should first start at home and gain a market share there. This way the company could gain credibility and ensure its product works, before entering a foreign market. (Renker 17 October 2022.) This plays an important role when doing business with Germans, looking at German business culture in particular, which will be discussed further in chapter 3.

The Finnish EdTech report further advises what a foreign investor should remember when investing in Finnish EdTech. First, it is mentioned how engaged, active, and firm the Finnish EdTech ecosystem is. People are closely connected and share information; the investor must understand this. Secondly, the strength of a “strong international brand of quality education and innovative pedagogy” (EdTech Finland 2022) is a plus in entering a foreign market. Finally, the two challenges of the long time period before the break-even point and the difficulties of the local Finnish market are stated. It might take up to 10 years to develop a ready-to-use product. The Finnish market is challenging because it is small, fragmented and involves a high level of bureaucracy. Further, education is seen as something that should be free, which can lead to challenging attitudes, as mentioned earlier.

Especially these strengths and challenges must be considered when developing a marketing plan to enter a foreign market. How to use those strengths to sell yourself and your product better and how to overcome the challenges? This will be discussed further in chapter 5.

2.3.3 EdTech Germany

The German EdTech sector has been more difficult to analyse than the Finnish one. As discussed earlier, the German educational system is incredibly challenging, with each state having its own institution for educational issues and hardly any institutions on a national level. These 16 different ministries of culture and education complicate the already complex regulations on the national level even further.

It has been more challenging to find an organisation or institution that can give us the whole panorama of the EdTech situation in Germany. “Bündnis für Bildung”, the institution officially responsible for the entire German EdTech industry, unfortunately, does not provide equally good information on the German EdTech industry as EdTech Finland does. Much information is only offered in German and does not directly refer to the EdTech industry, but rather educational issues in general, digital education and digitalisation. Further, people from Bündnis für Bildung did not respond to our requests to provide information about the German EdTech industry. Therefore, this chapter cannot provide an up-to-date company mapping of listed EdTech companies in Germany from 2022.

Bündnis für Bildung is part of the European EdTech Alliance (EEA) and a non-profit organisation. It aims to support digital change in education in Germany. Further, it intends to make digital media, tools and means of communication more openly available for people working in education. However, as the name translates to “alliance for education”, the organisation also deals with other education-related issues than EdTech. (European EdTech Alliance 2022)

Opposed to Finland, Germany still needs to build up something like the Helsinki Education Hub. However, according to a discussion with Birkhoelzer from the Founders Foundation gGmbH, at the official Slush 2022 side event InvestED Helsinki 2022, Germany is just in the middle of building up a similar incubator programme and institution to help support German EdTech companies – especially start-ups. (Birkhoelzer 17 November 2022.)

As mentioned earlier, the EdTech market is very much dominated by start-ups. However, Hiltcher says that according to Florian Schoner from the Ifo Institute’s Centre for the Economics of Education, the number of start-ups on the German market is manageable. According to Schoner, the share of start-ups related to the educational sector is in the single digits. (Hiltcher 2021)

Looking at the German EdTech sector and possibilities for start-ups, one should look at those regions and cities within Germany that are mostly connected to the industry. Berlin is often mentioned when talking about start-ups and educational technologies. According to Business Finland, “Berlin was named the best city to start a company in Europe by Startup Heatmap Europe, overtaking London” (Business Finland 2022). This includes start-ups from all sectors, not only EdTech.

In the top 5 European cities for Edtech start-ups, Berlin is placed in fourth place, only surpassed by Moscow, London, and Paris (StartupBlink 2022). Germany also comes fourth in the Venture capital invested in Edtech companies in Europe in 2021, with \$297 million (Brighteye Ventures 2022).

Hiltscher sees the high administrative burden on companies as the biggest challenge for German EdTech start-ups. She refers to Ulrich Schmid, the managing partner of the mmb institute in Essen, who explains that one must do an enormous amount of marketing to enter the market. However, most start-ups need help to handle this. Schmid thinks, that compared to other markets like China or the US, start-ups struggle with much bigger obstacles. Like in Finland, education is mostly seen as something that should be free and organised by the state. Therefore, Germans are often not willing to spend money on education. (Hiltscher 2021)

Westerlund and Renker also referred to these public sector challenges during our interviews. They questioned whether the public sector should or could be approached by a Finnish start-up, entering the market. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.) More about this can be found in chapter 5.

The term “digitalisation” came up during our interviews and in many articles regarding the German EdTech industry. The issue of digitalisation is closely related to the challenges of the German EdTech market. According to Westerlund, it is, and has been for the past years, a very hot topic in Germany (Westerlund 5 October 2022.).

It is often mentioned that Germany needs to catch up with digitalisation. During a webinar organised by EdTech Sweden, about the German EdTech sector, Werner Glowka from the Saxonian State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs also discussed this problem. He sees two reasons for this “lacking behind”. (Glowka 11 October 2022.)

First, there is the issue of two main decision-makers within the public sector: The Federal Republic on national level, and the state on local level. Glowka thinks the problem of no clear definition of “who is responsible” often leads to shifting the responsibility onto the other. As a result, instead of moving forward quickly, the process is often terribly slow, or nothing happens at all, because

nobody feels responsible. Further, Glowka discussed the problem of every state going its own way, leading to high costs and differences between the 16 states. (Glowka 11 October 2022.)

The second reason for lacking behind that Glowka mentions is the digital infrastructure. Germany is still in the process of building up a digital infrastructure, with many places still needing fast internet and Wi-Fi access. This is especially a problem at schools. Who wants to invest in devices if there is no internet available at the school? (Glowka 11 October 2022.)

Hence, when comparing the 16 German states, regarding possibilities and opportunities for EdTech start-ups, the aspect of the level of the digital infrastructure of the state needs to be considered. According to Arne Ruhe from the Freie Hansestadt Bremen, there are huge differences between states regarding their digital infrastructure. This is related to two things: First, different states invested in different things. For example, the states Saarland and Bremen are top regarding the number of devices available at schools. Second, differences are also related to the size and wealth of the state. According to Ruhe, smaller states usually have fewer players (fewer municipalities) deciding on educational issues. Therefore, they often have a better infrastructure. Bigger states, on the other hand, often have more resources and therefore often better teacher training possibilities. (Ruhe 11 October 2022.) This plays a role when developing the marketing plan, especially the geographical aspects of the target market.

Just before the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns, Germany started a digital educational plan for all schools around Germany, called the “DigitalPakt Schule”. It was created around four years ago, in 2018 and the pandemic has only accelerated the intentions of that plan. However, as mentioned, by Glowka and Ruhe, all states have different programs, with only some joint programs. (Glowka 11 October 2022.; Ruhe 11 October 2022.) This is related to the fact that education is the states’ responsibility.

The following illustration gives an overview of the DigitalPakt Schule. Due to the structure of the German educational system and administration, the application for funding goes through various institutions. First on the local level and then on the national level. States are not equally treated. For example, the amount of money each state is entitled to is based on two-thirds of the tax revenue and one-third on the size of a state’s population. (Bündnis für Bildung 2019)

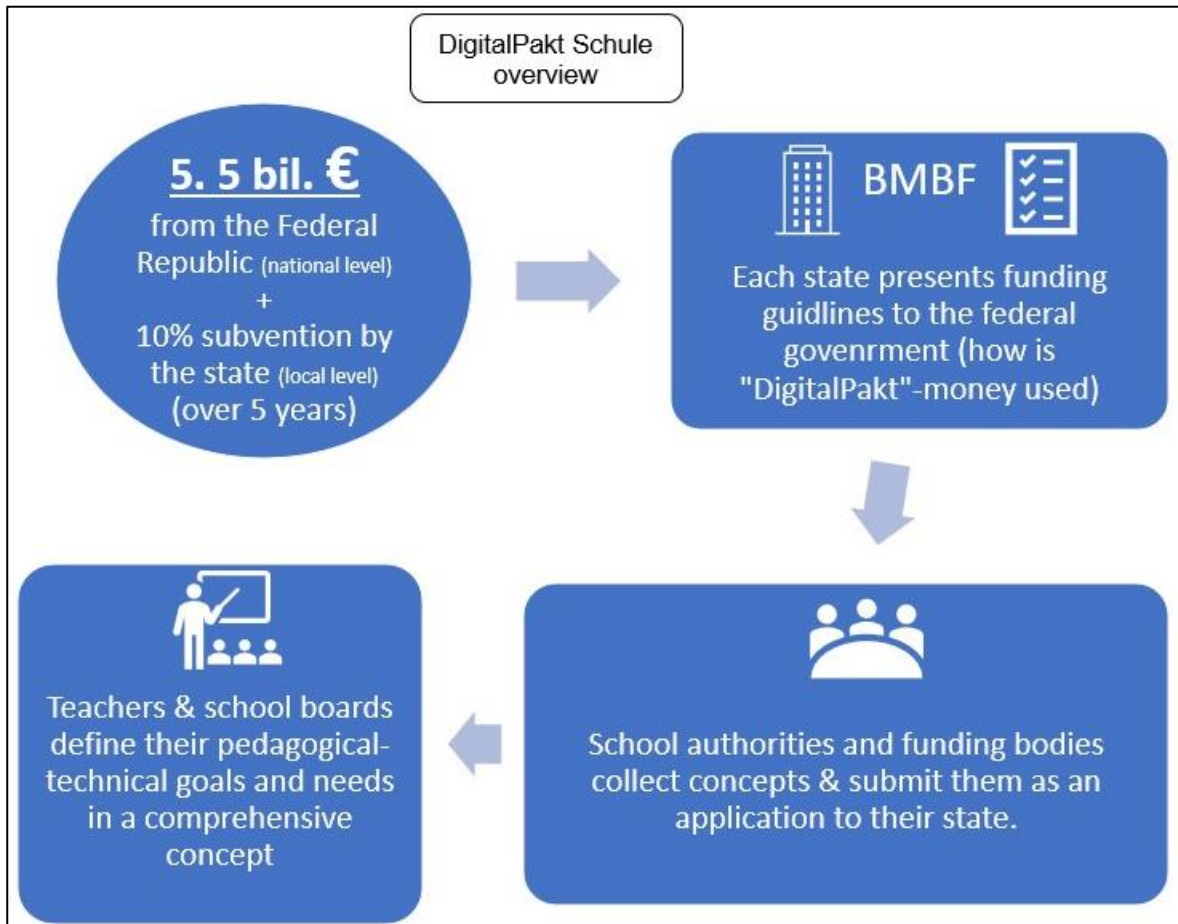


Figure 5. "DigitalPakt Schule overview" (adapted from Bündnis für Bildung 2019)

The plan has an outstanding budget of five billion euros. This budget was increased by around 590 million euros during lockdowns to provide children with equipment for remote study. (Glowka 11 October 2022.)

According to Westerlund this digitalization is going fast and "right now is the perfect moment to be there" to offer (Finnish) EdTech solutions (Westerlund 5 October 2022.). Westerlund sees education being a hot topic in Germany, also regarding worries about PISA results going down. She thinks that Finland is still respected regarding learning methods, even though Finland's results have also gone down. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.) This also relates to the Finnish EdTech strengths mentioned in the previous chapter.

Our commissioning company operates within the K-12 sector. According to Renker, many EdTech companies approaching from Finland are from the K-12 or early education sector. However, she says, there is little money in the K-12 sector. The coaching sector is much more commercialized, and therefore more likely to make money within that sector. (Renker 17 October 2022.) This contrasts with the statement by Westerlund in the previous paragraph. Hence, it must be kept in mind

when developing the marketing plan in chapter 5. What and how could it be possible to get money or investors in the K-12 sector?

In addition to the previously discussed public sector of the educational industry, one shouldn't forget to look at the private sector. The private sector is much larger than in Finland and, according to Westerlund and Renker, might be easier accessible than the public one. More money might be available, and public educational restrictions and laws do not equally restrict the private sector. Private tutoring is much more common in Germany. Likewise, there are many more private language schools, due to the large amounts of people entering Germany every year. Professional (vocational) schooling institutions, such as the IHK (= "Industrie und Handelskammer"), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, could be described as semi-private, as they often cooperate with private businesses, but are still mostly part of the public educational system. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.)

To get a better overview of the German EdTech landscape, we will now look at how existing German EdTech companies can be divided into similar categories as the Finnish EdTech market. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, it is not possible to provide an up-to-date company mapping. However, we base our information on an "Education Startup Map" for German-speaking Europe, including Switzerland and Austria, by the German blogger Nina Weber from 2021 (Weber 24 November 2021.). As the industry is changing rapidly, information from a year ago is already outdated and most likely many companies could be added and or/removed from Weber's map. Weber does not use the same categories as EdTech Finland in its report (see Figure 4) but very similar ones. She divides the market into 13 different categories, though there is no "educational games" category. However, there are several categories to take into consideration: "online learning", including 5 companies "preschool & early childhood education" also including 5 companies and "study tools and support" including 8 companies. Other categories might also include educational games, such as "test preparation and tutoring" with 5 listed companies and "languages" with 4 companies. This makes over 27 companies, which we will take a closer look at when searching for competitors in the German EdTech industry. We will take a closer look at possible competitors in chapter 5 when discussing the development of the marketing plan. (Weber 24 November 2021.)

To summarize this chapter, a few things must be paid special attention to. It is more challenging to get information on the German EdTech market than the Finnish market. This is partly related to the structure of the German educational system, being fragmented and with no unity on the national level. There are many more different institutions involved and it seems that the peer-spirit and sense of community one can find in Finland, is not the same as in Germany. This might also be related to the market's sheer size, with way more players to be found than in Finland. Like for the

Finnish market, many challenges and opportunities must be considered. The most important challenges are the bureaucracy, the digital infrastructure, and the attitude towards education – similar as in Finland, education is seen as something that should be free and taken care of by the state. The most significant opportunity to be mentioned is the current amount of investment and the fast modernisation process – to repeat what Westerlund said: “right now is the perfect moment to be there” (Westerlund 5 October 2022.).

3 German market

3.1 Country introduction

Germany is officially called “The Federal Republic of Germany”, consisting of 16 states, which are: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein, and Thuringia. This division is especially important when looking at the German educational system, as mentioned earlier. But it also plays a role when looking at legal aspects and responsibilities within Germany and its states.

The head of government is the current chancellor Olaf Scholz from the social democratic party SPD. The head of state is the president, Walter Steinmeier. (Elkins 2022) Additionally, power is also divided between the 16 states, each having its own Ministerpräsident, meaning “State Prime Minister”.

Keeping in mind, that education is the responsibility of the states, one should also mention that each state has their own Kultusministerium, meaning “Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs”. For example, the “Kultusministerium Baden-Württemberg” is responsible for education within the state Baden-Württemberg. (Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden Württemberg 2022) This can play an important role when thinking about whom to contact, or who to talk to about local educational matters.

