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Instagram Marketing Plan

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The aim of this project-based thesis was to develop a comprehensive Instagram marketing plan for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep. The concrete outcomes of this project were a PDF Instagram Marketing Handbook and a summarizing poster, intended for use by the commissioner and employees of the company.</p> <p>The theoretical part of this thesis was based on the theory of social media marketing, with a particular focus on Instagram. The focus was on topics such as content creation, including the key elements that contribute to high-quality content, and the significant role of aesthetics in visual marketing platforms such as Instagram. The study also explored the importance of storytelling and Instagram engagement rates, as the factor that contribute to the visibility and success of content on the app. In addition, this research delved into marketing strategy and marketing plan, with a thorough SWOT analysis conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the company's internal and external environment. Furthermore, benchmarking was used to better understand how competitors are executing their Instagram marketing.</p> <p>The results of the SWOT analysis and benchmarking revealed that the commissioner possessed significant potential in the area of Instagram marketing. However, it was also evident that there was room for improvement as the content and posting schedule were found to be inconsistent.</p> <p>Development ideas were formulated based on established theory, as well as the results of the SWOT analysis and benchmarking. These recommendations included the need for a dedicated social media specialist, the creation of a content schedule and topics, improvements to overall aesthetics, bio, captions, and hashtags. The resulting Instagram Marketing Handbook compiled all of these suggestions and was subsequently summarized in the poster.</p>		
<p>Keywords</p> <p>Instagram marketing, marketing plan, content creation, engagement rate, benchmarking, Instagram marketing handbook</p>		

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1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, the number of social media users is said to be 4,59 billion, but by 2027 this number is said to reach 5,85 billion (Website of Statista 2023). This means that over 40% of the world's population will be using social media. Therefore, the importance of social media marketing will be even more relevant for companies, and building a strong brand is vital. (Blomster, Kurtti, Määttä & Sinisalo 2020, 8.)

Companies may know that they should use social media as part of their marketing strategy. But they may fail to realize that by just posting and sharing some content randomly and without clear goals will not have the desired effects. A company intending to use social media as part of their marketing should have a clear strategy for it and the intent behind it. Social media marketing requires planning and needs to be executed thoughtfully. (Geyser 2021.)

A recognizable logo, memorable company name, or catchy slogan alone are not enough to define a brand. Brand refers to the full customer experience and is, therefore, intangible. It is everything from visiting the company's website to the appearance of a bar. In essence, a brand is how customers, both current and future, view the company. A strong brand can help companies to get an edge against their competitors and create value for their customers. (Kenton, 2022a.) Instagram is an excellent tool for companies trying to build and promote their brands (Coles 2018, 123).

The aim of this thesis is to help Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep to develop their Instagram marketing plan and produce an Instagram Marketing Handbook for the company. Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep does not use social media actively at the moment. For that reason, the commissioner would greatly benefit from

an Instagram Marketing Handbook. Especially when considering how effective well planned and executed social media marketing can be.

2 COMMISSIONER AND RESEARCH TASK

2.1 Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep is a distillery and tasting room located in The Netherlands' capital Amsterdam. The distillery was opened in 2010 in an old pumping station situated in the East part of the city in Flevopark. The pumping station dates back to the 1880s and is situated by a small pond. (Website of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep 2022.)

The distillery produces over 100 different products, all made from natural ingredients. Their selection is wide and offers spirits like jenevers, bitters, fruit liquors, gins, and vodka. The distillery's products can be tasted at their proeflokaal on their premises. Proeflokaal is a Dutch word for a tasting room and refers usually to a bar attached to a winery, brewery, or distillery (Janssens 2022a). Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's tasting room fits 49 people, and the outdoor terrace can fit up to 250 people, expanding the capacity of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep to nearly 300 people. The company does not rent out the premises for private functions. (Website of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep 2022.)

The tasting room also offers imported German beer, coffee and tea, soft drinks, wine, and cider in their drink selection. Furthermore, small bar snacks such as cheese and sausage platters can be ordered. They also have seasonal drinks in their offering. (Website of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep 2022.)

The company has been a family-run business since the beginning. At the moment, Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep employs nine people, but the full-time equivalent is four. The tasting room is open six days a week and is closed on Mondays. From Tuesday to Friday, it is open from 15:00 to 20:00, and on weekends the opening time is at 13:00. During the winter season from the 1st of October to the 1st of April, the closing time changes to 18:00. (Janssens 2022a.).

The writer is familiar with the commissioner through friends who have or are still working at the distillery. Therefore, the writer has had some insights into the way the commissioner operates before starting to write this thesis. Furthermore, the writer has been following the commissioner's Instagram account for more than two years. Therefore, it has been easier to form a picture of the commissioner's needs for a proper Instagram marketing plan.

2.2 Research Task

The objective of this thesis is to produce an Instagram marketing plan for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep. The commissioner wishes to have a clear strategy for their Instagram marketing and optimize the usage of the platform as a marketing channel. The concrete outcome of this project-based thesis is a handbook for the commissioner that they can use in their Instagram marketing in the future.

The aim is to create a handbook that details how the commissioner wants their brand to be presented on Instagram. It will detail things such as the posting schedule, what kind of posts are expected, who is posting, the tone of the text that is used in the captions, and the font. This way, all current and new employees will be on the same page when it comes to their Instagram marketing.

By optimizing their Instagram marketing plan Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep can gain more followers. This way they can reach even wider audience and attract

the interest of potential new customers. Furthermore, by having a clear Instagram marketing plan making content for their account will be easier as there are clear guidelines for them to follow.

The commissioner uses and wants to continue to use, their Instagram account to market both the proeflokaal and the distillery. They do not wish to have two separate accounts and feel that having just one account makes things easier and simpler for them and their clients. They also highlight that as the companies are very closely tied together, share the same owner, and operate from the same premises having two accounts does not make sense for them. (Janssens 2022a.)

Currently, the commissioner does not utilize Instagram to its full potential. The commissioner is not too familiar with the platform and only knows its most basic functions. The account is used occasionally and not in a planned manner. (Janssens 2022a). Chapter 6.1 will introduce the commissioner's account in more detail.

3 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media allows companies to publish and share content directly with consumers. For small companies with small budgets social media marketing is an excellent alternative to traditional marketing and can save money. But the fact is that social media is constantly evolving. New social media platforms rise, and new features are updated to the old ones constantly. Therefore, companies must keep themselves updated about the changes that are happening in social media. (Blomster et. al. 2020, 8, 10.)

As there are many social media platforms to choose from any company wishing to use social media in their marketing strategy must define the appropriate social media marketing platform(s) for them. They must determine

their target groups and find out which platforms these target groups use. After determining the social media marketing strategy, short-term plans can be outlined. From there, the company can start planning and creating content that is appropriate for that specific social media platform. (Kananen 2018, 74–75.)

Some popular social media marketing platforms that have a large number of users are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok for example. Each of these social media platforms has its own features and requires different kinds of content. In addition, all of these platforms have their own user demographics. Therefore, any company wishing to start using social media as their marketing tool should find out where their customer segment spends its time. (Kananen 2018, 110–115.)

3.1 Instagram as marketing platform

Instagram is social media application meant for sharing photos and videos. It was founded in October 2010 by Kevin Systrome and Mike Krieger. As the first mobile-based social media platform Instagram quickly gained popularity among social media users. Only after two years of its launch, Instagram was acquired by Facebook in April 2012. (Blystone 2022.)

Instagram is free to download from various mobile application stores. Furthermore, anyone is able to create an account for free. On the app, users can follow other users, brands, businesses, and celebrities. In Instagram, users can also post their own photos or videos on their feed or stories; apply filters or edit their photos and videos; like, comment, or share other users' content; send private messages to other users, and discover other users by hashtags or geotags. (Website of App Store 2022.)

Instagram has over 1,130 million users worldwide, April 2022, and this number is predicted to reach 1,35 million by the end of 2023 (Website of Statista 2022b). In January 2022 (Website of Statista 2022c) the gender distribution in the app is roughly 50–50. Furthermore, the vast majority of users were

between the ages of 18 and 34, indicating that the social networking app is most popular among younger audiences.

According to Kananen (2018, 192), Instagram's visual nature requires the use of photographs, videos, or other types of visual content from businesses. Therefore, businesses that may not be able to create visual content may want to consider using other social media platforms. The mere display of product photos is an insufficient way of Instagram marketing. He further continues by stating that when a company wants to announce new products or services, Instagram is a good option as a platform. As follower engagement with the post can be a strong indication for the company.

On Instagram, users are able to create a bio for their account (Website of App Store 2022). A short bio can explain to potential clients why they should be interested in the company and what it has to offer. And as Instagram profiles often act as the initial point of contact for potential customers strong first impressions are crucial. Therefore, companies should make sure that their profile bio is inviting and informative. (Zote 2021.)

Business profiles on Instagram can also access a free tool called Instagram insights. This tool can help businesses to discover more about their performance and follower count. It offers an overview of the follower demographics: age, location, and gender. Additionally, businesses can easily follow statistics on how the audience has interacted with particular posts, stories, videos, reels, live videos, etc. (Website of Instagram Help Center n.a.)