Germany plays a vital role within the EU. This is partly related to its geographical position. The country is situated in north-central Europe, sharing its border with nine countries: Denmark in the north, Poland and the Czech Republic to the east, Austria and Switzerland in the south, and France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands in the west. North Germany also has a long coastline, bordering the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. (Elkins 2022)

Due to this geographical position, many trade routes from all over Europe go through Germany. However, it is hard to say if this also plays a role in the EdTech sector, usually rather not dealing



Figure 6. Map of Germany's administrative division with neighbouring countries (TUBS 2012)

with actual goods to be shipped. However, only within the last few months, several mayor EdTech events/ fairs have taken place in Germany with many visitors and participants from all over Europe. Two examples are the EdTech Germany fair, which took place on the 29.- 30. September 2022 in Berlin and the EdTech Next Summit on the 24. - 26. October 2022 in Bielefeld.

Both being part of the EU, Germany and Finland share many values and views, such as respecting human rights and democratic values. However, they also differ in many aspects, size being the most obvious one. While they don't vary much looking at the land size, with Germany having roughly 357,6 m², and Finland around 338,5 m², it's the population that makes the difference (Elkins 2022).

With over 83 million inhabitants, "Germany is the largest and most populous economy in the EU" - and the fourth largest worldwide (Business Finland 2022). According to Business Finland, Germany is "one of the most international economies globally. [...] Around 50% of the annual GDP is being exported to other countries making Germany one of the top 3 trading nations worldwide" (Business Finland 2022). This makes Germany also very attractive to foreign investors. This said, Germany is Finland's most important business partner with 13,8 % of Finland's export in 2020 going to Germany. (Business Finland 2022)

Finally, it is worth mentioning that there are other German-speaking markets apart from Germany. That means once a company has a ready German product and marketing material in German, it can easily also expand to other German-speaking markets, such as Austria and parts of Switzerland. That said, one needs to keep in mind the differences in the educational systems between those countries and Germany. Therefore, the product would still need to be adapted for the other markets, but the language issue would already be solved.

3.2 Macroeconomy

According to Investopedia,

"Macroeconomics is a branch of economics that studies how an overall economy [...] behave[s]. Macroeconomics examines economy-wide phenomena such as inflation, price levels, rate of economic growth, national income, gross domestic product (GDP), and changes in unemployment."
(Investopedia 2022)

Here we briefly discuss the following aspects impacting the German economy: GDP, inflation, unemployment, and the consumer price index. Due to COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, the world's economic situation has changed dramatically and rapidly in the last 2 years. Therefore, we would like to look at the most actual and accurate numbers we can find. For this, we will mainly use data from statistical and employment offices in Germany.

A study made by the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt), shows that the year-on-year change of the gross domestic product (=GDP) fell to -3.7% in 2020 and made a remarkable recovery in 2021 with 2.6%. For 2022, GDP is expected to be at around 1.6%, and projected to go as low as -0.3% for 2023. (Ifo Institut 2022) Inflation, lower consumption power, logistics issues due to the war in Ukraine, and a rise in energy costs and raw materials are reasons why Germany's GDP will remain low for this and next year.

As of September 2022, the inflation rate in Europe reached 10%. Europe's biggest economy, Germany, reached 10.9%, the highest inflation rate for Germany since 1951 (Cohen & Eddy 2022). Energy costs and price manipulation of gas by Russia, have hurt consumers all around Europe. A study made by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Climate Protection, about the year-on-year change of the inflation rate in Germany, shows that inflation was at 0.5% in 2020, went to 3.1% in 2021. It is projected to be at 6.1% in 2022 and 2.8% in 2023 (Bundesministeriums für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz 2022). But inflation only shows a big picture of the situation. Looking at data provided by the Statistisches Bundesamt on their webpage, one notices how hard inflation affects the consumer. For example, the current Customer Price Index for energy in Germany is 43.9% and for food, it is 18.7% (Statistisches Bundesamt 2022). This means that German consumers must pay 44% more for energy and almost 19% more for food, than what they paid a year ago at the same time of the year. These numbers were checked last time on the 17th of October 2022. However, they are changing daily.

The last aspect we would like to take a closer look at is unemployment. A study published by the European Statistical Office, or Eurostat, published in September 2022 with data gathered in July 2022, shows that unemployment in the European Union was at 6%, and Germany's rate was the third lowest, with an unemployment rate of 2.9% (Eurostat 2022). A forecast made by Statista with Bundesagentur für Arbeit, "Federal Employment Agency", data estimates that unemployment for 2022 will be at 2.31% and for 2023 at 2.29% (Ifo Institut 2022).

We consider these 4 macroeconomic aspects important to mention in our study because most companies and firms use these numbers when investing, expanding, developing, and hiring. These numbers are also used to inform how well the country's economy is doing. Even though the European and German economies are being directly affected by war, post-pandemic issues and inflation, numbers like low unemployment show why Germany is nonetheless the biggest and one of the strongest economies in the EU.

3.3 Legal and political considerations

To understand Germany and to be able to do business with or in Germany, we must also understand its laws. The topic is broad and complex; therefore, we cannot go into detail within the scope of this thesis. We consider, that for our study, regarding EdTech and digitalization, we should focus on two important aspects. The first will be the country's division into states, and the second is data protection.

The German “Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany” (Grundgesetz, also GG), Part II Art. 20 GG, declares that “The Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic and social federal state” (Federal Ministry of Justice 2020). The Basic Law applies to all 16 states. Part II, Art. 30 GG, declares that “Except as otherwise provided or permitted by this Basic Law, the exercise of state powers and the discharge of state functions is a matter for the Länder” (Federal Ministry of Justice 2020). It then continues that the Federal law is over the Länder law. Part II Art. 28 GG, regarding Land constitutions – Autonomy municipalities, explains that each state has the responsibility of following the articles found in the Basic Law, as for example human rights, and to guarantee this right to each German living in its state. This article also defines that each state has “[...] the right of self-government in accordance with the laws [...]” and that “Municipalities must be guaranteed the right to regulate all local affairs on their responsibility within the limits prescribed by the laws” (Federal Ministry of Justice 2020).

This legal state division can result in big differences between the states. For example, digitalization might be a priority for one state, but not for all of them. These differences might cause some states to be digitally ahead or behind others. Some states might have internet access in some schools, but not all of them, because it has not been their priority to invest in it. For our study, we need to be clear that we deal with states with different priorities and preconditions. However, because of the pandemic, all states are trying to speed up their digitalization. We will discuss this in more detail in the following chapters.

The second legal consideration is data protection. Through our research and interviews, we discovered that one of the main obstacles or issues with EdTech in Germany is handling and storing customer data. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.) It gets even more sensible when handling information related to children and minors. The German “Federal Data Protection Act” (Bundesdatenschutzgesetz, also BDSG) is the data protection Act that applies to the processing of personal data in Germany (Federal Ministry of Justice 2022). The act applies to the Federal level, and to all states, but the states can also have their own data protection acts. The Act applies to all public and private bodies that process personal data in Germany or of German people. The Act is also subject to the European Union laws and does not apply when the EU law directly

applies. The Act consists of 7 chapters and 86 sections. Any company that uses, processes, or stores personal information in Germany or of German people, must know and operate by the rules of this Act. The institution supervising this Act on the Federal level is the “Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information” (Bundesbeauftragter für den Datenschutz und die Informationsfreiheit, also BfDI). (Federal Ministry of Justice 2022)

To sum up the above, Germany is a Federal Republic divided into 16 states. Each state: must follow the Basic Law and guarantee the fulfilment of all articles; is self-governed in accordance with the Basic Law; has its own institutions that guarantee all rights and duties for its inhabitants; and has its own laws, that are regulated and legalized by the Basic Law and can never be above it. Each state is independent in its decisions, for example regarding education or infrastructure.

Secondly, Germany has one of the strictest data protection acts, and it should always be considered when investing or expanding in the educational technology sector. Understanding all the different legal, state, country and European concerns might be overwhelming for any business, entrepreneur, or investor. Westerlund confirmed this in one of our interviews. She recommends having a German legal advisor (Westerlund 5 October 2022.).

3.4 Business culture (EdTech sector in particular)

Business culture consists of two words - “business” and “culture”. According to Businessculture.org, “Culture illustrates the accepted norms and values and traditional behaviour of a group” (Passport to Trade 2.0 2022). The website continues that the term business culture “...is related to behaviour, ethics, etiquette and more. A business culture will encompass an organisation’s values, visions, working style, beliefs, and habits” (Passport to Trade 2.0 2022).

There are big cultural differences between countries regarding business culture, for example, how to greet or address your business partner. Therefore, one should always do research before meeting or contacting a business partner from another country. This is vital because it is related to the first impression of your opponent. According to Martin, “Building a business relationship has a lot to do with the first impression you make” (Martin & Chaney 2006, 23).

It is wise to make use of offered training related to business culture when planning to enter the German market. The German-Finnish chamber of commerce (AHK) offers different types of training, such as German business communication culture or negotiating with German business partners (AHK 2022). But also other organisations like Business Finland offer help and advice regarding business culture, as for example advice from their German country specialist (Business Finland 2022).

In this chapter, we won't discuss all the aspects mentioned above of business culture. Instead, we focus on the differences between Finnish and German business culture and the main elements that must be considered when doing business with Germans regarding the EdTech business. Much of the information is also based on the findings from our interviews.

There are many aspects to take care of when doing business in Germany, such as for example getting the German names right or how to negotiate prices for products. However, in the following we would like to focus on some elements that we consider most important for this thesis. Germans are described as process-oriented and risk-averse (Riemhofer 2019). This means that Germans need to know the complete process of an operation and all the risks that this might involve. Germans are fond of preparing things beforehand to the smallest detail before a negotiation, and they expect that others present in the conversation or negotiation are equally prepared (Riemhofer 2019).

Our interviews point to two important suggestions when doing business with Germany. First, when in a negotiation, it must be clear in what way and how a product differs from others; in other words, to answer the question, what makes the product special? (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.) Secondly, according to Westerlund and Feller, Germany is a control-based society, meaning people need proof that everything will be ok. Therefore, stamps and certificates are highly important to Germans. This also applies to data security. Germans are less trusting than Finns and are more cautious and careful with data security regulations. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Feller 24 September 2022.) Glowka has also discussed the issue of data security playing a big role at the Ed-Tech Germany webinar (Glowka 11 October 2022.).

This issue also shows in a report about consumer values and behaviour in Germany by Passport. The report states that over 50% of respondents actively manage data sharing and privacy settings according to their preferences. In addition, over 40% of respondents see it as an invasion of their privacy when receiving targeted ads, based on their online searches and purchases. (Euromonitor International 2022)

In our research and interviews, it was also mentioned that Germans tend to prefer to do business with someone that speaks German. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Feller 24 September 2022.) According to Riemhofer, Germans follow the rules, in any context, with great discipline, especially while doing business (Riemhofer 2019). Here we can argue that the challenge is not to speak German, but to do business with someone who understands all the rules and regulations and can be trusted. And that someone trusted is often another German.

Through our research, we noticed differences in business culture when interacting with or contacting people from the EdTech sector in Finland and Germany. People from Finnish organisations were being much more approachable, relaxed, and accessible, also when it comes to language.

4 Elements of marketing plan

4.1 Concept of marketing

To keep it simple, marketing is all the actions taken to sell a product and satisfy our customers. This includes, for example, advertisement, promotion and targeting. Investopedia says, “Marketing refers to activities a company undertakes to promote the buying or selling of a product or service” (Investopedia 2022). This can be considered as the traditional approach to marketing. What must be done to sell a product? However, in the last decades, new approaches have been created, not only to sell the product but also to satisfy and delight the customer. It is not only about selling something that customers want but to build a connection to customers and their needs.

“[...] marketing is engaging customers and managing profitable customer relationships” (Armstrong & Kotler 2016). In other words, marketing is about creating value for the customer and expecting value in return. Value is created when a product or service is better than the one the competition offers. Marketing creates value to engage new and existing customers and tries to keep them happy and satisfied, so they can, in exchange, return value to the business.

The authors of the book “Marketing 5.0”, Hermawan Kartajaya, Philip Kotler, and Iwan Setiawan, find that marketing has experienced many changes with technology and that technology has created new and exciting ways of how to approach customers. Nevertheless, even with all the many tech-changes marketing has had since it was created some 70 years ago, some key concepts have resisted change and are still applied in marketing. They find that, for example, segmentation, targeting, positioning and the 4 P’s are universal essential elements that marketers worldwide still use (Kartajaya, Kotler & Setiawan, 2021); and as we are also worldwide marketers, we are going to use these critical concepts in our thesis.

4.2 Definition of Marketing Plan (vs. Marketing strategy)

Many people struggle to differentiate a marketing plan from a marketing strategy. A marketing plan is often described as one part of the marketing strategy. Therefore, we will start by defining what the two terms mean.

According to a video called “Digital Marketing Strategies For Beginners | Tips & Tools for Success” included in an article by Carmicheal, at HubSpot, a marketing strategy can be defined as “long-term, broad goals, that a business wants to achieve” (in Carmicheal 2022 min. 0:49 – 0:54). A strategy can be seen as the “why” - the reasons for actions and goals. In contrast, a marketing plan, on the other hand, is the “how”, what you are going to do, the specific actions and steps to be

taken to achieve the strategy. (Carmicheal 2022) Therefore, one needs a marketing strategy to develop a marketing plan.

According to HubSpot a marketing plan is one step in developing a thorough marketing strategy. The plan should identify the company's budget, the initiatives to be dealt with and the channels to implement the planned initiatives. Additionally, as the plan should be based on the overall strategy, it should include a business summary. (Carmicheal 2022; HubSpot 2022) More details about the contents of the HubSpot marketing plan template used in this thesis will be described in chapter 5.

Investopedia defines a marketing plan as “a document or set of documents, outlining the platforms and methods a company will use to reach their target” (Chen 2022).

According to Investopedia, a marketing plan is based on a company's overall marketing strategy. It usually includes market research, tailored messaging for specific demographics and geographic areas and a marketing mix consisting of the 4 Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. Additionally, the plan should also state metrics to measure the results of marketing efforts. (Chen 2022)

Similarly, to the previously mentioned theories, Kotler describes a marketing strategy or a business plan as something providing a “broad overview”, whereas a marketing plan “serves to document how the organisation's strategic objectives will be achieved through specific marketing strategies and tactics, with the customer as the starting point” (Kotler & al. 2018, 627).

Kotler talks about a “Customer-Driven Marketing Mix” or “Customer Value-Driven Marketing Strategy”, putting the customer in the centre. This is closely related to the importance of research, that Kotler points out: “To develop successful strategies and action programs, marketers need up-to-date information about the environment, the competition, and the market segments to be served” (Kotler & al. 2018, 627). Research helps marketers to find out what their customers need, expect, dislike or even how they view the company's product or brand.