3.2 Content creation

Social media is ideal for helping companies to build trust with potential and existing clients. Entertaining, practical, interesting, and sincere content are essential components in social media marketing. The published content should be persuasive, consistent, open-minded, and professional. This way the business can become more likable and credible as it can help attract wanted

attention when all these principles are reflected in the social media content. (Barry 2015, 1-11.)

However, a lot more goes into social media marketing than only pursuing likes, shares, and engagement. Businesses must concentrate on sharing informative yet engaging, creative, and easily digestible content about their products and services. (Bordelon 2019, 35, 44; Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan 2016, 162.) Engaging and relevant content is the key to ensuring consumers' and potential customers' interest. To appear genuine, companies should have some high-quality and well-planned social media posts rather than overwhelming followers with irrelevant posts with poor quality. As a result of the latter, the company may even appear desperate or untrustworthy. Companies should aim to sell their trustworthiness through their social media posts. (Bordelon 2019, 45.)

Finding ideas for content for the chosen platform and thorough planning are important stages in the content creation process. Businesses must consider two factors while choosing the ideal theme that works for them in social media marketing. First, meaningful content must be relevant to the lives of the followers and potential followers alike. Second, stories that mirror the brand's ideology and values make for excellent content. (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan 2016, 160.)

Jutkowitz (2017, 83–84) highlights how employees that are given the freedom to express their creativity within established guidelines produce content that reflects the organization's business culture. The incorporation of personal touches makes the material stand out and makes it original. It produces a unique, authentic portrayal of the brand that interacts with customers. This is what can set a brand apart from competitors.

3.2.1 Types of Content

There are several types of content that can generate traffic and engagement for a business account on Instagram. These include but are not limited to; Behind-The-Scenes, Products, Services, Reposts from Employees, Educational Posts, Influencer Posts, User-Generated Content, and Newsjacking (Trending Holiday Posts). Companies should try to alternate with the different types of content and post them across the different features of the platform, reels, posts, stories, and videos. (Decker 2022; Thomas 2022.)

Good quality content that educates the company account followers about their products and services can have a direct effect on those people becoming paying customers. (Bordelon 2019, 47.) Behind-The-Scenes posts are a great way to show followers what goes on at the company, how products are made, or what the employees do during a normal workday, for example. For the latter reposts from employees are a great way to show this. (Thomas 2022.)

Moriuchi (2016, 2.) has defined consumer-generated content (CGC), sometimes known as user-generated content (UGC), as content that is created and posted on various sites of the intranet by non-experts. She further specifies how these consumers have had direct experience with the product or service they have posted about. She continues by stating how consumer-generated content has become a widely popular form of media worldwide and it is among the fastest-growing forms of content on the internet.

Therefore, it is no wonder how user-generated content is used by companies to promote their products and services through re-posting content from their customers. This way companies also get to engage with their followers, and the fans have the chance to gain visibility in return. Many benefits come with posting user-generated content: Higher brand engagement, building brand trust, educating users, and saving time on content creation. However, it is always important to ask for permission from the original creator and give credit to them. (Mazouri, 2021)

3.2.2 Aesthetics

According to the Cambridge Dictionary 'aesthetic' refers to the pleasing visual appearance of a product or environment (Website of Cambridge Dictionary 2022). However, in the context of Instagram, it refers to the overall look and feel of an account. Having an aesthetic Instagram account can be important for several reasons. An Instagram account with a cohesive and visually appealing aesthetic can be more attractive to potential followers and can help to establish a strong visual identity for the account. (Demeku 2022a; Geyser 2022a.)

Defining a brand personality is an essential first step in creating an Instagram aesthetic, as it helps to guide the visual theme and direction of the account's content. It's also important to consider the target audience and the values that the company represents when defining the brand personality, as this can help to ensure that the chosen aesthetic resonates with the desired target audience and aligns with company values. (Geyser 2022a.)

Considering the visual elements that align with the brand personality can create a cohesive and consistent visual identity for the company's Instagram account. There are several factors to consider when defining the visuals for the company's Instagram aesthetic, including color, layout, and visual elements such as graphics, fonts, and images. The best way to establish this is by creating a style guide. A style guide should define guidelines for the visual elements of the Instagram account, and it helps maintain consistency when it comes to the account's Instagram aesthetic. (Geyser 2022a.) The Instagram Marketing Handbook will also function as a style guide for the commissioner

Research conducted by the University of Loyola Maryland found that 'color increases brand recognition by up to 80%'. Furthermore, color can even affect consumers' purchase decisions. (Kumar 2017, 7–8.) Therefore, choosing the right colors for the Instagram aesthetic is an important aspect of creating a cohesive and visually appealing account. The colors that are chosen can help

to define the brand personality and create a strong visual identity for the Instagram account. (Geyser 2022a.) Figure 1 shows how the color wheel and complementary colors can help to create a more aesthetic feed.

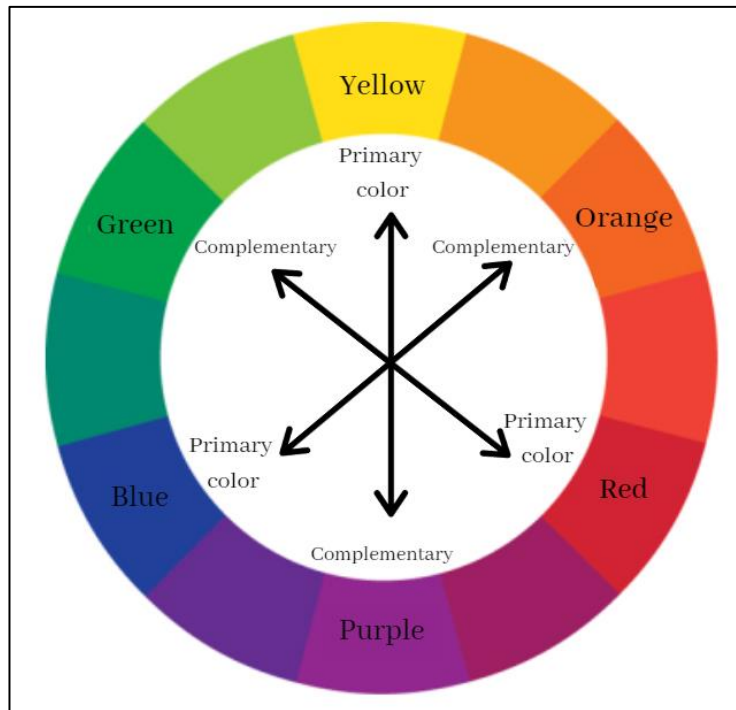


Figure 1. Color wheel for complementary and primary colors. (Website of Cornell University, n.a.)

Complementary colors are colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel, and they tend to create a visually balanced and harmonious combination when used together. For example, blue and orange, violet and yellow, and red and green are all complementary color pairs (Website of Tate Modern n.a.). Using a combination of complementary colors can help to create a visually appealing and cohesive Instagram aesthetic. Colors from the company logo are generally a good starting point, as these colors may already be associated with the brand. However, if the brand logo colors do not accurately reflect the brand personality, it is important to choose colors that will help to convey the desired visual identity. (Geyser 2022a).

The layout of the feed is also an important stage when creating a cohesive Instagram aesthetic. The company must decide how they want to arrange its

content on its Instagram account. Many grid layout options can be chosen for Instagram accounts. (Website of Preview 2018.) Figure 2 shows some of these grid layout styles.



Figure 2. Different Grid Lay-Outs (Website of Preview 2018; Gomez 2021.)

These layouts options range from a more free-form layout of the monochromatic squares to a more planned yet simple checkerboard style and row-by-row grid layout to a more complex puzzle layout where multiple posts form one big picture to the feed (Figure 2). A grid layout plan should also be included in the style guide to ensure consistency of the Instagram content (Geyser 2022a).

Text-based content is also part of the Instagram aesthetic. In this case, typography plays an important visual element in the overall Instagram aesthetics of the account. Therefore, it is important to choose fonts that complement each other and keep using these chosen fonts consistently. If the company logo has text in it, the font should be in line with this. (Mumford 2021.)

Overall, defining the visuals that best reflect the brand personality is an important step in creating a cohesive and consistent Instagram aesthetic. By carefully considering all the visual elements that align with the brand personality can create an Instagram account that effectively communicates the brand to the audience. (Demeku 2022a.)

3.2.3 Storytelling

Batat (2019, 161–162) summarizes that in marketing, storytelling refers to a tactic that utilizes stories to trigger the audience's emotions. The story's objective is to make the audience more open to the brand's communication. These stories are intended to pique curiosity and keep people engaged longer than traditional types of communication. He continues how the ultimate objective is to create an emotional response from the audience, which can then be used to persuade them to buy the brand's product or service. While logic may play a factor in the ultimate choice, the emotional connection produced by the story is what initially draws the customer in and inspires them to evaluate the brand.

Storytelling is a necessary tool since it is a natural method for people to receive, comprehend, and recall knowledge. Stories are hardwired into human brains, and they help to make sense of the world by offering meaning and context. (Weich 2013, 146.) Storytelling has been used to transmit information, history, and culture since the early days of human civilizations. When knowledge is told as a story, it becomes more relevant, remembered, and engaging. Therefore, it is such a strong marketing tool, as it enables companies to deliver their message in a way that connects with their target audience and is more likely to be remembered. (Jutkowitz 2017, 33–36.)