Kotler further notes that marketing plans are usually done for one year. (Kotler & al. 2018) Therefore, a plan should regularly be revised or renewed to be up to date. The amount of research to be realised within the scope of this thesis is limited yet plays an important role in developing the marketing plan.

With the customer at the centre, Kotler's theory aims to create value for the customer, and build up a customer relationship. As a first step to define, which customers one is serving, Kotler mentions segmentation, targeting, differentiation and positioning. As a next step, Kotler uses the marketing Mix approach to design a marketing program, including the four Ps - Product, Price, Place and Promotion. These two steps are complemented by marketing analysis, marketing planning, marketing

implementation, and marketing control. (Kotler & al. 2018) This, however, goes beyond the marketing plan and aims at managing the marketing strategy as a whole.

4.3 Target market

Adam Smith described the market, or “free market”, as the flow of capital and products between individuals and nations without government’s or authorities' influence (Hayes 2022). Using this definition, we can describe the market as a place where services and products are exchanged. We must understand that the market includes nations, states, provinces, huge land masses and many kinds of people. This huge market is where our potential customers are, but we cannot just release a product into a random market and expect people to buy it. To reach a better product or service success in a market, we can divide the market into different categories or segments. The most common segments found in marketing are geographic, demographic, behavioural and psychographic. Some authors have also added organisational segmentation when targeting companies, countries, or institutions.

With market segmentation, we can understand who the customer is, where the customer is located, and the customer’s lifestyle. A small fraction of all the customers within the whole market need our product or service. We can divide the market into many segments to better understand how we can reach our customers and how they can find us. When we finally can reach our customers, and they can reach us, we have found our target market. For any successful marketing strategy or plan, marketers must be clear about two important aspects. The first one is the target market, what customers we will serve. The other is the value proposition, how we can best serve the customer (Kotler & al. 2018).

4.4 The 4 P’s

The 4 P’s are also known as the marketing mix. As mentioned in the concept of marketing subchapter, the 4 P’s are essential elements that all marketers use. Neil Patel, considered by Forbes to be one of the world’s top 10 marketers, says that a marketing plan “is a concept that summarizes the four basic pillars of any marketing strategy” (Patel 2022). For any marketing strategy, we must have these four elements to release, sell, and promote our product. The 4 P’s stand for Product, Price, Place, and Promotion.

Much has been written about this topic; nowadays, we can even find 7 P’s. With time, People, Process and Physical evidence have been added for services, to the initial 4 P’s. For our thesis, we will focus on the 4 P’s.

For this thesis, we want to define what we consider for each of the 4 P's. Product is what we offer and sell, it can be a physical object or a service. It sounds simple, but in our world, competition is hard, and the product offered must be different, unique, and it should make the customer want to buy it. According to Patel, the product must stand out from all the competition and offer something others don't have. (Patel 2022)

We could define price as the amount of money we can ask for our product. How much are customers willing to pay? Finding the right balance for the price takes a lot of work. A product with a low price might be considered bad or cheap; and an overpriced product in the wrong market will never sell. How much can we charge without looking cheap, but also without overpricing? How much can we charge to make a profit? How much does the competition charge for a similar product? These variables depend on the target market, discounts, company values, competition, and product. (Patel 2022)

Place defines where we sell the product and where we can advertise it. According to Patel, we must pick a location where the customers are. As Patel puts it, they won't come to us, we need to get to them, and it is all "about location, location, location" (Patel 2022). Further, as with Price, we must check where the competition sells their product and how they place it. (Patel 2022)

Finally, the last P is "Promotion". The goal of promotion is to sell the idea to our customers that they need to buy our product and that we offer it at a competitive price. We can promote our product with advertisements, events, bundles, yet we must always be aware that one of the primary purposes of promotion is to generate income/value. (Twin 2022)

4.5 Our Marketing Plan in this thesis

We use an edited template from HubSpot for our marketing plan, which is based on HubSpot's marketing theory. The template was edited to fit our own definitions. We used HubSpot's definitions as a basis and complimented it with aspects of other theories, such as Kotler's.

As discussed, many theories state that a good marketing plan should be based on a company's overall marketing strategy, for example, according to Investopedia's definition of a marketing plan. As our commissioning company has already defined a marketing strategy for themselves, we are basing the marketing plan in this thesis on Loru Games' existing strategy. However, looking beyond this thesis, this strategy should be developed and refined further. The needs and problems of the target group/market should be analysed further through thorough research about the German target market(s). The company's marketing strategy should have a dynamic approach, continuously evolving and adapting the strategy, aligning & realigning it according to current threats or

trends. A design & lean thinking approach, including double-loop learning makes the strategy grow and evolve continuously. (Laintila 2022)

As Kotler has put the customer at the centre of a marketing strategy/ plan, we have also started by researching our target customers/ market. Even though our plan does not include a detailed segmentation, according to Kotler's factors (geographic, demographic, psychographic and behaviour), we have used these aspects to define the market targeting, choosing the most attractive segments to enter. The buyer personas and target industries mentioned in the plan are based on these choices. Based on Kotler's theory, differentiation, and positioning, play an important role. We apply this theory in our plan regarding our competitor's analysis and looked at the offering for different targeted segments. How to differentiate and position ourselves compared to competitors, and what to offer to whom? (Kotler & al. 2018)

According to Kotler, the aspects mentioned in the previous paragraph are part of defining a marketing strategy (Kotler & al. 2018). However, as the marketing strategy can be seen as a basis for a marketing plan, it is vital to define those aspects clearly.

Kotler sees planning the marketing mix, including the 4Ps, as defined in previous chapters, as "one of the major concepts in modern marketing" (Kotler & al. 2018, 78). We edited the HubSpot template to include those 4Ps.

In addition to the mentioned aspects of Kotler's theory, according to HubSpot a marketing plan should also identify the company's budget, the initiatives to be dealt with and the channels to implement the planned initiatives. Additionally, the plan should be based on the overall strategy and include a business summary as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. (Carmicheal 2022) All these aspects are therefore included in our marketing plan.

5 Developing the marketing plan

In the following chapter, we will explain how our marketing plan came to be, and why the plan is what it is. The marketing plan itself can be found as an attachment to this thesis.

First, we will take look closely at our interviews and survey results and discuss our main findings. Those findings make up a solid basis for the developed plan, according to Kotler's theory about the role of research discussed in chapter four. Detailed results from our survey can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

A critical piece of advice given to us by Renker during our interview was that a company should first have a market share and experience in the local (Finnish) market, before entering the German market (Renker 17 October 2022.) Therefore, for the plan developed in this thesis we shall assume that Loru Games has already done so, even though this is currently not the case. Further, as mentioned in the previous chapter, a marketing plan should be revised every year, especially before actually implementing the plan. This is particularly important, because the EdTech industry is evolving quickly, and things can change drastically within a few weeks.

After discussing the results, we will explain and justify the template we used for our marketing plan. We will go through each aspect included in the template, one by one and explain how we developed them and what reasons are behind our decisions.

5.1 Results of the survey

The population of the survey consists of teachers from different states in Germany, mostly Baden-Württemberg, and some teachers from the German school in Helsinki, Uusimaa. The survey took place between the 9th and 30th of October 2022. We gathered a total of 66 valuable answers.

Of the 66 answers, 56 came from Germany and 10 from Helsinki. We wanted to gather responses from teachers in Helsinki to compare infrastructure generalities.

The survey's primary objectives were to explore the possibilities of entering the German market with data gathered directly from teachers in Germany, to identify challenges and infrastructure issues in German public education and find areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in German public education.

The survey was divided to filter teachers that have used online games and teachers that have not used them. We managed to gather 45 answers from teachers in Germany that have used online games at school, and with the data from these 45 teachers, we created the graphs for Germany.

We created an infographic outlining all the results from our survey to be easily visually presented to our commissioning company. The infographic will be attached separately to this thesis.

Here, we will shortly present the most important findings. According to our results, most German teachers have a high opinion of Finnish education. Therefore, they might also highly value Finnish educational products, and see them as something of high pedagogical quality.

A lack of a stable internet connection or appropriate devices was often stated as reasons for not using digital or online learning products. Though the digital infrastructure seems to be a big challenge in many areas in Germany, many teachers answering our survey also stated that they nowadays have good internet at their school. 60 % of teachers in Germany consider their school's internet as good or average. There is not enough data to draw any definite conclusion and further research filtering out specific areas within one state would be necessary. However, it could be, that the differences within one state are related to rural and urban differences. Rural areas are often still lacking more behind.

Regardless of the digital infrastructure, there is high interest in digital learning, online learning, and gamified learning. Almost 70 % of teachers who answered the survey have used online educational games in the classroom or as homework. Those teachers also have a very positive attitude towards online educational games. Teachers' positive attitudes might be related to the positive response they have gotten from their students. German teachers said that (online) educational games have had to some extent, a positive impact on the motivation of almost 50 % of their students. Further, teachers stated that there has also been an improvement in the learning outcome of over 50% of students to some extent.

According to teachers, over 70% of parents seem to support in some way the use of educational games at school or at home. This could be relevant, when looking at the private education sector and especially the private tutoring business in Germany.

Over 50% of teachers using online educational games started to use them more than once per month, weekly or more than once per week. There might be a good opportunity within the public sector for Loru Games, if they also had an offline product. Teachers might be more likely to use a digital learning program that is not online, like learning software from a CD or an APP.

Additionally, it is essential to mention that Loru's product is mainly designed for tablets. The survey showed that most students in Germany have been using tablets for online educational games.

Finally, it seems as though the whole EdTech industry is not something known to all German teachers. Our survey showed that the terms "EdTech", "gamified learning" and "(browser-based)

educational games” were new to a significant percentage. This might be a language issue, with many are simply unfamiliar with the English terms. But it might also hint at the German EdTech industry not being too visible – at least to German teachers.

5.2 HubSpot Marketing plan template

For this thesis, we have used a marketing plan template by HubSpot. According to the theory discussed in chapter four, we have considered that this template satisfies and fulfils all the needs for a good marketing plan. As discussed in chapter 4.5., the template was edited to fit our own definition. We used HubSpot’s definition as a basis and complemented it with aspects of other theories, such as Kotler’s.

Parts of the template were filled with the help of the suggested formulations or content provided by the HubSpot template. Those parts are marked with the source “HubSpot 2022” behind them. Some parts were also filled with the help of Eero Järvenpää, who is responsible for Loru Games’ business development activities. The template is divided into seven chapters: First, a business summary (including a SWOT analysis), second business initiatives, third the target market (including target industries, buyer personas, and competitive analysis), fourth a market strategy (including the 4 Ps), fifth a budget estimation (including ideas for possible funding), sixth the marketing channels and seventh the marketing technology.

5.2.1 Business Summary

The business summary first looks at basic facts about Loru Games, such as the company’s location, mission, and marketing leaders. We used information provided by the company, like how they define their mission and who is in charge of marketing within their company.

Loru Games offers motivating and engaging games for onsite and online learning. Their mission is to help teachers in their work by providing easy-to-use gamified teaching tools and assisting the students in staying motivated with their learning progress. (Järvenpää 2022) Their objective is to reach as many teachers and students as possible in the pursuit of a more engaging learning experience.

After the general business summary, this chapter also includes a SWOT analysis. The SWOT outlines Loru’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, based on material provided by Loru Games (Järvenpää 2022; Loru games 2022), strengths of Finnish companies mentioned in the Finnish EdTech report (EdTech Finland 2022) and our own examination of Loru’s product. In addition, we used the information gathered through our research to reflect on opportunities and threats within the German market. The SWOT reflects what Loru does well and where it should improve.

Looking at what the company can do also means being aware of possible challenges and reflecting on how to face them.

Therefore, the SWOT provides important information on how Loru differs and how they should present themselves to show others in which way they are special. According to Westerlund, being unique and standing out is the key to success (Westerlund 5 October 2022.).

5.2.2 Business initiatives

The business initiatives are based on the overarching marketing strategy of the company. As mentioned, Loru has defined a marketing strategy, which we are using for this plan. The initiatives are, as discussed in chapter 4.2. the steps and actions to be taken to achieve this overarching goal (Carmicheal 2022). We propose three different business initiatives on how to approach/enter the German market. These initiatives are based on the findings from our research and go along with the overall strategy. According to Westerlund and Feller Germans are more likely to do business when presented with German content (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Feller 24 September 2022.). Therefore, all initiatives also require content in the German language, to reach a wider audience and succeed with the mentioned initiatives.

According to the survey results, teachers in Germany don't seem to know much about EdTech in general and Loru Games yet. Therefore, the first initiative is to inform, increase awareness and invest in visibility on an online and offline scale. Increasing online visibility includes various channels and methods, such as SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) and increasing engaging content in different Social Media channels to reach a broader audience in Germany. Increasing visibility offline could be achieved through visits to various (German) fairs regarding the educational industry and the EdTech market. For this, we included suggestions for German fairs to be visited based on our research and suggestions from our interviews and other players within the EdTech network.

Entering the German market is particularly difficult for non-German speaking companies, often needing more language skills and knowledge about the German market and business culture (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.). Therefore, the second initiative is looking for a partner or cooperation with a company established in Germany. This could help when it comes to the issues mentioned above. Further, looking at Loru's weaknesses from the SWOT analysis, Loru has very limited staff, and partnering up with another company could therefore offer more human resources. In addition, Loru is very specified, focusing on gamified learning in the K-12 sector. To make their product more attractive to a broader audience, including more ready materials, partnering up could be an opportunity, being a valuable addition/expansion to an established/ valued product/ service.

As we discussed in chapter 2.1. regarding Education in Germany and 2.3.3 regarding the German EdTech industry, the German Educational system is very complex, and especially the public sector is particularly challenging. Westerlund and Renker question whether a Finnish start-up could approach the public sector (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.). Based on the discussions of Ruhe and Glowka we mentioned in chapter 2.3.3. it is therefore wiser not to approach Germany as a whole but focus on one state first and then slowly expand, state by state (Glowka 11 October 2022.; Ruhe 11 October 2022.). Therefore, in our third initiative, we suggest approaching the public sector state by state. We recommend either approach a small state (like Bremen) or a wealthy state (like Baden-Württemberg) first. As mentioned, Ruhe discussed small states often have better digital infrastructure due to less players involved (Ruhe 11 October 2022.), whereas wealthier states have more capital to invest.

5.2.3 Target market

The German market is huge. Therefore, it is crucial to define the target market cautiously to reach our customers. Who could be a potential customer for Loru Games and how to serve them best? For that, we first defined our target industry before looking at possible buyer personas in more detail and finally comparing Loru to its main competitors in the German market. We looked at Loru's existing customers and considered the advice received through our interviews, while keeping the company's SWOT analysis in mind. What are Loru Games' strengths and opportunities, and who might be looking for such a solution within the educational sector?

Looking at the target industry, we have selected the 3 sectors within the basic German Education (K12) industry that we consider the most relevant for Loru Games to approach Germany. These are the public sector, e.g. Primary public schools, the private sector, e.g. private tutoring or language schools, and the semi-private sector, e.g. vocational schools. Keeping in mind that Loru is targeting the K12 sector, the semi-private sector, such as vocational schools, can only be targeted to a limited extent and are not the main focus of this plan. Also, for the private sector, in the age group of K12, can be a challenge.

To identify the best potential customers within the German market, we created four buyer personas from the sectors mentioned above, for a partnership or to work with. The personas are based on findings from our interviews, the survey, and other research material but also refer to this marketing plan's SWOT and initiatives. Looking at our initiative number two to partner up or cooperate with an established German company, we looked at possible companies, publishers, and states to target. Our survey showed that most teachers use free or paid versions paid by their school, with only ~18% of teachers paying for licences themselves. Therefore, it is wise to target not only teachers directly but instead schools or communal institutions and people on a higher level, where

decisions are made. In Germany, teachers don't seem to be the ones making too many decisions. Further, as our survey showed, many teachers seem reluctant to use online educational games, their school's internet being unstable or unreliable. Targeting educational publishers could lead to the possibility of offering an offline product (e.g. CD) connected to a school book.

For our first buyer persona, we chose an established German EdTech company offering an online language learning platform, which could improve its offering by adding a gamified aspect to its product.

The second buyer persona is one of Germany's most successful educational media companies. It could expand its additional services for schools by, for example, offering educational games as supplementary learning material accompanying their schoolbooks.

The third buyer persona is the state "Freie Hansestadt Bremen". Bremen is receiving funding through the DigitalPakt Schule to develop digitalisation in education. According to Ruhe states look for products that are easy to set up, require little or no training for teachers and help teachers assess their students. Loru Games' product includes assessment and analytical aspects, providing valuable data for educators, such as information or feedback about students' development and performance. (Ruhe 11 October 2022.)

For the fourth buyer persona, we chose a teacher similar to Loru's existing customers. Based on the interview with Helamaa, someone responsible for IT or digital tutoring for other colleagues at their school could be best targeted to suggest new licences to buy (Helamaa 5 October 2022.). Looking at our initiative number one, fairs related to education, such as the didacta, are an excellent place to find ambitious teachers looking for new ideas or licences to buy for their schools.

Finally, we provide a competitive analysis to complete the target market chapter. We look at two companies that Loru Games has identified to be in direct competition with internationally (Järvenpää, 2022) and one German company. Kahoot and Quizlet are widely used amongst German teachers and are, therefore, in direct competition in the German market. Finding a German company offering a similar product to Loru's was challenging. The German company in this marketing plan does not have games as their focus but rather mainly uses educational games as rewards for students who have completed a certain number of exercises.

5.2.4 Market Strategy

The chapter market strategy includes the 4P's, as defined in chapter 4.5., where we refer to Kotler's theory of the marketing mix. According to Kotler, the marketing mix, or the 4 P's, allows us to show a summary of the market strategy. We find out what is our product, how much we can charge

for it, what location we want to focus on and how we can promote it. For this, we used information provided by Loru Games, our SWOT analysis, and the results from our research.

The product description in this chapter is based on our examination of Loru's product, material provided by the company and information from the SWOT analysis. The main aspects of the product to highlight here are learning content, high quality games, differentiation, technology and the assessment and analytical aspect. It is important to mention, that Loru's gamified learning platform works as a product on its own but can also easily be included as an add-on to other products or services, aiming at the public and the private educational sector alike.

The price issue, as shown in our survey results, has already been discussed in the previous chapter while looking at the target group. It might be easier to get paid users when targeting educational players on a higher level, such as states or educational publishers. Therefore, in addition to Loru Games' pricing strategy, including free and paid tiers, we add the option of school or state licences. For partnerships with other EdTech companies or publishers the price needs to be negotiated depending on the time and overall impact.

Regarding the place, we kept the initiatives of this plan in mind, aiming to increase visibility online and offline. As the target group of this plan can be reached through different channels, all channels must be considered – offline and online. Here, the aspect of material in German must be again kept in mind.

Based on the initiatives and target market of this plan and keeping a low budget and possibilities for funding in mind, we concluded to promote Loru's services in five different ways, using organic channels, paid campaigns (where/ if needed), webinars, fairs and event, and direct contact. According to Westerlund, this is where German language and hiring a German speaker are especially crucial (Westerlund 5 October 2022.).

5.2.5 Budget/ Funding

Based on the initiatives in this marketing plan, we concluded that the budget estimations should include marketing expenses for fairs/ events, market entry support (such as market research, legal counselling, and training (e.g. German business culture)), translation and interpreter/ adviser, paid social media marketing and paid SEO (search engine optimisation).

The price estimations given here are based on current prices of events and stands provided by the mentioned fair websites, and information provided about the costs of paid social media marketing, translation costs and costs for SEO to be found online. (See the attached marketing plan for details about used sources)

Furthermore, we added possible funding solutions for each marketing expense that we found during our research (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.).

5.2.6 Marketing channels

This section contains the marketing channels suggested to be used, online and offline. The recommended channels are based on the business initiatives, target market analysis in this plan, and advice gathered through the interviews. Further, we looked at the channels Loru currently uses and made suggestions on what other channels to add. We used the findings from our research to conclude where to find possible customers and partners, and further researched the usage of social media channels in Germany.

According to Westerlund and Renker, unlike in Finland, not all German companies are on LinkedIn. Therefore, Facebook still plays a more important role. Also, offline presence shouldn't be neglected and is especially important now that pandemic restrictions are lifted and people are again meeting face to face. (Westerlund 5 October 2022.; Renker 17 October 2022.)

According to several websites, such as Mimikama many German teachers use social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, to exchange information between each other or research and find content for their lessons (Wannenmacher 2019). According to a Statista study from 2022, Facebook is with 71%, the second most popular social media platform in Germany, followed by Instagram with 63 %. Twitter comes in seventh place with 19%, followed by LinkedIn with 13% (Statista 2022). Twitter plays a less important role for educators in Germany than in Finland. According to Westerlund, LinkedIn seems to slowly gain more popularity amongst Germans, but right now is not a widely used channel (Westerlund 5 October 2022).

Looking at the marketing plan initiatives, regarding marketing channels, it is essential to keep the goals of initiative one in mind. The goal of improving online visibility is to increase Loru's website's rank on Google and improve user-friendliness. Therefore, one should create engaging content (in German) on all social media channels.

We therefore decided to include the four main social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn) in this marketing plan, with Facebook and Instagram as the most important social media channels. Twitter is included, as it is currently an important channel for Loru Games. The future use, however, needs to be discussed. LinkedIn might become more and more important in the coming years. In addition to the mentioned four social media channels, we include the Loru Games' website online and fairs/events as offline. For each of these channels, we provide a metric to measure success. These channels have been selected for educating our customers, generating leads, and developing brand awareness. All channels require information and posts in German.

5.2.7 Marketing Technology

In this chapter, we discuss the technologies and software to be used by Loru Games to help achieve its goals and objectives. We first focus on free or very low-cost services, keeping a low budget in mind. Most of the information provided about the chosen technologies is based on information and suggestions by HubSpot in the marketing template and the article by Carmicheal. (Carmicheal 2022; HubSpot 2022)

For this plan, we chose the following five tools/ software that we consider to be the most useful for Loru: email marketing software (e.g. by HubSpot), the HubSpot Marketing Hub, the Marketing CRM (by HubSpot and/or monday.com), an SEO management software (SEMrush) and a social media management software (by HubSpot).

Loru already uses email and mailing lists to contact existing customers. Therefore we consider an email marketing software to be most important to the company. The HubSpot email marketing software could make it easier to send mass communications to all customers or enrol for webinars, where Loru presents their product/ new features. (Carmicheal 2022; HubSpot 2022)

The HubSpot Marketing Hub is a centralized platform combining over 500 marketing tools in one. The tool allows to draw new users through blogs, SEO and live chat tools. HubSpot Marketing Hub also offers custom reporting and built-in analytics. We suggest to first use the free version of the tool and only update to the paid version, if necessary. (Carmicheal 2022; HubSpot 2022) We recommend this tool as it combines various tools in one, making it easier to keep an overview.

CRM tools make it easier to organise potential customers and store and manage their information in a centralized database or software. The Marketing CRM tool by HubSpot is free. Therefore, we suggest only adding monday.com if the HubSpot tool only fulfils some needs. According to various websites, monday.com has gotten outstanding ratings. TrustRadius rated monday.com as the best software in 2022 (TrustRadius 2022).

SEO management is vital to increase visibility. SEO management software, such as SEMrush can be beneficial. As this is however quite costly, we only suggest investing in this software other SEO measures are not working well enough. (Carmicheal 2022)

This plan includes several social media channels. Therefore a social media management software, such as HubSpot software could be useful. Carmicheal suggests using this software to post on multiple platforms simultaneously and get feedback about engagement summarised in one. (Carmicheal 2022).

6 Evaluation / conclusion

The main objective of this thesis was to find out what Loru Games, a Finnish EdTech start-up, needs to enter the German EdTech market and to develop a marketing plan for the company. The plan was developed with the help of thorough research in the form of interviews, a survey and secondary literature. Further, it was based on Loru Games' existing marketing strategy. Therefore, the research's main question was, "What does a Finnish EdTech company need to consider to enter the German market?". Two sub-questions were asked to define the question further: "What is the German EdTech market like?" and "How prepared is the German educational environment using online educational games?".

The authors have reached the following conclusions that respond to the objective and research questions. First, Germany as a country poses many challenges but also offers many opportunities. Germany is divided into 16 states with 16 different educational systems, education being the responsibility of the states. But this should not only be seen as an obstacle. 16 states also offer 16 chances to enter the German market. States in Germany can be big, small, wealthy, undeveloped when it comes to digitalisation, or eager to grow and develop. Each state represents a different opportunity for an EdTech company, depending on what it is looking for. The key is to research which state might best fit the product and the company and not to give in and keep trying other states, if the first choice does not work out.

As with any other country, Germany has its own way of doing things. Language, data protection, and the educational system could be seen as obstacles. Therefore, working with or hiring someone that has the German educational, legal, and cultural know-how, such as a German lawyer or a German teacher from the target state, is key to finding a way into the German market. Another possibility could be collaborating or partnering up with an established German company.

The results of the survey and interviews showed that Germany might be behind regarding its digital infrastructure. Still, due to the pandemic and large federal investments, the country is moving fast towards its goal of bringing educational digitalisation forward.

Further, any company approaching the EdTech sector in Germany must first create awareness and recognition. This can be achieved with an excellent and unique product, cooperation with other institutions in the industry and, most importantly, by presenting the company and its product at relevant events and online. Trust also plays a significant role, which can be gained in several ways. Germans want proof that the offered product is reliable and good. Therefore, the company should have a satisfying market share in Finland and presentations, information, and product features in German.

Moreover, the study also showed that the EdTech industry and gamified learning are big trends. People might still need to become familiar with these terms, but they are increasingly getting more important. Digitalization in Germany is being implemented fast and ambitiously. According to the research, Germans value Finnish education and might appreciate a Finnish EdTech product.

The Finnish EdTech market is well organised, and information is openly available. Getting an overview of the Finnish market can be achieved easily. The Finnish EdTech association seems to be always open to help and provide information for EdTech companies willing to grow and explore new markets. This was greatly appreciated by the authors and was a big help throughout the thesis process. In contrast, getting an overview of the German market proved challenging. As Germany is divided into different states, there is not only one centralised Ed Tech institution or association, but a great variety of institutions oversee the EdTech market. As a result, the recommendation is to start by approaching individual states and institutions or seek collaboration with an established EdTech company.

Finally, entering the complex German educational market requires a lot of patience. With a solid market share in the home country, the company will more likely succeed. Therefore, it needs to be well prepared before internationalising. For Loru Games to succeed with the presented marketing plan, further research, such as market research for the specific chosen state or company, is necessary. Moreover, preparing employees through training, such as business culture training by the AHK, and hiring additional German-speaking staff is inevitable. For this the company would need sufficient funding, which also needs to be thought through with care – what to start with and how to apply for it? Despite the challenges, Germany offers a huge market with great opportunities, and as Westerlund said “right now is the time to be there!” (Westerlund 5 October 2022).

Sources

AHK 2022. AHK Finland. URL: <https://ahkfinland.de/fi/>. Accessed: 26 October 2022.

Anton. 2022. Anton app. URL: https://anton.app/en_gb/. Accessed: 21 November 2022.

Armstrong, G., Kotler, P. 2017. Marketing: An Introduction, Global Edition. 13th ed. Malaysia: Pearson Education. E-book. Accessed: 22 October 2022.

Babbel GmbH. 2022. Babbel. URL: <https://about.babbel.com/en/>. Accessed: 9 November 2022.

Birkhoelzer, D. 17 November 2022. Program Manager EdTech Next, Founders Foundation gGmbH. Discussion. Helsinki Education Hub's InvestEd Helsinki 2022, official Slush 2022 side event. Helsinki.

BMBF, 2022. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung. URL: https://www.bmbf.de/bmbf/de/bildung/zusammenarbeit-von-bund-und-laendern/zusammenarbeit-von-bund-und-laendern_node.html. Accessed: 22 September 2022.

Brighteye Ventures 2021. Venture capital invested in EdTech companies in Europe from 2014 to 2021 (in million US dollars). Statista. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Brighteye Ventures 2022. Venture capital invested in EdTech companies in Europe in 2021, by country (in million U.S. dollars). Statista. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Bundenamt, S. 2022. Consumer price index. URL: https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Economy/Prices/Consumer-Price-Index/_node.html. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Bundesministeriums für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz 2022. Von der Pandemie zur Energiekrise. Wirtschaft und Politik im Dauerstress. Projektgruppe Gemeinschaftsdiagnos. Halle. URL: https://gemeinschaftsdiagnose.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/GD_F22_Langfassung_online.pdf. Accessed 17 October 2022.

Bündnis für Bildung 2019. DigitalPakt Schule im Fokus. URL: <https://www.bfb.org/post/digitalpakt-schule-im-fokus>. Accessed: 12 October 2022.

Bündnis für Bildung 2020. BfB-Umfrage zu den Chancen und Herausforderungen. URL: https://www.bfb.org/_files/ugd/544eb1_7e68e01e424d461385c82e74936c2b5f.pdf. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Business Finland, 2022. Business Finland. URL: <https://www.businessfinland.fi/en>. Accessed: 5 October 2022.

Business Finland. 2022. Doing business in Germany. Business Finland. Helsinki. URL: <https://www.businessfinland.fi/49bd73/globalassets/finnish-customers/05-go-to-market/locations/doing-business-reports/doing-business-in-germany.pdf>. Accessed: 5 October 2022.