According to Lazauskas and Snow (2018, 25–38), there are four main elements when it comes to storytelling: Relatability, Novelty, Tension, and Fluency. The first element relatability means how the human brain tends to

resist things that are too unfamiliar. It can be difficult to become engaged in a story that is too strange or unusual. Instead, a storyteller in marketing should aim to produce content that relates to the followers.

On the other hand, the human brain is also fascinated by new things, known as novelty. Therefore, successful storytelling combines relatability and novelty in the right ratio. Ideally starting with something relatable to hook the audience and then introducing the new thing, so as not to scare the audience with information overload or bore them with too much old information (Figure 3). (Lazauskas & Snow 2018, 29–31.)

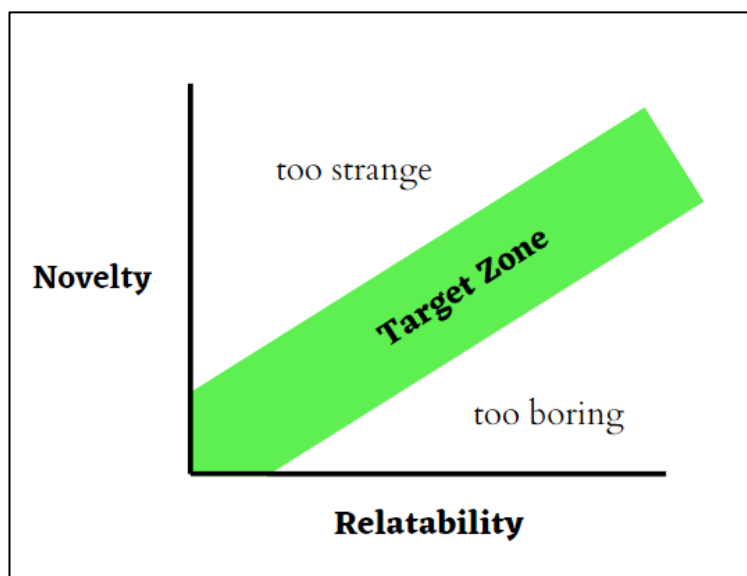


Figure 3. Ratio Between Novelty and Relatability (Lazauskas & Snow 2018, 30.)

Figure 3 depicts the target zone between novelty and relatability, and this is where *tension*, the third element of storytelling, can be created. The terms *conflict* or *curiosity gap* are also used as synonyms for tension. It is the feeling of being emotionally invested, the sense of intrigue, and the possibility of what could happen that create tension. In its shortness, it is what makes a story more interesting and what transforms a good story into a great one. The last element of storytelling *fluency* refers to the assumption that a lower reading level is preferable to a higher one. An excellent storyteller will get the focus of the reader on the content rather than the words or the structure of the story

itself. The story should be captivating through relatability, novelty, and tension. (Lazauskas & Snow 2018, 35–40.)

3.3 Instagram Engagement Rate

Engagement rate can tell companies how much and how actively followers engage with the published content on social media. A higher engagement rate indicates that the brand's content is accepted and noticed by the target audience. Furthermore, businesses can also use engagement rates to track the effectiveness of their social media marketing efforts. (Website of Sprout Social, 2022.) The basic engagement rate can be calculated with the following formula

$$(\text{Average Number of Likes} + \text{Average Number of Comments}) / \text{Followers} \times 100 = \text{Engagement Rate (Worb 2022)}.$$

It is important to note that many elements affect the success of a post getting engagement. One of these elements is the Instagram algorithm itself. (Geyser 2022b.) Instagram had chronically organized content until 2016, but according to the Head of Instagram Adam Mosseri (2021), people were missing over 70% of the content they could see and therefore the first Instagram algorithm was introduced to the platform. According to Instagram (Website of Instagram Creators n.a.), users typically interact with each section differently. Therefore, Instagram uses different algorithms for each section of the app (Reels, Feed, Explore page). In the end, the algorithm's goal is to study the users' habits and preferences on the app and then recommend content that makes the user stay on the app as long as possible (Warren 2022).

It is critical to gain a lot of likes and comments shortly after posting material on Instagram to ensure visibility. This is because the Instagram algorithm favors posts with a high level of engagement (Comments, likes, and shares). Posting when the followers are most active or participating when to post can help elevate the engagement rate significantly. (Barnhart 2012.) Table 1 below

showcases the best posting times on Instagram. Darker the color the better engagement rates can be expected.

Table 1. The best times to post on Instagram (Demeku 2022b)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
			12am			
1am					1am	
	2am		2am			
3am		3am		3am		3am
	4am					4am
		5am		5am	5am	
6am	6am					
						7am
	8am					
	9am					
afternoon and evening						
3pm					10pm	10pm
11pm						11pm

Analysts analyzed over 11 million posts to find the best times for maximum engagement on Instagram to determine the optimal times to post content on Instagram (Table 1) (Demeku 2022b). As it can be seen, the best times to post on Instagram seem to be very early in the morning hours. The best day to post content seems to be Monday. If evening posting times are preferred the best days to do so are Monday and Sunday. However, it is important to note that this is based on one research, and companies should monitor the engagement levels on their posts and see which time works best for them.

When it comes to posting frequency, different sources recommend varying posting frequencies. Based on the Head of Instagram Adam Mosseri's suggestion the social media management platform Hootsuite, for example, recommends posting 2-3 posts on the feed per week but not more than 1 per

day (McLachlan & Cohen 2021). While other like the social media management platform Later recommends posting 14 times a week, for accounts that have less than 1000 followers (Warren 2021a).

Data from various sources have discovered how different types of content also receive different engagement rates (Instagram Engagement Report 2022; Thomas 2022; Newberry 2022). Due to the nature of the Instagram algorithm content that gets engagement is favored, and one metric of this engagement is the time that is used on the content by the followers (Mosseri 2021). Therefore, it is no surprise that videos, carousel posts, and reels seem to be the content types performing better than traditional one-picture posts, as these types of posts require followers to use a longer time on the posts (Instagram Engagement Report 2022; Thomas 2022).

According to Instagram Business (2019), hashtags are an essential part of Instagram marketing. They are a way to organize and classify posts by topic, making it easier for users to find posts that align with their interests. By including relevant hashtags in posts, it increases the possibility of the content being seen by individuals searching for that topic. This can directly affect the engagement level and help gain followers. Table 2 presents different hashtag types and their uses.

Table 2. Hashtag types in Instagram for businesses (Forsey 2022).

Type of hashtag	Usage and Benefits	Example hashtag
Product or service hashtag	Used by businesses for posts about their products and services. This is typically more generic.	#bar
Industry niche hashtags	Narrower than product or service hashtags. Used to represent the more specific service/products provided.	#jenever
Branded hashtags	Aid to build community around the business. Could be a catchphrase,	#distilleerderij nieuwwediep

	name of a product, the name of the company.	
Campaign hashtags	Useful way to track the activity associated with the campaign. Encourages participation and promotes the account.	#summerspecial
User-generated content hashtags	Exclusively for customers. the business, has no control over what is posted. Unfiltered and unsponsored posts.	#drinkgoed
Phrase hashtags	Hint about your brand or business. Convey a message or call to action, encourage users to engage with content	#drinksatnieuwe diep
Event or conference hashtags	Connect with attendees, share updates and insights from the event. Gain visibility and exposure	#Helles tasting2023
Location hashtags	Attract users who are interested in a specific location and increase the visibility of content to those users.	#flevopark

Table 2 shows that there are many options when it comes to hashtags. The maximum number of hashtags per post is 30 (Website of Instagram Help Center, n.a.). However, Instagram Creators (2021) recommends keeping the number of hashtags between three and five. It is smarter to use fewer more content-specific hashtags instead a long list of generic hashtags that are possibly unrelated to the content and the company.

In addition to hashtags, the caption length itself is something that has an effect on the engagement rate. Hub Spot's Instagram Engagement Report from 2022 found that captions increase engagement levels by 4-6%. According to their research, there seem to be two ideal lengths that seem to be performing the best. Keeping it under 20 characters or making the caption longer by more

than 2000 characters. Furthermore, adding emojis and having a call to action are all something that can positively affect the engagement rate (Warren 2021b). Call to action (CTA) in social media marketing refers to a suggestion in a post that asks followers to act on it. It could encourage followers to comment, like, or share the post or simply tell them to visit a location or buy a product or use a service. (Kenton 2022b.)

4 MARKETING STRATEGY & MARKETING PLAN

4.1 Marketing Strategy

To talk about a marketing plan, it is important to understand the difference between a marketing plan and a marketing strategy. These two terms are often used wrongly as synonyms for each other. Therefore, it is easy to mix these two terms as the explanations can be seen to be close to each other with small differences.

A marketing strategy is a company's plan that they have written to detail how they are reaching out to potential customers and converting them into paying and reliable customers. The focus of a clear marketing strategy should be on the company's value proposition. Because ultimately it is what tells potential customers why they should use the company's services and/or buy their products. It is essentially created for the company's marketing team so that they know how the company wishes to be marketed on various marketing channels. (Barone 2021.)

It is very important that companies have strong marketing strategies as it will help them to acquire customers. Furthermore, it can help them to direct their efforts to those marketing channels and methods that they have deemed the

most lucrative for them. A good marketing strategy gives the company direction and gives an edge against any competitors. (Chan 2020.)

Laire (2022) summarizes that in short it can be said that the marketing strategy provides the 'why' behind the marketing of the company. It can help companies grow and achieve their marketing goals. And how marketing strategy should be finished before starting the development of the marketing plan as this provides the framework for it.

4.2 Marketing Plan

Where the marketing strategy provides the 'why' and acts as the framework for the marketing of the company. The marketing plan is the guideline and shows the protocols for how the marketing is supposed to be done. (Laire, 2022.) In this project-based thesis, the Instagram Marketing Handbook will act as the Instagram marketing plan for the commissioner.

As markets are quickly growing to be more and more competitive. Therefore, marketing plans have changed over the years to be more customer- and competitor-focused. Furthermore, marketing plans nowadays tend to be more realistic than in the past. They are created by combining the knowledge from various sources to get additional contributions from all departments of a company. (Kotler et al. 2019, 96.)

The recommended content for an Instagram marketing plan varies between various sources. However, subjects that seem to be recommended by many include the following subjects: defining the target audience, who posts and analyses results, content strategy (what kind of content and how often), content schedule, outlining the account aesthetics, tone of captions, and hashtags. (Skelley 2020; West 2023; Decker 2022.) In the end, the company needs to define the information they want to include in its Instagram marketing plan.

SWOT can be a very helpful tool when starting to create or assessing an already existing marketing plan for a company as it provides a helpful overview of where the company currently stands. SWOT analysis was originally created in the 1960s to help companies to evaluate and identify the company's internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. It is still one of the most used tools in business management. (Vuorinen 2013, 88–90.). Table 3 showcases the use of SWOT analysis and the terms.

Table 3. SWOT analysis matrix (Kotler et al., 2019, 88 – 90)

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the company excel at? • What distinctive resources does the company have? 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What must be improved? • In which areas is the company underperforming?
External	Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there undiscovered potential that the company can use? 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitors advantages over the company

As seen in Table 3. SWOT analysis provides an easy way to see all the areas at once. However, companies need to remember to do proper in-depth analysis as otherwise, the SWOT will not provide any additional value, and valuable time is wasted. If correctly done few overarching themes should arise and these should be used as the focal points. (Vuorinen 2013, 88–90.) In this thesis, SWOT was used to assess the current stage of the commissioner's Instagram marketing efforts (see chapter 6.1).

5 CREATING INSTAGRAM MARKETING PLAN FOR DISTILLEERDERIJ 'T NIEUWE DIEP

5.1 Project-Based Thesis

The project-based thesis uses a real-life problem as a case and tries to find a solution for a specific problem through practical means. The result is often something concrete like a handbook, manual, service, event, or concept. The project-based thesis includes two parts theoretical part and the practical part. The theoretical part will introduce the necessary theoretical background which is needed to support the practical part. In return, the practical part focuses more on the concrete end product or project (handbook, event, etc.). It showcases the development plan and/or the implementation and it is supported by the theory. (HAMK 2018, 8.) The theoretical framework is built by studying various books, academic articles, and reliable websites on the topics. This is done to prove the understanding of the topic in question. But more importantly, it introduces the point of view and the approach to the topic. (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2003, 42.)

The starting point for a project-based thesis is finding a development project that is suitable for a thesis. In the initial phase, the writer needs to consider the need for said development only then can the initial development task be formed. It is also important to consider the possible commissioner and their involvement in the whole process. (Salonen 2013, 17.) The whole project-based thesis process is pictured in Figure 4.

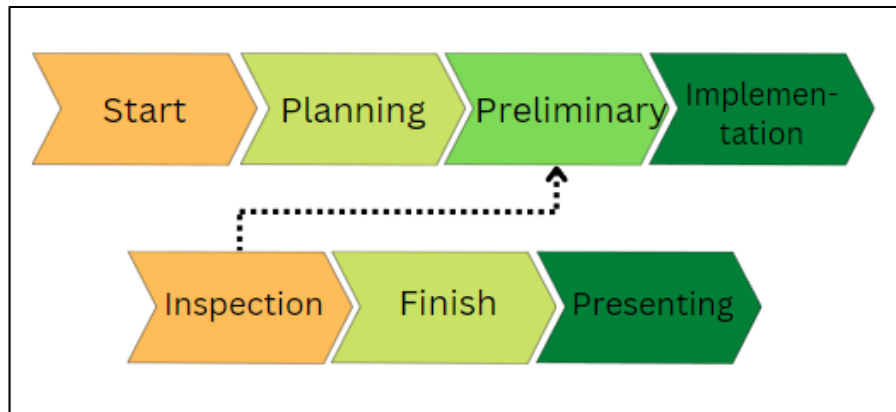


Figure 4. Linear process of a Project-Based Thesis (Salonen 2013, 17-19).

Figure 4 shows how the planning phase comes after the starting phase. During this phase, a thesis plan is made for the development project. Salonen (2013, 17) says that this plan should detail the objective, environment, process, commissioner, materials, and data-gathering methods. Vilkkä and Airaksinen (2003, 26–27) specify that in the planning phase three questions are answered: what to do, how to do it, and why to do it. At the same time, the responsibilities and involvement of the commissioner must be clarified. However, it can be challenging for students and representatives of the commissioner accurately plan all parts of their work and involvement. Therefore, it is important to plan the process as carefully as possible as this will make future work easier for all parties involved. (Salonen 2013, 17.)

The planning phase is followed by the preliminary phase. Typical tasks during this phase include reading through the plan and organizing the work for the upcoming phase which is called the working phase. This stage is often also referred to as the practical implementation phase. The working phase is often the longest and most demanding phase of the whole development process. It pulls together every component of the development project, outlining everyone's responsibilities and roles for example. Additionally, it describes how resources and materials are created and produced. (Salonen 2013, 18.)

The inspection phase can be considered to be a part of all the stages. However, the fact that it has been given its own phase demonstrates how crucial it is to the development process. All parties involved in the development

project review the outcome during the inspection phase. Following this, the development project may either be taken to the finishing phase or returned to the implementation stage if more work is still needed. Scheduling an adequate amount of time for the finishing phase is paramount as it may take a surprisingly long time to finish. A project-based thesis is formed by the completion of both the development project and the development project report. After the end product is finalized, it can be then presented and utilized. (Salonen 2013, 18–19.)

5.2 My Thesis Process

The thesis process started in April and ended in February. Figure 5 shows the timeline for this thesis process.

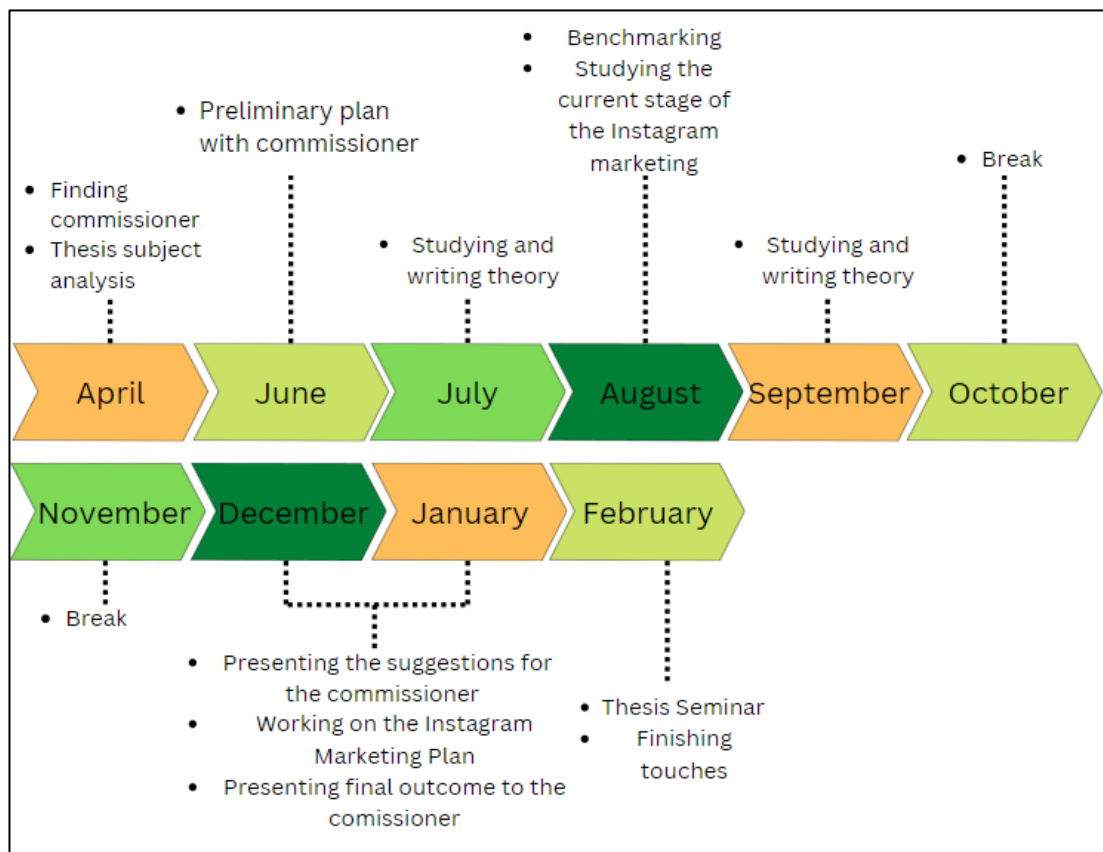


Figure 5. The thesis process.