Carmicheal, K. 2022. 7 Steps to Create a Complete Marketing Strategy in 2022. URL: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/marketing-strategy#marketing-strategy>. Accessed: 26 October 2022

Chen, J. 2022. What Is a Marketing Plan? Types and How to Write One. URL: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marketing-plan.asp>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Clement, J. 2021. Share of gamers in select European countries who believe playing video games has positive mental health effects as of September 2020. Statista. Accessed: 19 September 2022.

Cohen, P. Eddy, M. 2022. Eurozone Inflation Sets Another Record, Hitting 10 Percent in September. The New York Times. 30 September 2022. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/business/eurozone-inflation.html>. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Corporate Learning & Change GmbH. 2022. EdTech Germany. URL: <https://edtech-germany.de/edtech-konferenz/>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Deckers, R., 2017. Survey introduction examples that actually work. URL: <https://pointerpro.com/blog/survey-introduction-examples/>. Accessed: 1 October 2022.

Didacta Verband. 2022. Didacta. URL: <https://www.didacta.de/>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Drake, M. & Salmi, M. 2018. Thesis and Methods. Virtual learning material. Haaga-Helia Moodle. Accessed: 1 October 2022.

EdTech Finland ry, 2022. EdTech Finland. URL: <https://edtechfinland.com/>. Accessed: 2 November 2022.

EdTech Finland, 2022. Finnish EdTech Report 2022, Helsinki: Helsinki Education Hub. URL: <https://educationhubhelsinki.fi/content/uploads/2022/06/Finnish-Edtech-Report-2022.pptx-1-1.pdf>. Accessed: 2 November 2022.

EdTech Garage 2022. EdTech Garage. URL: <https://www.edtechgarage.org/>. Accessed: 2 November 2022.

Eduvation & Founders Foundation. 2022. EdTech next summit. URL: <https://edtechnext-summit.com/>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Elkins, T. H. 2022. Britannica - Germany. URL: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Germany>. Accessed: 19 October 2022.

Euromonitor International 2022. Consumer Values and Behaviour in German. Passport. Accessed: 18 October 2022.

European Commission 2022. Economic forecast for Germany. URL: https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-surveillance-eu-economies/germany/economic-forecast-germany_en. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

European EdTech Alliance 2022. European EdTech Alliance. URL: <https://www.edtecheurope.org/>. Accessed: 2 November 2022.

Eurostat 2022. Euro area unemployment at 6.6% for July 2022. URL: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/14698171/3-01092022-AP-EN.pdf/5a4f3990-b8b6-5e7b-4dfa-d97483802398>. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Eurostat 2022. Share of individuals doing an online course of any subject in the European Union in 2021. Statista. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Federal Ministry of Justice 2020. Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany. URL: https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_gg/englisch_gg.html#p0111. Accessed: 12 October 2022.

Federal Ministry of Justice 2022. Federal Data Protection Act. URL: https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_bdsch/englisch_bdsch.html#p0012. Accessed: 13 October 2022.

Feller, J. 24 September 2022. Managing Director of AHK. Haaga-Helia's Language Day. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. Seminar presentation. Helsinki.

Fink, A. 2003. How to ask survey questions. 2 ed. United States of America: Sage Publications.

Freie Hansestadt Bremen. 2022. Bildung – Digitalisierung und Medien - Kontakt. URL: <https://www.bildung.bremen.de/kontakt-358509>. Accessed: 5 December 2022.

Fuster-Guilló, A., Pertegal-Felices, M., Jimeno-Morenilla, A., Azorín-López, J., Rico-Soliveres, M. & Restrepo-Calle, F. 2019. Evaluating Impact on Motivation and Academic Performance of a Game-

Based Learning Experience Using Kahoot. *Frontiers in Psychology*. URL: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02843/full>. Accessed: 19 September 2022.

Galvin, B. 2022. Why The Future Of Online Education Looks Bright. URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2022/07/15/why-the-future-of-online-education-looks-bright/?sh=797797b74d65>. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Glowka, W. 11 October 2022. Head of the department 3 basic principles & vocational schools. Ed-Tech Germany webinar: Insights into the German education system, Ed-Tech areas of interest and public support initiatives. Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. Webinar (organised through Ed-Tech Sweden). Online.

Hanna, K. T. 2022. K-12. URL: <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/K-12>. Accessed: 24 October 2022.

Hayes, A. 2022. Adam Smith and "The Wealth of Nations". URL: <https://www.investopedia.com/updates/adam-smith-wealth-of-nations/>. Accessed: 27 October 2022.

Helamaa, O. 5 October 2022. Teacher & Digi-tutor. Deutsche Schule Helsinki (German school Helsinki). (written) Interview. Helsinki.

Helsinki Education Hub 2022. Helsinki Education Hub. URL: <https://educationhubhelsinki.fi/>. Accessed: 21 November 2022.

Hiltscher, L.M. 2021. Tagesschau. URL: <https://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/technologie/edtech-digitale-bildung-babble-101.html>. Accessed: 26 September 2022.

HubSpot. 2022. Marketing Plan Template. URL: https://offers.hubspot.com/marketing-plan-template?hubs_post-cta=anchor&hubs_post=blog.hubspot.com%2Fmarketing%2Fmarketing-strategy&hubs_signup-url=blog.hubspot.com%2Fmarketing%2Fmarketing-strategy&hubs_signup-cta=cta_button&hsCtaTracking=aacfe6c7-71e6-4f49-979f-76099062afa0%7C9b2f6aab-78db-47a4-af58-b0b4ea94699b. Accessed: 6 September 2022.

Ifo Institut. 2022. Number of unemployed people in Germany from 2009 to 2021, with a forecast until 2023 (in millions). Statista. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Ifo Institut. 2022. Top cities for Edtech start-ups in Europe in 2022, by education strength score. Statista. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Ifo Institut. 2022. Year-on-year change of the gross domestic product (GDP) in Germany from 2007 to 2021, with a forecast until 2023. Statista. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Inquero.com 2022. Study in Germany. URL: <https://www.studying-in-germany.org/german-education-system/>. Accessed 22 September 2022.

International Trade Administration 2021. Germany video game market. URL: <https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/germany-video-game-market>. Accessed: 19 September 2022.

Investopedia 2022. Macroeconomics definition, history, and schools of thought. URL: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/macroeconomics.asp>. Accessed: 16 November 2022.

Investopedia 2022. Marketing in Business: Strategies and Types Explained. URL: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marketing.asp>. Accessed: 27 October 2022.

Järvenpää, E. 31 October 2022. CBDO. Loru Games. Meeting. Helsinki.

Josep, G. 2022. 5 Reasons Why Online Learning is the Future of Education in 2022. URL: <https://www.educations.com/articles-and-advice/5-reasons-online-learning-is-future-of-education-17146>. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

Kananen, J. 2011. Rafting through the thesis process - step by step guide to thesis research. Jyväskylän Ammattikorkeakoulu. Jyväskylä.

Karppinen, H. 2022. LinkedIn page. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/heinikarppinen/>. Accessed: 17 November 2022.

Karppinen, H. 3 October 2022. CEO. EdTech Finland ry. Interview. Helsinki.

Kartajaya, H., Kotler, P Setiawan, I. 2021. Marketing 5.0. 1st ed. Editorial Almuzara. Cordoba. E-book. Accessed: 27 October 2022.

King, N. 2021. What are educational games? URL: <https://www.chaostheorygames.com/blog/what-are-educational-games-2021>. Accessed: 28 September 2022.

Klett Gruppe. 2022. Klett Gruppe. URL: <https://www.klett-gruppe.de/en/>. Accessed: 5 December 2022.

Kotler, P. Armstrong, G. & Opresnik, M. O. 2018. Principles of marketing, global edition. 17th ed. Pearson Education.

Laintila, O. 2022. Strategic Business Development. Virtual learning material. Haaga-Helia Moodle. Accessed: 1 November 2022.

Landesmesse Stuttgart GmbH. 2022. didacta – The trade fair for education and training. URL: <https://www.messe-stuttgart.de/didacta/en>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Loru Games. 2022. The next level of learning - Loru games. Loru Games. Helsinki.

Martin, J. & Chaney, L. 2006. Global Business Etiquette, A Guide to International Communication and Customs. Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc. Westport.

Marvin, D. 2022. Umfrage für Bachelorarbeit und Masterarbeit: So geht´s. URL: <https://www.empirio.de/empiriowissen/umfrage-bachelorarbeit-masterarbeit>. Accessed: 28 September 2022.

Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden Württemberg. 2022. Kultusministerium. URL: <https://km-bw.de/,Lde/startseite/ministerium>. Accessed: 20 October 2022.

Nguyen, H.P. March 2021. How to Use Gameplay to Enhance Classroom Learning. URL: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-use-gameplay-enhance-classroom-learning/>. Accessed: 19 September 2022.

OEB Learning Technologies Europe GmbH. 2022. OEB (Online Educa Berlin). URL: <https://oeb.global/>. Accessed: 16 November 2022.

Passport to Trade 2.0. 2022. Businessculture.org. URL: <https://businessculture.org/business-culture>. Accessed: 26 October 2022.

Patel, N., 2022. The 4 Ps of Marketing: What You Need to Know (With Examples). URL: <https://neilpatel.com/blog/4-ps-of-marketing>. Accessed: 27 October 2022.

Read, S. 2022. Gaming is booming and is expected to keep growing. This chart tells you all you need to know. URL: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/07/gaming-pandemic-lockdowns-pwc-growth/>. Accessed: 19 September 2022.

Renker, C. 17 October 2022. Senior Advisor – ICT & Digitalization. Business Finland (Germany). Interview. Helsinki/ Berlin.

Riemhofer, A. 2019. Doing Business in Germany: A Concise Guide to Understanding Germans and Their Business Practices. 1 ed. Business Expert Press. New York. E-Book. Accessed: 18 October 2022.

Ruhe, A. 11 October 2022. The Senator for children and Education. Ed-Tech Germany webinar: Insights into the German education system, Ed-Tech areas of interest and public support initiatives. Freie Hansestadt Bremen. Webinar (organised through Ed-Tech Sweden). Online.

Smith, J. 2022. OuterBox. URL: <https://www.outerboxdesign.com/search-marketing/search-engine-optimization/seo-pricing-costs#:~:text=Average%20SEO%20costs%20are%20%24100,%2410%2D%2450%20an%20hour>. Accessed: 14 November 2022.

Statista. 2022. Social network usage by brand in Germany in 2022. Statista. Accessed: 5 December 2022.

Statistisches Bundesamt. 2022. Consumer price index. URL: https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Economy/Prices/Consumer-Price-Index/_node.html. Accessed: 10 October 2022.

Statistisches Bundesamt. 2022. Gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices in Germany from 2nd quarter 2018 to 2nd quarter 2022. Statista. Accessed: 4 October 2022.

TrustRadius. 2022. Monday.com reviews and ratings. URL: <https://www.trustradius.com/products/monday/reviews#features-scorecard>. Accessed: 10 November 2022.

TUBS, 2012. File: Germany, administrative divisions - de - colored.svg. URL: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/69/Germany%2C_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg. Accessed: 2 November 2022.

Twin, A. 2022. The 4 Ps of Marketing and How to Use Them in Your Strategy. URL: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/four-ps.asp>. Accessed: 31 October 2022.

Wannenmacher, T. 2019. Soziale Medien: Ein Leitfaden für Lehrerinnen und Lehrer!. Mimikama – Verein zur Aufklärung über Internetmissbrauch. URL: <https://www.mimikama.org/leitfaden-fuer-lehrerinnen-und-lehrer/>. Accessed: 5 December 2022.

Weber, N. 24 November 2021. Mapping the EdTech startup environment in German-speaking Europe. Blog. URL: https://medium.com/@nina_weber/mapping-the-edtech-startup-environment-in-german-speaking-europe-819e85755f68. Accessed: 5 October 2022.

WebFX, 2022. WebFX. URL: <https://www.webfx.com/social-media/pricing/#:~:text=The%20average%20cost%20for%20outsourcing,size%2C%20strategy%2C%20and%20budget>. Accessed: 14 11 2022.

Westerlund, L. 5 October 2022. Deputy managing director. AHK (German-Finnish chamber of commerce). Interview. Helsinki.

Wikipedia. 2022. Monday.com. URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monday.com>. Accessed: 10 November 2022.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview questions

Interview 1 with Heini Karppinen, CEO at EdTech Finland ry. Done 3 October 2022. Started at 9.58

(Quick introduction by Christine & Cesar: What do we study, who are we, what's the thesis about)

1. Could you please in a few words describe your main tasks and responsibilities as a CEO of EdTech Finland ry?
2. You have over 70 members in your association – how many of those are already making profit – actively on the market?
3. To continue with your members: How many are already operating or planning to operate outside the Finnish market? And do they get support through your association to expand internationally?
4. How do you see the current situation on the Finnish EdTech market? Is there a lot of competition?
5. What types of EdTech companies/ start-ups have succeeded well in the last 2 years? What has led to their success?
6. Do you see differences compared to other EdTech markets within Europe or worldwide?
7. Do you have any information on the current situation of the German EdTech market? If yes: Do you know, if there is currently a high demand for educational gaming solutions (also from outside of Germany)? How advanced is the German EdTech market? (Great or little competition?)
8. If not – do you know who we could talk to, about the German EdTech market?
9. Is there anything else you would like to mention, that we or the company should consider, that we haven't talked about yet?
10. (If we have time...) What can you say about the demand for EdTech products and the possibilities for funding in Finland and within Europe at the moment?

Interview 2 with Lotta Westerlund, Executive Vice President at the AHK (German-Finnish chamber of commerce), since 2022

Possible interview questions:

(Quick introduction by Christine & Cesar: What do we study, who are we, what's the thesis about)

1. Could you please in a few words describe your main tasks and responsibilities as the Executive Vice President for the AHK (German-Finnish chamber of commerce)?
2. AHK offers a lot of help for Finnish companies wanting to enter the German market. Especially keeping in mind small start-ups with a low budget- what could AHK offer to them and at what costs are those services offered?
3. How should a company approach Germany? What do you think are German business partners looking for, when cooperating with foreign companies? What do they maybe first pay attention to? Or what is most important to them?
4. Regarding language differences: What do you think - How likely are German customers going to use an educational product, that has an English interface? (And what role does the language play in general when doing business with Germans?)
5. What regulations, laws are most crucial to keep in mind when entering the German market? (Especially considering the educational sector)
6. Do you have any information on the current situation of the German market, regarding educational gaming / educational technologies? Do you know, if there is currently a high demand for educational gaming solutions (also from outside of Germany)? How advanced is the German educational gaming market? (Great or little competition?)
7. If not – do you know who we could talk to, about the market related to educational gaming/ technology?
8. What advice, tips would you give to a small start-up company (with no big budget), thinking about entering the German market? What should they do/ have in place before entering the foreign market? What challenges do they have to keep in mind?
9. Is there anything else you would like to mention, that we or the company should consider, that we haven't talked about yet?