The thesis process was initiated in late March through conversations with a potential commissioner regarding the topic of the thesis. Distilleerderij 't

Nieuwe Diep agreed to act as a commissioner as they found the subject promising. After the chosen topic and implementation method were agreed upon the thesis research permit was signed by the supervisor, commissioner, and the writer.

The relevant theory was studied, and written material was produced based on the theory. In August, benchmarking was conducted by studying various competitors of the commissioner, and a detailed analysis of the current stage of the commissioner's Instagram account was conducted to gain an understanding of its current status. This allowed for the formation of a clear picture of the current stage of the account, such as the frequency of posts, the content used, and the optimization of hashtags. Through this analysis, areas for improvement were identified and recommendations for optimal Instagram marketing strategies were formulated. The commissioner was also interviewed to gain additional insights into their expectations and desired use of the Instagram platform in their marketing efforts.

The objective of this thesis was to produce an Instagram Marketing Handbook for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep. The handbook was written based on the theory presented in this thesis and the benchmarking results to create a comprehensive PDF handbook (APPENDIX 1). The handbook was created using Canva, a free online design tool. Additionally, a poster was created to summarize the key elements of the handbook and to provide a visual representation of the information (APPENDIX 2). This poster can be displayed at the Distillery to serve as a quick reference for all employees and employer to review before posting on Instagram.

6 BENCHMARKING

According to Kozak (2004, 1-2), Benchmarking is commonly done with businesses that are better or in a similar position as the case company which

is getting benchmarked. This is done in order to learn from them. Companies can learn something from other companies who are succeeding or performing better in what they do. Benchmarking can also aid in identifying the shortcomings of the case company's operations compared to others. Benchmarking is a good tool to see what has worked for others. Chaffey and Smith (2013, 220–224) further point out that it can help companies who are just starting their social media marketing to understand what others in the industry do to gain customer engagement.

Amsterdam has more than 1 000 bars. These bars range from typical Dutch brown cafes to tasting rooms to cocktail bars (Website of Amsterdam Tourist Info, n.a.). From all of these bars, the commissioner considers the following three bars to be the biggest competitors; Wynand Fockink, A. van Wees, and Badhuis Oedipus on Javaplein. Therefore, these three competitors were chosen for the benchmarking process.

The commissioner considers Wynand Fockink and A. van Wees to be the closest competitors to Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep as their businesses offer similar products and services as they do. All three have their own distilleries and products as well as craft beer. Oedipus on the other hand differs from the other two. They are a bigger corporation rather than a small independent tasting room. But the commissioner finds that they are a competitor to Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep due to their popularity among the locals and tourists and their close proximity to them. (Janssens 2022b.)

In order to get an in-depth analysis from this benchmarking the writer compared the competitors' Instagram accounts to the commissioner's account. The evaluation focused on two main aspects: bio information and posts. The first focuses on information that can be gathered from the bio, including the number of followers and accounts followed, as well as the content of the bio itself. The second focus was on posts, including the type, frequency, average number of likes received, and use of hashtags. Additionally, the writer analyzed the language used and evaluated the overall visual aesthetics of the

accounts. The results and conclusions the writer made based on the benchmarking are discussed in chapter 6.5. The writer also chose to calculate the average engagement rates of the accounts to see how high the engagement is across the various accounts.

6.1 Current stage of Nieuwe Diep's Instagram

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram handle is @nieuwe_diep. In mid-July, their Instagram account had 694 followers, and 95 posts and they follow 51 accounts. As it can be seen in Picture 1 Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram profile picture is their logo. The bio of the profile details that the account is for a bar. It also displays the full name of the company and includes a link to its website. (Instagram of @nieuwe_diep, 2022.)



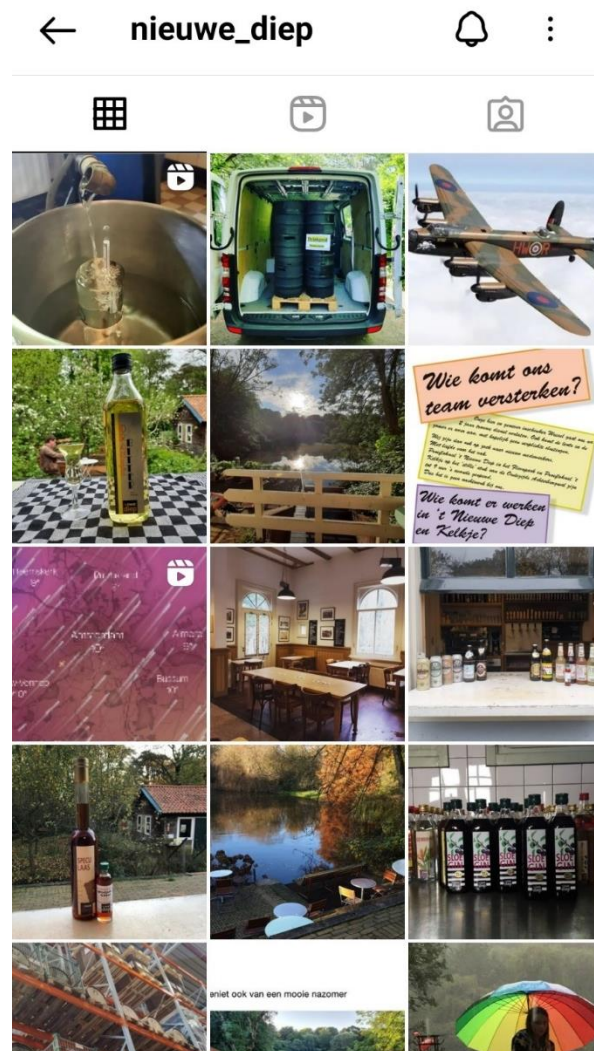
Picture 1. Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram Bio

When looking at Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram Insights it is clear that the majority of the followers are from the Netherlands (89,7%), with Amsterdam presenting 63,5% of the followers. 61,1% of the followers are female and 38,8% male. The biggest age groups are 25-34 year-olds (36,9%) followed by 35-44 year-olds (30,8%) and 45-54 year-olds (18,3%). (Instagram of @nieuwe_diep, 2022.)

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's account posts roughly one picture per month but there have been months when they do not post a single picture. The first

picture was posted on the accounts feed on the 18 of April 2018. When looking at their last 20 posts the average amount of comments per post is 0,75. While the average amount of likes is 27,5 per post. (Instagram of @nieuwe_diep, 2022.)

Pictures used in the feed do not appear to be of high quality. Furthermore, they do not seem professional and some even use very obvious filters that affect the quality even further. Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram feed can be seen in Picture 2 below.



Picture 2. Instagram Feed of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

All of the account's published posts have captions only in Dutch. Furthermore, most of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's posts do not include hashtags. Only

their most recent posts include hashtags. The most repeated hashtags are #cheers and #distillery. The commissioner does not have a clear plan behind the usage of hashtags (Janssens 2022b). Furthermore, none of the account's posts have been geo-tagged to the location of the proeflokaal. (Instagram of @nieuwe_diep, 2022.)

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep does not actively use the Instagram's Stories or Reels features. This is mainly due to these two features being more unfamiliar to the commissioner. They also rarely add tagged stories to their own. Nor interact with their followers on the platform besides liking the occasional picture here and there. (Janssens, 2022b.)

SWOT analysis was introduced in detail in Chapter 4. To form a clear picture of where the case company stands as it is and what must be developed a SWOT analysis was done for their Instagram marketing. Table 4 presents the findings of the SWOT analysis below.

Table 4. SWOT analysis of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep Instagram marketing

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They already have a dedicated customer base with regulars. • Family-owned company. • Menu comprising of their own distills and handpicked small brewery beers. • Beautiful and unique location in the Flevopark surrounded by nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instagram post are only in Dutch. • Harder place to stumble upon and not so easy to find. • Seasonality of the proeflokaal, open year around (limited opening times during winter) as majority of seating is outside. • Bad or cold weather means less people in the Flevopark so people do not pass by the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big terrace attracting lot of people during the warmer months. • Good engagement rate 	<p>proeflokaal or walk in by accident.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing more 'behind the scenes' of the Distillery. • The Distillery has their own bar cat 'Neutje', he could be made a mascot of the place. • Offering short, guided tours in the distillery for visitors. • Having sign in the proeflokaal inviting people to follow their account. • Creating a specific hashtag for the distillery to gain more traffic to their account. • Sharing visitors' posts, stories and generally being more interactive on Instagram. • Utilizing highlights feature in Instagram 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitors have stronger Instagram marketing and better content. • Losing followers during the slower months if there is less content. • There is no budget for paid Instagram marketing which can make it harder to get visibility. • Keeping the engagement rate high with more followers

Table 4 shows how there are many opportunities that Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep has not utilized in its Instagram marketing. Based on the benchmarking and a SWOT analysis, informed recommendations can be made to enhance the commissioner's utilization of the platform for their marketing purposes.