Interview 3 (written interview) Olli Hellamaa (Deutsche Schule, Helsinki (German school Helsinki))

1. Have you ever heard of the company Loru games?
2. Regarding educational gaming: Do you know how many paid licenses and/or Apps your school has bought/installed in the past year?
3. Do you know how many licenses and/or Apps your school has bought/installed in the past year in total (including also free ones)?
4. When installing new licenses or Apps (free and not free ones) on school devices – what can you say about the decision process & criteria? (What does an App or a license need to provide, so that it would be interesting for the school. Who makes the suggestions (no names, only position/ responsibility) and who makes the final decision about purchase/installation or no purchase/ installation?)
5. Where does your school/ you/ other colleges get information about new educational games on the market? (Do companies approach you directly or does someone visit educational fairs to get the information?)
6. What kind of training or support do teachers get for new apps/ licences? (And do teachers really make use of the available support?)
7. What is necessary for an App/ licence (regarding educational gaming) for teachers to use it in their everyday lessons – what does it need to provide?
8. What do you think: Do most colleagues who use educational games in class use the services provided/ paid for by the school - or mostly their own accounts and subscriptions?

Interview 4 Caroline Renker, Senior Advisor – ICT & Digitalization; Business Finland, Germany

(Quick introduction by Christine & Cesar: What do we study, who are we, what's the thesis about)

1. Could you please in a few words describe your main tasks and responsibilities?
2. What kind of support can Finnish start-ups get through Business Finland to enter the German market? (At what costs are those services offered?)
What are the requirements to get support from Bus Fin? (What should they do/ have in place? What challenges do they have to keep in mind?)
3. How do you see the current situation on the German EdTech market? How is it evolving?
What challenges are German EdTech companies currently facing?
4. Do you know where we can get information/ a good report, about the German EdTech market (also related to educational gaming)? (Numbers, trends, etc)
5. Do you about the competition regarding the educational gaming sector? (What are the biggest/ most important players in the sector right now?)

If yes: Do you know, if there is currently a high demand for educational gaming solutions (also from outside of Germany)?
6. What types of EdTech companies/ start-ups have succeeded well in Germany in the last 2 years? Do you know what has led to their success?
7. What main differences do you see between the Finnish and the German EdTech markets? (Community spirit like in Finland?)
8. What can you say about the demand for EdTech products and the possibilities for funding from Finland and within Germany now? (Digitalpakt Schule, Bildungsoffensive)
9. Regarding language differences: What do you think - How likely are German customers going to use an educational product, that has an English interface? (And what role does the language play in general when doing business with Germans?)
10. What regulations, laws are most crucial to keep in mind when entering the German market? (Especially considering the complex educational sector)
11. What advice, tips would you give to a small start-up company (with no big budget), thinking about entering the German market?
12. Is there anything else you would like to mention, that we or the company should consider, that we haven't talked about yet?

Appendix 2. Survey questions

The following survey was conducted from the 9th to the 30th of October 2022. The survey was made using Google Forms. The survey was sent as a link via email to teachers in Germany, mainly to the Baden-Württemberg state. The survey results were turned into an infographic by using the free digital version of Piktochart. Piktochart is an online graphic design tool and infographic maker.

Gamified learning & browser-based educational games.

Intro (in German)

Die folgende Umfrage dient Forschungszwecken, im Rahmen der Recherche für unsere Bachelorarbeit. Wir (Christine & Cesar) sind Studenten im dritten Jahr an der Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finnland. Wir absolvieren einen Betriebswirtschaft Studiengang mit Schwerpunkt Marketing.

Die Bachelorarbeit wurde von einem kleinen finnischen EdTech start-up Unternehmen (Loru Games) in Auftrag gegeben. Sie erforscht die Möglichkeiten für einen Einstieg der Firma auf dem deutschen Markt mit einer Plattform für Lehrer, mit digitalen Lernspielen für Schüler. (siehe auch www.lorugames.com)

Die folgenden Fragen, bzw. Antworten sollen uns Aufschluss über den aktuellen Stand deutscher Schulen zum Einsatz von digitalen Lernspielen geben. Dazu wollen wir gerne Deine/ Ihre Meinung hören.

Die **Beantwortung** der Umfrage nimmt **nur ca. 10 Minuten** Deiner/ Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch – wir haben es getimed. Mit der Beantwortung hilfst Du/ helfen Sie uns enorm mit der weiteren Recherche für unsere Arbeit.

Alle Antworten sind **anonym** und werden **vertraulich** beantwortet! Die angegebenen persönlichen Daten (z.B. Alter) dienen nur zur besseren Auswertung der Umfrageergebnisse. Die abschließende Arbeit wird frei öffentlich verfügbar sein.

Bitte beantworten Sie /Du diese Umfrage, so bald wie möglich und spätestens bis zum 28.10.2022

Wir bedanken uns bereits im Voraus für die gewissenhafte Beantwortung unserer Fragen!

Danke, dass Sie/ Du sich/ dir die Zeit nehmen/nimmst!

Da unsere Bachelorarbeit auf Englisch ist, sind die folgenden Fragen auch auf Englisch. Um Verständnisschwierigkeiten zu vermeiden, möchten wir hier kurz einige möglicherweise schwierige Begriffe klären:

EdTech: Die Abkürzung EdTech (educational technology) bezieht sich auf die Branche, die Bildungstechnologien entwickelt. Das sind technologische Entwicklungen wie Softwarelösungen, Dienstleistungen oder Tools, die das Lernen oder Lehren unterstützen sollen.

Educational games: zu Deutsch „Lernspiele“ sind Spiele, die ein bestimmtes Thema oder eine bestimmte Fähigkeit vermitteln sollen. Sie sind vor allem für Kinder und Schüler aller Altersgruppen gedacht und können sowohl im Klassenzimmer als auch außerhalb verwendet werden. Lernspiele wurden mit dem Ziel entwickelt, bestimmte Lernergebnisse zu erzielen.

Browser-based/online educational games: Lernspiele die online über eine Plattform oder Website gespielt werden können.

Gamified learning: zu Deutsch „Spielbasiertes Lernen“, ist das Erlernen von Informationen oder Fähigkeiten durch ein Spiel. Es kann in fast jedem Spiel vorkommen, ob ernsthaft oder nicht. Ein Beispiel dafür wäre Schach, bei dem Logik und strategische Fähigkeiten vermittelt werden.

(Für die Definition der Begriffe wurden Artikel von www.tagesschau.de und www.chaostheorygames.com verwendet)

Bei Fragen oder Interesse zu unserer Umfrage oder unserer Arbeit stehen wir gerne zur Verfügung. Auf Anfrage können wir auch Informationen zu Ergebnissen der Umfrage oder unserer Bachelorarbeit zuschicken. (Email auch auf deutsch möglich): [Email address.]

Sources used to write this introduction: (Deckers, 2017; King, 2021; Hiltcher, 2021)

Questions:

1. Personal background information, sex, age, location of school.
2. What is your general impression of Finnish education?
3. What grades (=Klassenstufen) do you currently teach? (Several answers possible, if none of the mentioned, write your answer under "other")
4. What is the language of instruction (= Unterrichtssprache) at your school (several answers possible, if none of the mentioned, write your answer under "other")
5. How good is your school's internet connection?
6. How good is your school's Wi-Fi connection?
7. How good is the internet connection that most students have at home to connect with tablets, laptops, and phones? (Try to make an estimation)

8. In your opinion schools AROUND Germany have good internet and Wi-Fi for teachers and students?
9. In your opinion teachers are (ALL OVER Germany) using browser-based/ online educational games?
10. Did you know what is EdTech (educational technology) before the survey?
11. Did you know what the term "gamified learning" means before the survey?
12. Have you used **online** educational games (in class or as homework)?

We divided the survey in Yes and No answers according to this question (nr. 12). Below you can find the **Yes** answers:

1. Have you used **paid** licences or subscriptions for educational games? (e.g., premium version of an App or a learning platform)
2. Where have students used browser-based/ **online** educational games? (Several answers possible, if none of the mentioned, write your answer under "other")
3. What device(s) have your students used for the **online** educational games? (Several answers possible, if none of the mentioned, write your answer under "other")
4. What is your general attitude towards **educational games in general** (not only online games)?
5. What is your general attitude towards **online** educational games?
6. Has using educational games increased your students' motivation to learn?
7. Has using educational games improved your students' learning outcome?
8. Does the school's internet and Wi-Fi allow to play **online** educational games? (stable & fast enough connection)
9. In your opinion, do parents support the use of **online** games for learning (at school and/ or at home)
10. How often do you think you will be using **online** games in the next month?
11. How often do you think you will be using **educational games in general** in the following month?
12. Here you can comment briefly on challenges and difficulties regarding the use of **online** education games at your school. (Not obligatory)
13. Have you used **paid** licences or subscriptions for educational games? (e.g., premium version of an App or a learning platform)

Here starts the **No** answers:

1. Are you willing to use browser-based/ **online** educational games **in the future**?
2. How much benefit do you see in using **educational games in general**? (online & offline)
3. What type of **offline** educational games have you used in the classroom?
4. Here you can comment briefly on reasons for not using **online** education games at your school. (Not obligatory)

“Thank you message”, (reminder: this information will be treated confidentially, your answers will be anonymous. But this is a public thesis. Please feel free to contact us, if you have any questions regarding this survey or the thesis. Email attached)

Sources used to help to design & formulate the introduction & questions: (Marvin 2022; Fink 2003)

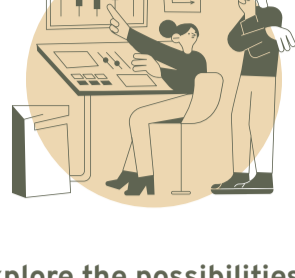
Educational online gaming survey. Germany 2022

The survey data was gathered from teachers from different states in Germany and Finland. Most answers came from Baden-Württemberg. The survey was conducted between the 9th and 30th of October 2022.

We received 66 valuable answers. The results are shown in the following infographic.



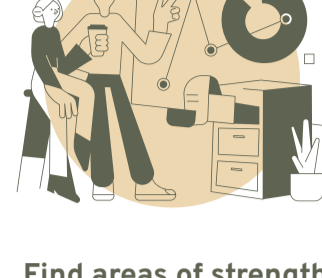
Survey Purpose



Explore the possibilities of entering the German EdTech market

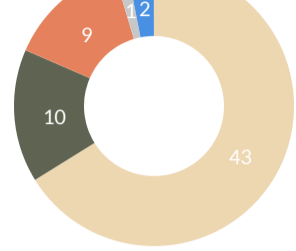


Identify challenges and infrastructure issues in German public education

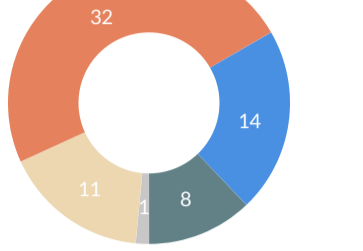


Find areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in German public education

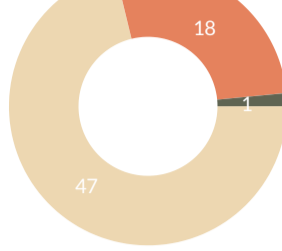
Survey Areas



Age



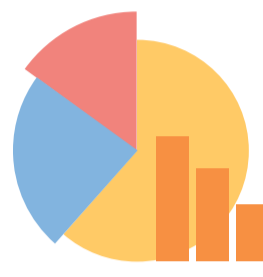
Sex



Process

Of the 66 received answers, 56 were from Germany, and 10 were from teachers working at the German school in Helsinki. We wanted to gather responses from teachers in Helsinki to compare to the German answers. The data from Helsinki will only be used in graphs to compare Germany and Finland and general data graphs. Those graphs are indicated with a *.

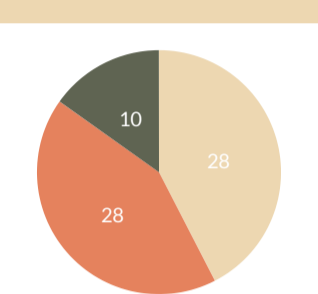
The survey was divided into two parts. Filtering out teachers that have used online games, and teachers that have not used online games. 45 of the 56 teachers from Germany have used online games at school. We created the graphs from Germany with the data of these 45 responses.



General term knowledge

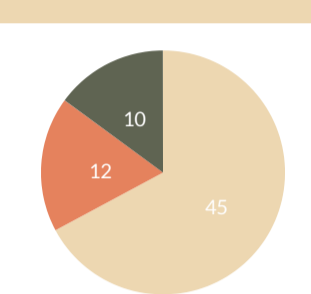
Did you know **what is EdTech** (educational technology) before the survey?*

Around 40% of the teachers had not heard about the term EdTech. Some 15% were unsure about it. It is a relatively new term and, it might not be yet big in Germany.



Did you know **what the term "gamified learning"** means before the survey?*

More teachers seem to be familiar with the term "gamified learning" than EdTech. The term has been relevant for teachers during past years.

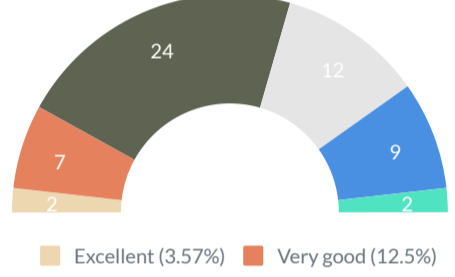


School internet connection: Germany and Helsinki*

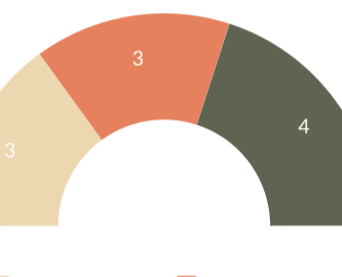
In Helsinki, more than half of the teachers consider the school internet to be very good/excellent.

60% of teachers in Germany consider their school's internet to be good/average, and 20% consider it bad or below.

Germany school Internet connection



Helsinki school internet connection

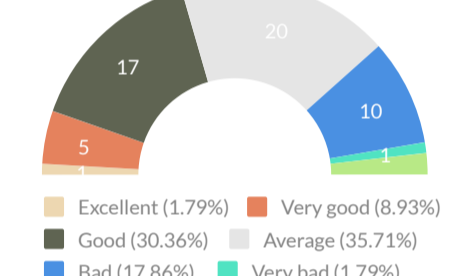


School Wi-Fi connection: Germany and Helsinki*

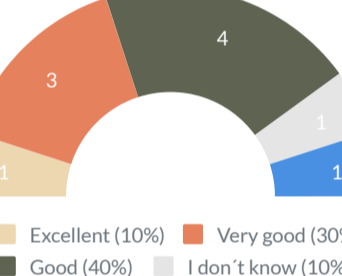
In Helsinki 80% of teachers say that the connection is good or above.

In Germany, over 50% of the teachers have consider their school Wi-Fi connection as average and below.