6.2 Wynand Fockink

Wynand Fockink is one of the historical distilleries and tasting rooms in Amsterdam. It dates back to the 17th century and is branded as 'Amsterdam's oldest tasting room'. They offer their own jenevers and liqueurs as well as craft beers. (Website of Wynand Fockink, 2022.) At the beginning of August 2022 their Instagram account had 3 101 followers and 74 posts and they followed 2 663 accounts. The profile bio details 'Since 1679 distiller of the most tasteful premium Liqueurs and Genevers.' It includes a link to their website as well as their address. (Instagram of @wynand_fockink, 2022.)

When looking at the last 20 posts the average post receives 2,6 comments and 69,9 likes. They post roughly once a week and have started using the Reels feature recently but only roughly once a month. The majority of the posts are about their products but there are a few posts about the bar and its long history as well. Their captions are always in English and they use mainly the same hashtags, in the same order in addition to the post-specific hashtags. #wynandfockink #genever #liqueur #cocktails #distillery #cocktailsofinstagram #cocktailsathome #cocktailsforyou #cocktailsandmixology #amsterdam #visitamsterdam. (Instagram of @wynand_fockink, 2022.)

6.3 A. van Wees




Family A. Van Wees opened this traditional tasting room and distillery in 1973. They also offer their own distills as well as craft beers at their bar. In addition, they also offer food and their lunch and dinner menus are very extensive, including Dutch classics like Dutch cheeses and bitterballen. (Website of A. Van Wees, 2022.) At the beginning of August 2022 their Instagram account had 686 followers and 194 posts and they followed 261 accounts. The profile bio details 'Traditionele fijndistilleerderij van diverse jenevers, gins, likeuren, esprits en meer! Een familiebedrijf van 4 generaties oud.' Which translates from Dutch to English as follows 'Traditional fine distillery of various genevers,

gins, liqueurs, spirits and more! 4 generations old family business.’. The bio also has a link to their website. (Instagram of @vanweesdistillery, 2022.)

The Instagram account’s last 20 posts have on average received 1,9 comments and 20,3 likes. Their posting schedule seems to be a bit more irregular with some posts being posted on the same day but then having two- or three-week gaps between them. They have also used the reels feature in the last year but only a few times. Their posts highlight their products and their history as well. All the captions are in Dutch, except for one which has also an English translation. Van a Wees does not use hashtags in their captions. (Instagram of @vanweesdistillery, 2022.)

6.4 Badhuis Oedipus

Oedipus Brewery was founded by four friends in 2011 and has since become a staple beer in many bars around the city. They have since expanded their operations to two tasting rooms and they brew their own beer on the premises of the tasting room in the Noord. The tasting room Badhuis Oedipus on Javaplein offers their signature beers and food made from local produce. Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday a live DJ set is podcasted on Oedipus Radio and can be listened remotely or at the tasting room. (Website of Oedipus 2022.)

At the beginning of August 2022 their Instagram account had 18,6K followers and 853 posts and they followed 1385 accounts. Their bio includes a link to their Linktree where people can access different parts of their website (web orders, careers, Oedipus Radio, etc.). The bio also details: ‘ We are a colorful Amsterdam-based brewery.  Tune into @radiooedipus  Our Taproom & Badhuis are open!’. (Instagram of @oedipusbrewing, 2022.)

The last 20 posts on the account have received on average 80,4 likes and 1,3 comments per post. They post 1-2 posts per week, a few of them being Reels.

Posts are mostly about their products and upcoming events. All captions are in English and rather than adding hashtags on the captions they comment on most pictures with the hashtags. The hashtags change quite a lot but the ones that are in most posts are #microbrewery and #oedipus. (Instagram of @oedipusbrewing, 2022.)

6.5 Conclusions of the Benchmarking

In order to get more out of the data, number of followers, likes, and comments on each of these accounts the average engagement rate was calculated by using the following formula

$$(\text{Average Number of Likes} + \text{Average Number of Comments}) / \text{Followers} \times 100 = \text{Engagement Rate.}$$

All the data gathered from the benchmarking can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Benchmarking results

	Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep	Wynand Fockink	A. van Wees	Oedipus Brewery
Followers	694	3 101	686	18,6K
Average Number of Likes	27,5	69,9	20,3	80,4
Average Number of Comments	0,75	2,6	1,9	1,3
Engagement Rate	4,07	3,23	3,24	0,44

Table 5 shows how Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep and A. van Wees have a similar number of followers whereas Wynand Fockink and Oedipus Brewery have significantly more followers. Latter even more than all the others

combined. Therefore, it is not surprising that the ones with more followers receive the most likes per post. However, the average number of comments per post between all the benchmarked accounts was surprisingly similar.

When looking at the engagement rate it is surprising to see that even though Oedipus Brewery has clearly the most followers their engagement rate is significantly lower than the others. Table 5 clearly shows how Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep has the highest engagement rate of all the accounts. However, it is important to remember that engagement rate does not tell everything about a brand or company's social media marketing efficiency.

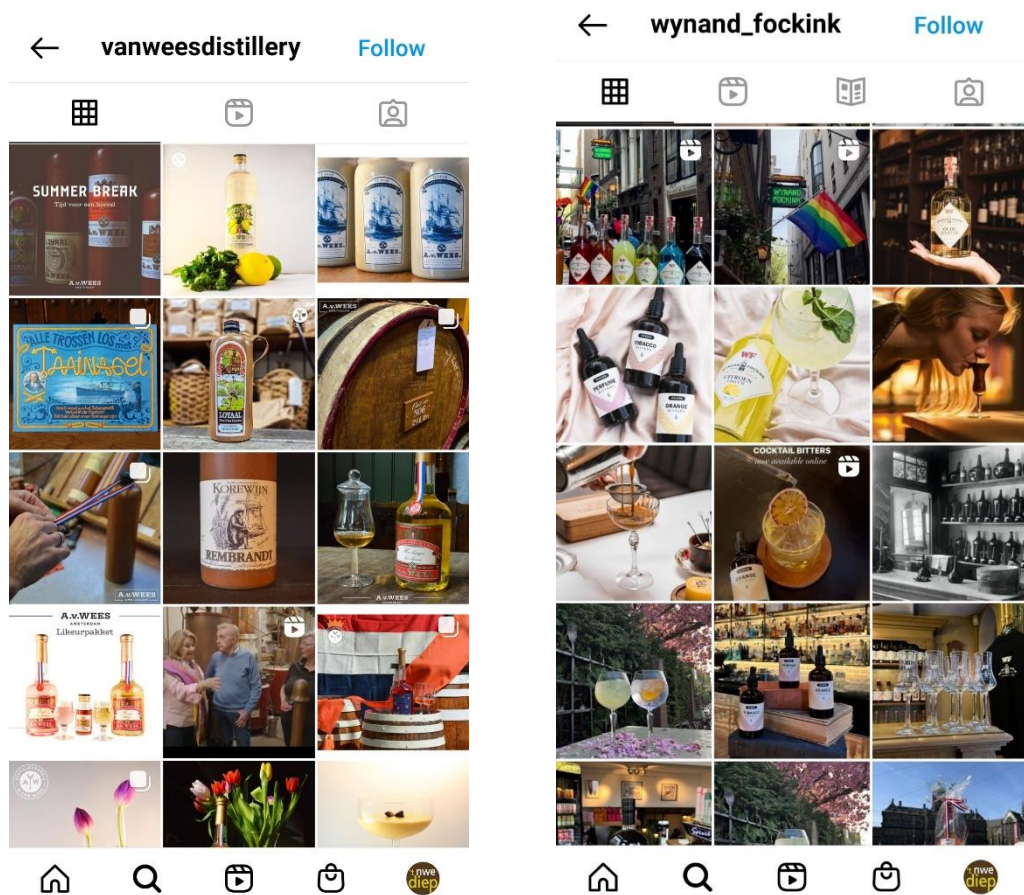
It seems that Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's posting schedule is the most irregular one sometimes months between the posts while the others post at least once a month if not weekly. Having a more regular posting schedule is highly recommended as it has been proven to improve visibility and engagement levels. However, when looking at the engagement rate in this benchmarking it may not always prove to be correct.

The two competitors, Wynand Fockink and Oedipus Brewery, with the larger follower numbers, have their post captions in English. As the majority of the majority of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep followers are from The Netherlands it is understandable choice to have captions in Dutch. However, if the case company wanted to attract a bigger following from potential international customers, they may want to consider also translating their captions to English. All competitors but A. van Wees use hashtags in their posts. While they have their set hashtags that they use on every post they also add some that are relative to the post. Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep should also consider having a list of such hashtags that are easy to copy and paste on each post as having the right hashtags on posts can increase the engagement rate.

Oedipus and A. van Wees use the geo-location tagging feature on most of their posts while Wynand Fockink uses it more scarcely. Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep on the other hand does not take advantage of this feature at all. While it

may seem like a small feature it can still help potential customers finding the company.

When looking at the quality of the photos in the feed of the competitors (Picture 3. and Picture 4.) it is clear how the competitors' pictures look more professional and thought out when compared to Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's feed (Picture 2.).



Picture 3. Instagram Feed of A. van Wees and Wynand Fockink



Picture 4. Instagram Feed of Oedipus Brewing

When comparing content between Picture 3 and Picture 4 to Picture 2 it is clear how the competitors seem to have used more time curating their content as well. Therefore, as a recommendation for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep, they should invest in hiring a professional photographer or setting time aside to curate more high-quality content. Furthermore, Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's location is beautiful and picturesque and should be taken advantage of on social media.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Development Ideas

The writer has made several recommendations regarding the Instagram Marketing Handbook for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep. The writer believes that the plan represents a solid foundation for the commissioner's ongoing efforts to enhance their Instagram marketing and achieve their objectives. All the recommendations presented in the Instagram Marketing Handbook are discussed in detail in this chapter. Furthermore, the entire Instagram Marketing Handbook can be found in APPENDIX 1 with the summarizing poster in APPENDIX 2.

The first recommendation for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep is to appoint a dedicated Social Media Employee. The commissioner has expressed their lack of familiarity with the platform and its features, expressing concerns about their ability to fully leverage the platform for marketing efforts (Janssens 2022a). Therefore, the writer suggests the appointment of a dedicated Social Media Employee who will be responsible for managing the Social Media Marketing content. This individual should ideally possess a comprehensive understanding of the platform and its capabilities and have the necessary skills and expertise to effectively utilize the platform to achieve the commissioner's marketing objectives.

This dedicated Social Media Employee would be responsible for creating and posting content on the commissioner's Instagram account. The Social Media Employee would use the Instagram Marketing Handbook as their guideline as it includes a range of elements such as the type of content, the frequency of posts, the use of hashtags, and the development of a consistent brand voice. The employee would also be responsible for monitoring and analyzing the performance of the commissioner's account and making adjustments to the strategy as necessary to optimize results. Additionally, this employee would be

responsible for engaging with followers, responding to comments and messages, and building a community around the commissioner's brand.

However, the writer would like to add that in addition to having a dedicated Social Media Employee, it is also recommended that all employees be encouraged to take pictures and produce content for the commissioner's Instagram account. By involving all employees in the content creation process, the commissioner can ensure that a wide range of perspectives and experiences are represented on their Instagram account and that the content is reflective of the company's culture and values.

Taking into consideration the demographics of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's followers, the majority of whom are based in Amsterdam and fall within the 25–34-year-old age range, the writer suggests that the commissioner should focus their marketing efforts on 'young professionals living in Amsterdam'. This demographic is more likely to bring repeat customers and continue using the commissioner's services, as opposed to tourists who may only visit the city infrequently. Furthermore, the commissioner should also consider organizing events, promotions, and other activities that are of interest to young professionals in Amsterdam. This can help to establish the commissioner's brand as a central part of the local community and increase their visibility among this target audience.

The writer believes that the current bio of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram account could be improved. Currently, the bio only includes a link to the company's website. To enhance the effectiveness of their Instagram presence, the writer suggests that the commissioner should include additional information in their bio such as the company's physical address and a brief description of the company and its offerings. A suggested bio could read:

Distillery – Tasting room

Crafting traditional premium spirits from organic ingredients in the beautiful Flevopark

Link to website

Flevopark 13a, 1095 KE Amsterdam (link to Google maps)

Including the physical address in the bio can make it easier for customers to find and visit the commissioner's distillery and tasting room. Additionally, providing a brief description of the company and its offerings can help to attract potential customers who are interested in the company's products and services. It also helps to attract tourists that are looking for places to visit in Amsterdam, and it will be easier for them to find the place.

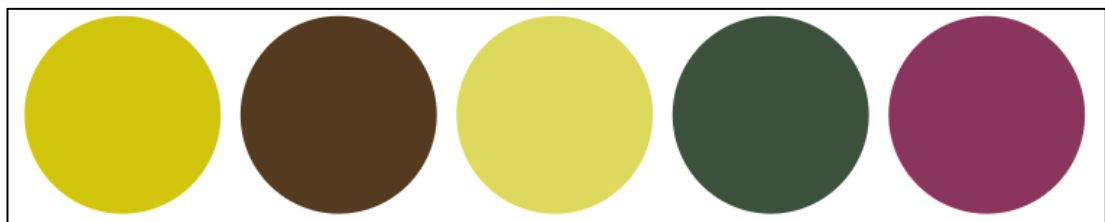
The writer also suggests incorporating relevant hashtags in the commissioner's Instagram posts, to increase visibility and engagement among their target audience. Hashtags such as #Distilleerderijnieuwediep, #genever, #liqueur, #proeflokaal, and #distillery can help to attract users who are interested in the company's products and services. Furthermore, captions for Instagram posts should be kept concise, but on occasion, longer microblogs can be used for certain types of content such as historical information or storytelling. This can help to add depth and context to the commissioner's posts and can make them more engaging and interesting for followers. Additionally, to ensure maximum engagement from non-Dutch-speaking followers, the writer suggests that all captions be written in English.

The writer observes that the commissioner's current posting schedule on Instagram is inconsistent. To optimize their Instagram marketing efforts, the writer suggests that the commissioner should aim to establish a consistent posting calendar in the future. This can help to increase the visibility and engagement of their posts and can also help to build a sense of anticipation and excitement among followers. Additionally, the commissioner should also consider posting at times when the engagement rates are the highest.

The writer believes that there is potential for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep to utilize their bar cat, Neutje, as a mascot of sorts on their Instagram account. Neutje, who lives in the tasting room and roams around the Flevopark, is a cute and charming addition to the distillery. Additionally, his name translates to "small glass of liquor" which makes him an appropriate mascot for the company. The commissioner could take advantage of Neutje's presence by featuring him in their Instagram content. This could include photos and videos of Neutje roaming around the distillery and Flevopark, interacting with customers. By incorporating Neutje into their content, the commissioner can add a unique and charming element to their Instagram account, which can help to increase engagement and attract more followers.

Furthermore, the commissioner could also include Neutje in their branding and packaging. This could be in the form of a logo or an image of Neutje on their bottle labels, for example. This way, Neutje can serve as a mascot for the distillery and can help to create a strong connection between the brand and the cat. Moreover, it is a unique and creative way to stand out from the competition.

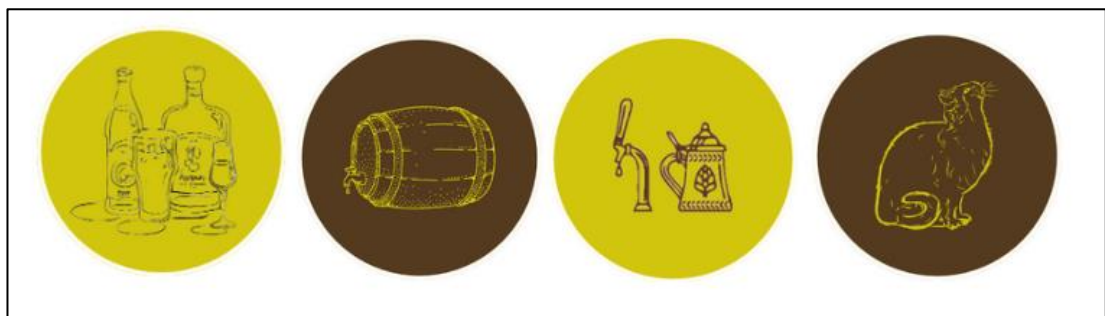
As Instagram aesthetics play a significant role in the overall effectiveness of an account's marketing efforts. In this regard, the writer suggests that the commissioner should establish a set of brand colors to be used consistently across all Instagram posts. This can help to create a cohesive visual identity for the commissioner's brand and make their posts more recognizable and memorable. As an example, the writer has provided a color palette below (Picture 5).



Picture 5. Suggested brand color palette for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

The two main colors on the left are from the company logo and a complementary color purple on the far right was chosen to harmonize with the primary colors (Picture 5). Additionally, two other colors were selected using an online color AI called Colormind. These colors complement the commissioner's brand and would enhance the visual appeal of their posts.

The writer suggests that the commissioner starts using Instagram's highlights feature to organize their stories into specific categories, such as Products, Distillery, Proeflokaal, and Neutje. This can help followers to find and view specific types of content and can also help to increase engagement and visibility of the commissioner's stories. To enhance the aesthetic appeal of the highlights, the writer suggests using icons that are consistent with the commissioner's brand, and that match the two main colors of the company's logo, as demonstrated in Picture 6.



Picture 6. Instagram Highlight icons for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

Furthermore, the commissioner should follow a consistent grid layout in their Instagram feed to enhance its aesthetic appeal. As this can help to create a visually pleasing and cohesive feed that is easy to navigate and engaging for followers. The writer would suggest the tile/chess layout. This layout is relatively easy to implement and does not require as much planning as other layout styles.