Germany school Wi-Fi connection



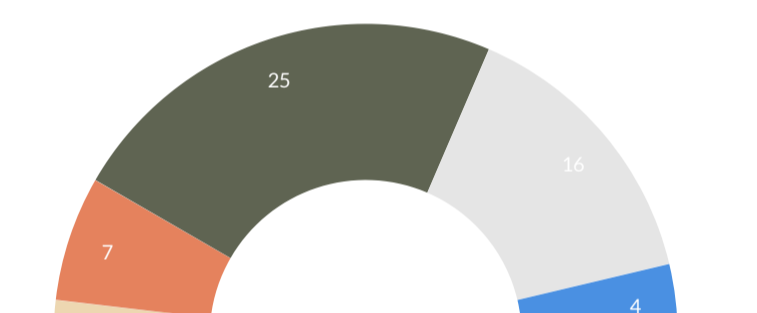
Helsinki school Wi-Fi connection



School internet/Wi-Fi connection around Germany

Our study has shown that Germany is behind in digital infrastructure, compared to other countries, e.g. Finland.

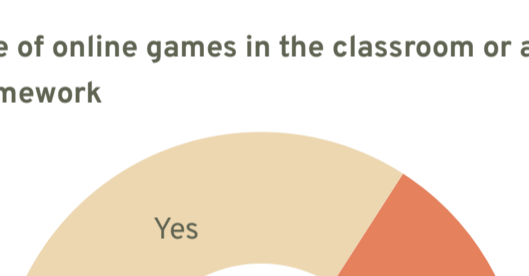
Around 20% of the teachers consider Wi-Fi connection around Germany to be good. Almost 50% consider it to be average, and over a third of the teachers consider it to be bad.



Digital infrastructure in Germany

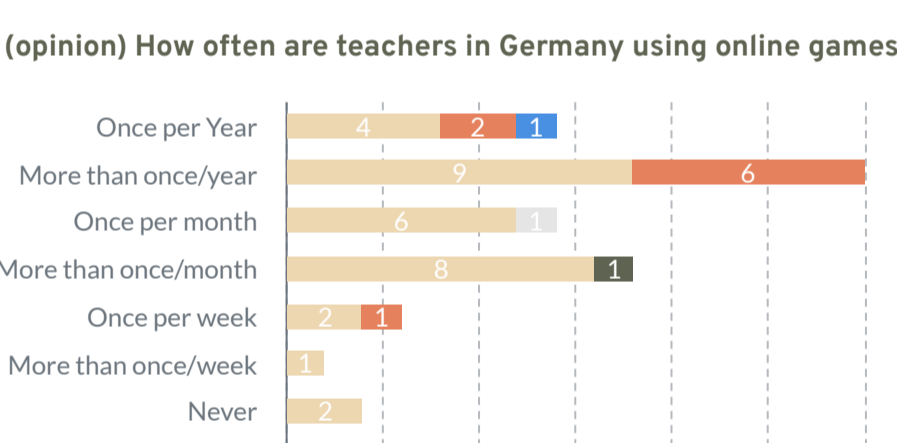
Gaming: Use of games in the classroom

Use of online games in the classroom or as homework



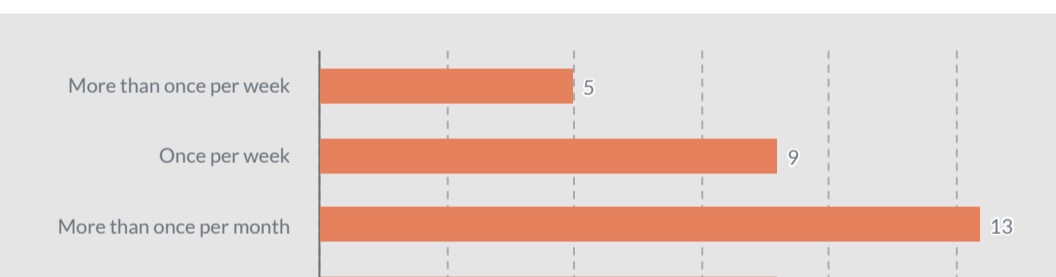
45 out of 66* Have used online games in the classroom or as homework

(opinion) How often are teachers in Germany using online games



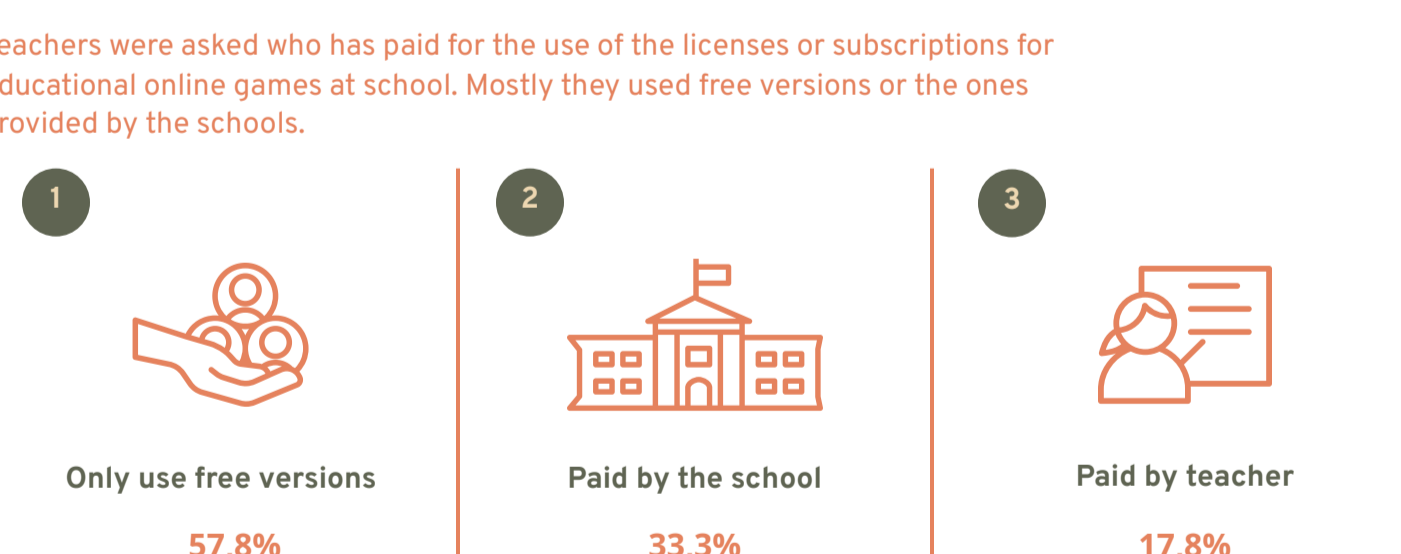
Almost 70% of the teachers who answered our survey have used online educational games in the classroom or as homework. That is 7 out of 10 and shows how games are now becoming part of the classrooms around Germany. We also found out that even if teachers have used online educational games, it seems that they don't use them really often. A third of teachers consider that teachers use games at least once a year. Only 5% consider that they used it on a weekly basis, and 25% don't know how often games are used in classrooms. But the graph below shows that teachers also believe they are going to use educational online games more often in the future.

How often do you think you will be using educational games in the following month?



Who has covered the licenses or subscriptions?

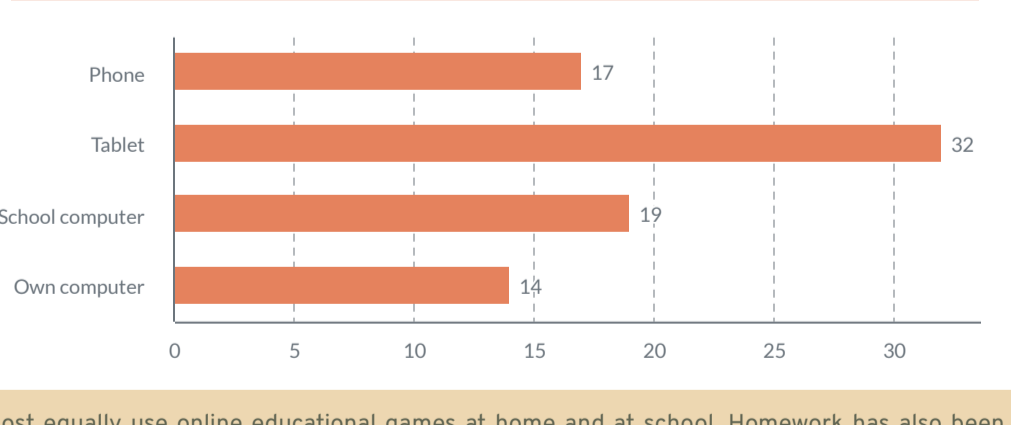
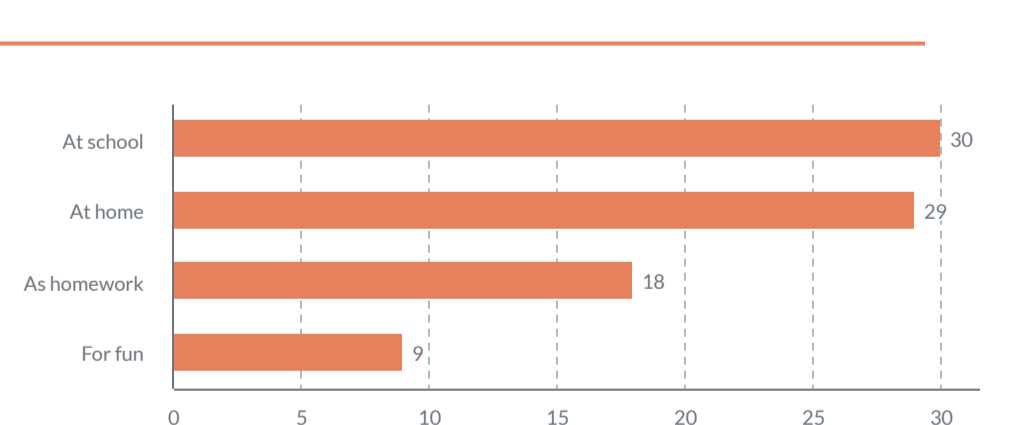
Teachers were asked who has paid for the use of the licenses or subscriptions for educational online games at school. Mostly they used free versions or the ones provided by the schools.



Where have students used online educational games? (Multiple answer choice).



What device(s) have your students used for the online educational games? (Multiple answer choice).

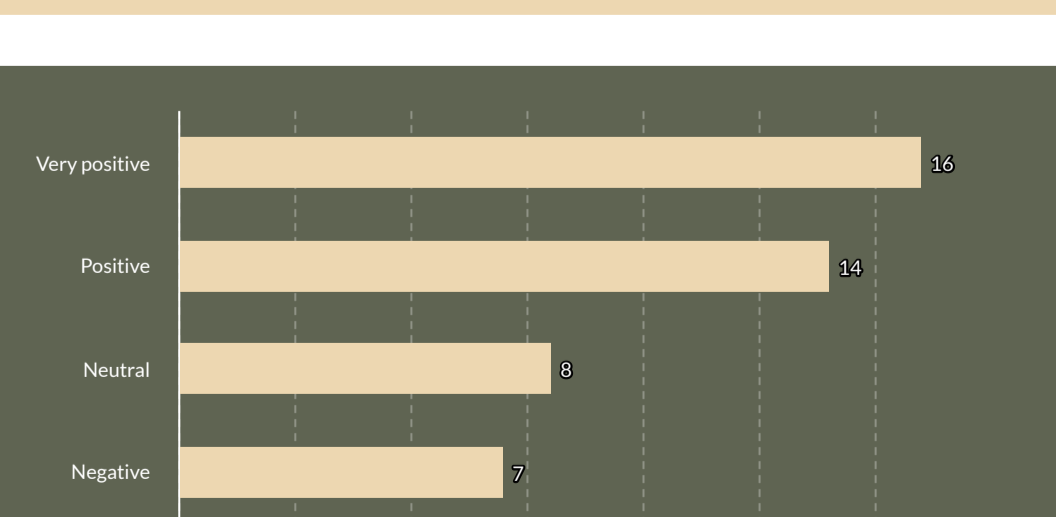


The first graph shows how students in Germany almost equally use online educational games at home and at school. Homework has also been shown to be a part of the use of online educational games at home. Recreational use/fun of games scores the lowest, but it is also a representative number and something that could be encouraged by parents and teachers. The second graph, of huge importance for Loru Games, shows that most students use tablets for online educational games (Loru focuses on tablets). School computers and phones are almost equally used, and own computers are the least used for educational online games.

What is the general attitude towards online educational games?

We asked the teachers what was their general attitude towards online games.

Almost 70% of the teachers have a positive/very positive attitude towards online educational games.



Impact of online games on students

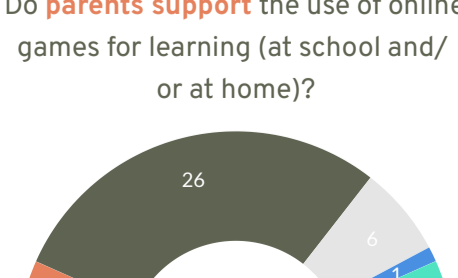
Students' motivation to learn using educational online games



Has using educational games improved your students' learning outcome?



Do parents support the use of online games for learning (at school and/or at home)?



The first 2 graphs show how online educational games have impacted students in Germany. The first graph shows that almost 50% of the students have had a positive impact on their motivation while using games at school. The second graph shows that more than 50% of the students have shown some improvement in their learning while using games at school. The last graph shows that over 70% of parents support in some way the use of educational games at school or at home.



Loru Games Ltd

Marketing Plan

Our Objective

Loru Games aims to reach as many teachers and students as possible in the pursuit of more engaging learning experience, focusing on the German market.

Authors of Document

Cesar Calvo
Christine Rodrian

(In cooperation with Eero Järvenpää from Loru Games: Eero@lorugames.com)

LORU games

Table of Contents

Business Summary	2
Business Initiatives	5
Target Market	7
Market Strategy	12
Budget	15
Marketing Channels	17
Marketing Technology	20

Business Summary

Our Company

Loru Games is located in the capital region of Finland, registered in Kerava. It offers motivating and engaging games for onsite and online learning. Our mission is to help teachers in their work by offering easy-to-use gamified teaching tools and help students to stay motivated with their learning progress. (Järvenpää, 2022)

Our Marketing Leaders

Miika Anundi, CEO	Miika Anundi is Loru Games's CEO and leads the marketing efforts.
Panu Kuitunen	Panu Kuitunen is Loru Games's CPeO (Chief Pedagogical Officer). He is responsible for Loru's social media presence.
Eero Järvenpää	Eero Järvenpää is Loru Games's CBDO. He is responsible for Loru Games's business development activities.
Ilkka Davidsen	Ilkka Davidsen is Loru Games's Chief Game Producer. He is responsible for community contacts.

SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT analysis for the fiscal year 2023 identifies Loru Games' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is to be clear about what Loru is good at and what could be improved. Furthermore, the analysis shows how the company can use its strengths to capitalise on them and think about how to avert possible threats.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High quality games: engaging, attractive, motivating for student - gamers & non-gamers• Differentiation: students can choose game type & level (single & multiplayer option)• Reputation: Finnish educational products valued/ high quality• Technology: platform/ games designed for tablet (modern devices)• Assessment & Analytical aspect: valuable data for educators: information/ feedback about students development/ performance• No prior training required: easy to use; browser-based - ready to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low profit margins: need to keep prices low/ free version. (attitude/ challenging investment in education - "sth free")• weak online presence: channels & website content need improvement & updates; add other channels (IG)• no fixed, full-time employees: requirement for funding & approaching a market

Opportunities

- **Digitalisation in education:** Growing demand for digital educational solutions; huge government investment (e.g. "DigitalPakt Schule") - acceleration through Pandemic
- **Germany / German-speaking market:** huge & growing fast
- **well established private sector:** high demand for private tutoring & language schools (possible collaboration/ partnering up)

Threats

- **weak digital infrastructure in Germany:** schools / homes lacking fast internet/ Wifi; lack of devices
- **little investment/ money in K12**
- **teachers/ parents/ educators:** lack of proficiency/ low attitude towards (browser-based) digital games
- **tough competition:** well established German companies, many EdTech start-ups approaching the German market
- **public educational system:** high bureaucracy, state division: many players involved in processes

Business Initiatives

Loru Games has the aspiring goal to be the number one educational gaming platform for teachers and expand internationally to reach as many users as possible. (Järvenpää 2022) The following initiatives to approach the German market in 2023 are designed to achieve this goal. All mentioned initiatives require content in German language:

Initiative 1: Invest in Visibility (online & offline presence)

Description	Over the next 12 months, we'll work on improving online visibility, improving our existing channels & expanding to new channels. We will work on our offline visibility on the German EdTech market through visiting various fairs & events related to EdTech & education in Germany. (HubSpot 2022; Carmicheal 2022).)
Goal of initiative	<p>To improve user-friendliness and increase our website's rank (on e.g Google); create engaging content in existing Social Media channels and add Instagram, as additional channel. (HubSpot 2022) (Could also include a combination of paid marketing, content marketing & growing community)</p> <p>Visit the biggest German educational/ EdTech fairs to network & attract investors: Didacta; EdTech Germany (by CLC Corporate Learning & Change GmbH); EdTech Next Summit (in cooperation with the European EdTech Alliance); OEB (organised by OEB Learning Technologies Europe GmbH, Berlin)</p>
Metrics to measure success	Number of new leads & percentage of new leads leading to new users/customers (freemium user vs. paying customer), expanded network, attracting new investors

Initiative 2: Partnering up / Cooperation

Description	Reach out to existing EdTech companies or educational partners to partner up. Making your product a valuable addition/expansion to the other product/ service. Initiative 1 is the basis for Initiative 2.
Goal of initiative	Use established EdTech companies and/or educational publishers to access the German market; join forces.
Metrics to measure success	Proven interest to partner up, e.g. number of (new) partners and number of users in partner networks

Initiative 3: Approach public sector state by state

Description	There are several approaches to choose a possible state: small states (e.g. Bremen), rich states (e.g. Baden-Württemberg), or with a strong established EdTech community (e.g. Berlin)
Goal of initiative	Easier access, by focusing on one state & one curriculum vs. Germany, with 16 different educational systems.
Metrics to measure success	Expanded network within the public sector, find and meet the potential customers. Show interest and bring interest from them.

Target Market

Industries

In the fiscal year 2023, we're targeting the following industries in Germany where we'll sell our product and reach out to customers (HubSpot 2022):


German
Basic
Education
(K 12)

This includes the following educational sectors:

- the public (Example: public Primary and lower Secondary school)
- the private (Example: Private tutoring, language schools, educational publishers)
- the semi-private (Example: vocational schools, e.g. IHK)

Buyer Personas

Within our target market, we've identified the following buyer personas to represent our ideal customers (HubSpot 2022):



Arne Schepker/ CEO
Arne is the CEO of Babbel, a German EdTech company, specialized in language learning. The company is well established and ranked amongst the Top 100 EdTech companies in Europe. Arne would like to improve/expand his service by adding more gamified learning to his platform. Babbel is looking for potential partners.



Christian Döttinger/ CEO
Christian is the CEO of Klett Gruppe, which Ernst Klett Verlag is part of. Klett Verlag is one of the biggest and most successful educational media companies in Germany. Because of the digitalization within the educational sector Christian is looking for companies offering educational games to expand the additional services for schools (e.g. additional learning material/ methods accompanying school books). He is looking for EdTech companies to partner up with. (Klett Gruppe 2022)



Rainer Ballnus / Freie Hansestadt Bremen
He is the Head of Bremen's educational department responsible for digitalisation and media. Ballnus just got funding from the DigitalPakt Schule and is now looking for educational gaming platforms to use at his schools. He aims for a product, that is easy to set up and helps teachers assess their students better. (Freie Hansestadt Bremen 2022)



Mia Müller/ teacher
Mia is a teacher at a primary school in Baden-Württemberg. She is also a "digital tutor", responsible for all IT related issues. Mia's school is about to apply for money from the state through the DigitalPakt Schule. She is looking for possible licenses to buy for her school and is looking at products or services that include gamified learning. Mia will visit the didacta fair to look for possible companies.

Competitive Analysis

Within our target market(s), we expect to compete with the following companies (HubSpot 2022) The analysis of the first two competitors is based on Loru Games' internal material (Loru Games 2022):

Kahoot

Products we compete with	Multiple choice questions, quizzes, multiple player games, synchronous and asynchronous learning, free and paid tier.
Other ways we compete	They are a global established learning platform. Many ready learning sets (learning session). Over one million paid users

Quizlet

Products we compete with	Multiple choice questions. Single player games. Synchronous and asynchronous learning. Free and paid tiers.
Other ways we compete	Many ready study sets (over 500 million) global established learning platform.

Anton

Products we compete with	App includes (next to exercises) educational games for various subjects; students can be organised in class groups (Anton 2022)
Other ways we compete	Easily accessible from various devices (App for phone, tablet & computer), free (no ads); teachers can follow students learning progress & assign certain tasks/ games; games are not the main focus of Anton (games= reward, students collect stars & trophies to play) (unlike Loru) (Anton 2022)

Market Strategy

Product

Loru Games has an educational gaming platform for teachers. The product offers the following:

- **Learning content:** selected and/or created by educators (ready sets & own material)
- **High quality games:** engaging, motivating - for gamers & non-gamers
- **Differentiation:** students can choose game type & level (single & multiplayer option); game adapts to player's progress
- **Technology:** browser-based (ready to use); designed for tablets
- **Assessment & Analytical aspect:** real-time learning reports about students' progress (in the classroom & remotely)
(Loru Games 2022)

The platform works as a product on its own but can also easily be included into other products/ services, aiming at the public and the private educational sector alike.

Price

Our price range varies by business type, size, and need. We can craft specific packages depending on the client – from private clients to partnerships (HubSpot 2022).

Loru Games' pricing strategy includes Free Trier and Paid Trier, like the biggest competitors Kahoot and Quizlet. Free Trier is especially aimed at new users, mainly private customers. The Loru Premium license/ Paid Trier grants access to unlimited classes, question sets, more games and full learning reports. Loru Premium Monthly is set at 4,99€/ month (for single users) and Loru Premium Annual is set at 49€/ year (single users). These prices are competitive with the above-mentioned companies. (Loru Games 2022)

For school licenses the price can be adjusted, depending on the size of the school/ number of teachers using it.

Prices for state licenses (e.g. Bremen or Baden-Württemberg) depend on the size of the state/ number of schools/ teachers.

For partnerships with other EdTech companies or publishers the price needs to be negotiated depending on the time and overall impact.

Place

As we are trying to enter the German market, it is essential, that our product is also displayed offline in Germany/ at events in Germany, as well as online, with content in German. It is wise to look at the competition – where and how do they display their products?

Depending on the customer, we're aiming to reach, we must be present at different locations. Other EdTech companies are most likely to be found at events related to the industry, such as EdTech Germany (by CLC Corporate Learning & Change GmbH) or EdTech Next Summit (in cooperation with the European EdTech Alliance).

Private customers, such as teachers or parents, however, are most likely not to be found there, but rather at events related to education in general, such as the Didacta. Also, representatives of the state can be found at such events.

Where to reach out to whom also plays a role when looking at the marketing channels, especially social media – who is using which channel and how to adapt provided content to match their needs/ interests?

Promotion

We promote our services in the following ways (HubSpot 2022):

- **Organic channels:** website, blog posts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram)
- **Paid campaigns:** social media, search engine optimization (SEO)
- **Webinars:** participate in/ present at EdTech webinars aiming to promote Finnish EdTech companies/products to European/German markets (e.g. EdTech Garage) – depending on the event: pitch in German!

- **Fairs/ events:** participate in/ present at big German/ European EdTech fairs/ events – pitch in German!
- **Direct contact:** contact possible partners (e.g. publisher) and customers (e.g. state of Baden-Württemberg) directly, if possible in German. (HubSpot 2022)

This above strategy combines organic, paid, direct/personal marketing opportunities to reach out to new (possible) customers.

The content for the mentioned channels is discussed in more detail in the marketing channels chapter of this plan.

Budget /Funding

Over the course of 2023, given the cash allotted to the Marketing team, we expect to invest in the following items to ensure we meet the objectives outlined in this marketing plan. (HubSpot 2022) As Loru’s budget depends highly on funding, funding options are listed below:

Marketing Expense	Estimated Price	Possible Funding
Visiting fairs/ events (Didacta, EdTech Germany, EdTech next summit, OEB)	5.000 -10.000€ ¹	Business Finland, AHK (German-Finnish chamber of commerce)
(Additional) Market entry support (market research, legal counseling, training (e.g. German business culture)	? ²	Services offered by AHK & Business Finland Germany; funding possible through e.g. Business Finland, ELY-keskus
Translation & interpreter/adviser services (platform translations, pitch in	5.000€ ³	Support through EdTech networks, AHK and Business Finland (help to

¹ Tickets for EdTech Germany 2022 = 1390 €; Didacta ticket prices 2022 = 30-40€, exhibitor prices vary according to stand, basic stand ~ 2000€ (according to trade fair calculator from Landesmesse Stuttgart); EdTech Next summit tickets are free, start-up pitches also free; OEB tickets 945 €, exhibitor prices not published; on top of all: flights to Germany&back; sources: the mentioned fairs own websites; Landesmesse Stuttgart: Trade fair calculator

² Price varies according to included services & company (Westerlund, 2022)

³ Estimation: costs vary depending on translator/ adviser, around 20-50€/hour

German, German lawyer,...)		connect); possibly also funding
Paid Social Media Marketing	450 – 6.000€/month ⁴	Marketing funding (private investors or Business Finland)
Paid Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)	2.500 – 10.000€/month ⁵	Marketing funding (private investors or Business Finland)
Total	12.950 – 31.000€	

⁴ Estimation according to WebFX (WebFX, 2022)

⁵ Estimation according to OuterBox (Smith, 2022)

Marketing Channels

Over the course of the following years, we will launch/ramp up our use of the following channels for educating our customers, generating leads, and developing brand awareness. (HubSpot 2022) In addition to Loru's existing channels, we will also add Instagram to the list. The future use of Twitter needs to still be discussed. All channels require information/ posts in German, in addition to English & Finnish:

Fairs/Events

Purpose of channel	Brand awareness, be where the customers are, customer engagement, customer acquisition. (HubSpot 2022)
Metrics to measure success	Number of new contacts/customers. Interest from clients.

Twitter

Purpose of channel	General brand awareness and point-to-point contacting specific individuals.
Metrics to measure success	Number of followers Number of actions on posts. Number of website visits via Twitter.

Facebook (page & group)

Purpose of channel	Build brand awareness Host closed insider group for beta testing and getting feedback Reach German companies that are not in LinkedIn (Westerlund, 2022)
Metrics to measure success	Likes on the public page Activity on the insider group

LinkedIn

Purpose of channel	Build brand awareness Reach out to/ Search for possible partners
Metrics to measure success	Followers on the company page Activity on the posts

Instagram

Purpose of channel	Build brand awareness, visual engagement (HubSpot 2022) Reach out to/ Search for possible partners & customers
Metrics to measure success	Followers, likes Activity on the posts

Loru Games Website

Purpose of channel	Build brand awareness, increase visibility
Metrics to measure success	Page visitors, SEO analytics

Marketing Technology

We will utilize the following technologies and software to help us achieve our goals and objectives (HubSpot 2022). We will first aim at free or very low-cost services, keeping our low budget in mind.

Email Marketing Software

Loru Games has own mailing list for the Loru Games' Ambassador Program. Additionally, Loru could also use an email marketing software, e.g. from HubSpot, to send mass communications to all customers, to enroll for webinars, where Loru presents their product/ new features (HubSpot, 2022; Carmicheal 2022).

HubSpot Marketing Hub

This is a centralized platform, combining over 500 marketing tools in one. The tool allows you to draw new users through blogs, SEO and live chat tools. HubSpot Marketing Hub also offers custom reporting and built-in analytics.

HubSpot has a free version of this tool, but it can also be updated to Starter (\$45/ month), Professional (\$800/ month) or Enterprise (\$3 200/month). (HubSpot, 2022; Carmicheal 2022)

Marketing CRM

We will use the above free version from HubSpot. (HubSpot 2022) If we feel this is not enough, we will also add monday.com as a CRM tool.

monday.com is not only a CRM tool, but as Wikipedia puts it, it “is a cloud-based platform that allows users to create their own applications and project management software” (Wikipedia, 2022). Monday.com has won many awards

this year (e.g. top rated 2022; best software 2022 from TrustRadius). Amongst other things, it is said to be easy to use, data can be organized well visually and has good administrative task management functions. (TrustRadius, 2022)

According to HubSpot monday.com has 3 different paid trier versions: Basic (\$8/month/seat), Standard (\$10/month/set) and Pro (\$16/month/seat) (Carmicheal 2022).

SEO Management Software

We will use SEMrush software only if we feel that other SEO measures are not working well enough, as SEMrush is not that cheap. There are three different price categories: Pro (\$119/month), Guru (\$229/month) and Business (\$449/month) (Carmicheal 2022).

With SEMrush we can run technical SEO audit, track daily rankings, but also analyse our competitor's SEO strategy and find out about keywords to use or how to increase organic traffic. SEMrush can also be used to measure social media strategy, plan content, or do market research. (HubSpot, 2022; Carmicheal 2022)

Social Media Management Software

With the help of HubSpot's social media software, we can post on multiple platforms simultaneously and get feedback about engagement summarised in one. (HubSpot, 2022; Carmicheal 2022)