The writer has considered the various opportunities and challenges and the specific needs of the commissioner and has developed a comprehensive plan that is designed to optimize the commissioner's utilization of Instagram as a marketing platform. The writer has also outlined the resources, materials, and

methods required for the successful execution of the plan and identified the key roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

7.2 Reliability and Validity

The assessment of reliability and validity is a crucial aspect of any thesis process, regardless of whether the thesis is project-based or involves more traditional research methods. This is because the reliability and validity of a thesis are important indicators of its overall credibility and quality. (Kostamo, Airaksinen & Vilkkä, 2022). In the case of this thesis, which did not gather data through qualitative or quantitative research methods, the focus of validity is on how well the theoretical framework supports the project and its results. (Website of DIAK LibGuides 2023).

In this thesis, all development ideas were carefully crafted based on findings from the theoretical part of the thesis. These ideas served as the foundation for the project, *The Instagram Marketing Handbook*, and were informed by a rigorous exploration of diverse perspectives in the relevant literature. The author undertook extensive research to ensure that the theoretical framework was comprehensive and introduced varied viewpoints. In doing so, the author exercised critical evaluation and source criticism to assess the credibility and relevance of the used sources. This involved a thorough review of academic papers, books, industry reports, or articles written by people in the field.

Assessing the reliability of the SWOT analysis can be challenging, as it is a subjective analysis that is heavily influenced by both the timing of the analysis and the person conducting it. Therefore, the results may vary significantly depending on who is conducting the analysis and when it is conducted. Similarly, while the benchmarking results may provide some degree of reliability, they are not entirely immune to the subjective factors that can impact the results. For example, if someone were to repeat the benchmarking with the same competitor pictures, there is a possibility that the results could differ if the posts had gained more likes or comments since the initial benchmarking.

was conducted. Additionally, the benchmarking process also involved some degree of subjective analysis, which would further impact the reliability of the results.

Shamoo and Resnik (2015, 28–29) have identified a set of guiding principles for research ethics, which include ‘honesty, objectivity, openness, confidentiality, carefulness, respect for colleagues, respect for intellectual property, respect for law, respect for research subjects, stewardship, social responsibility, and freedom’. While not all of these principles may be directly applicable to this thesis, the author has adhered to the relevant research ethics principles. The author has recognized the importance of upholding ethical standards in research and has taken great care to ensure that all necessary principles were considered and applied throughout the thesis process.

7.3 Commissioner’s Feedback

The thesis commissioner has provided feedback regarding the thesis, the handbook and working with the writer. The commissioner received the seminar version of the thesis accompanied with the PDF version of the Instagram Marketing Handbook and the poster. Due to schedule differences face-to-face feedback session was not possible. Therefore, the feedback was given over email on the 20th of February.

“As a company that takes pride and joy into making and serving, in our opinion, the best drinks in town it was rather odd working with Milla on this project. Admittedly social media is about the last thing we think about during a day, sadly even after paying our dear friends at the Dutch government excise tax.

Luckily Milla convinced us to do this project because albeit we were skeptical at first, she delivered a lot of insights into the world of social media. What started out as hearing terms we never heard before turned into a schooling of sorts for us into this world. We still don’t grasp everything as well as she does but it is a very good start for us as a company.

Milla taught us, for example, that a company should post stories on Instagram as a daily interaction with followers. She also made it clear to us that it's wise to stick to a more regular posting schedule on "feed posts" to make sure that the followers don't lose interest. She also offered a lot of insight into our direct competitors social media styles. Ranging from the kind of pictures used, the schedule of posting and the tags added to the posts.

We love a lot of ideas and plans she put on the table for our Instagram future, like making Neutje the mascot. We are currently making a plan to work on the social media aspect as a team. And since all our staff have camera's on their phone it's easy to make a quick picture any time to use on the social media outlets. She does have a point in the quality of the pictures so for us it might be smart to invest in a good camera for this. It's not a perfect social media start but it's a start.

Overall, it's been delightful to work with Milla over these past months. Not only has she showed us many different aspects of the social media world that we didn't even know existed, she also taught us many ways of using the tools that social media provide and how to use them. Admittedly it's still a bit overwhelming for us, she gave us a lot of information. Luckily Milla has offered to explain more about social media to us and guide us in the coming future." (Janssens 2023.)

7.4 Authors' Reflection

The thesis process proved to take longer than originally intended by the author. Various factors contributed to this outcome, including the author's relocation abroad and engagement in full-time employment elsewhere during the writing process. Although the chosen topic of the thesis is not entirely novel, as subjects regarding social media and Instagram marketing have been increasingly popular for a considerable period. The topic remains relevant given the growing significance of social media and Instagram in the marketing

industry. As the commissioner had an underdeveloped Instagram marketing plan, the project in the thesis was proved to be beneficial and needed.

While writing the theoretical framework for this thesis, the author recognized the importance of defining and limiting the scope of the subject especially given the vastness of Instagram marketing as a subject. Finding the relevant, up-to-date, and reliable theory proved to be particularly challenging, as there were numerous sources and diverse opinions on the various topics. However, the author remained committed to the task, recognizing that the construction of a comprehensive theoretical foundation was critical to the success of the thesis and the project. During this process, the author gained a deeper appreciation of the challenging nature of social media marketing as it requires workers in the industry to be able to adapt to emerging trends and ever-evolving platforms. As practices and strategies that may have been effective in the past can quickly become obsolete, social media marketers must stay informed and agile in their approach.

The author feels that if more time was allocated to the thesis process incorporation of content creation into the project would have been possible. This in turn, could have helped the commissioner to start the implementation of the Instagram Marketing Plan. However, the author believes that the handbook is comprehensive enough to satisfy the commissioner's requirements and will effectively support the achievement of their marketing goals.

In the end, the author is satisfied with the result of this thesis. The Instagram Marketing Handbook satisfied the commissioner's needs and the feedback reflects this as well. The author was happy to hear that the commissioner will start using the handbook in their Instagram marketing and furthermore implementing the development ideas to their marketing as well.

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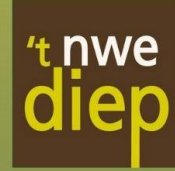
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Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep

INSTAGRAM MARKETING HANDBOOK

Content

<u>Foreword</u>	<u>03</u>
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FOREWORD

To ensure that our company's Instagram account is managed in the most professional and appropriate manner, we have established certain guidelines for our employees to follow. These guidelines cover a wide range of topics, including obtaining consent for posts, appropriate language and imagery, and adhering to company policies and regulations. Additionally, we have designated a specific employee as our Social Media Employee, whose role is to manage the company's Instagram account and to ensure that all posts adhere to these guidelines.

This document is designed to provide our employees with a comprehensive understanding of the guidelines and best practices for managing our company's Instagram account. By following these guidelines, which will help us to connect with our customers, promote our brand and achieve our business goals.

We ask that all employees take the time to study this document carefully and to reach out to the designated Social Media Employee or the employer if they have any questions or concerns about the guidelines outlined here.

GENERAL RULES

**1**

Always obtain permission before sharing any content that features or mentions specific persons, such as co-workers, patrons, or partners.

2

Offensive or discriminatory language and imagery is strictly prohibited.

3

Do not reveal any sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information.

4

Follow all corporate policies, particularly those concerning advertising and marketing and guidelines outlined in this document.

5

Understand and follow applicable rules and regulations, especially those regarding data protection and intellectual property.

6

Only share material that is related to the company's brand and messaging.

7

Always state whether the content is sponsored or contains affiliate links.

8

Take note of the post's tone and content, and make sure it corresponds with the company's values and mission.

9

Include a disclaimer if the post is an opinion or personal viewpoint that is not the company's official stance.

10

Posts that might be seen as misleading, deceptive, or defamatory are also prohibited.

11

Employer reserves all the rights to delete any posts that do not follow the guidelines without consultation.



SOCIAL MEDIA EMPLOYEE

At Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep, we have designated a specific employee as our Social Media Employee. This individual is chosen by the employer based on their expertise and knowledge of various social media platforms, with a focus on Instagram. Any employee may express their interest in this role at any time during their employment, and opportunities for the additional role will be discussed with the employer

Currently, our company maintains an Instagram account, and the designated Social Media Employee is responsible for creating and posting content on the platform while adhering to established guidelines. They are also responsible for monitoring Instagram insights, reporting findings to the employer, and making informed decisions based on data analysis.

The Social Media Employee will ensure that each post is appropriately tagged with hashtags, geotags, and mentions. They are allotted a specific number of working hours, as agreed upon with the employer, to fulfill the tasks related to this additional role. If additional hours are required, they will be discussed with the employer, or a second Social Media Employee may be appointed to assist with tasks.

As part of their responsibilities, the Social Media Employee will be responsible for monitoring Instagram insights and reporting these to the employer on a monthly basis. The report should include data on the number of followers gained, engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and shares, as well as information on the performance of specific posts and campaigns.

The Social Media Employee will use this data to make informed decisions about the content and strategy of the company's Instagram account. The report will allow the employer to have a clear view of the progress of the account and to make adjustments if necessary. The report should also include a brief analysis of the data and any recommendations for future actions.

It's also important for the Social Media Employee to make sure that the report is delivered on a regular schedule, such as the first week of every month, and that it's easy to understand. They can create a simple report in an excel sheet or a slide presentation to make it more readable. The schedule for the report will be agreed with the employer.

All employees of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep are encouraged to capture moments throughout their workday and share them with the designated Social Media Employee for posting on the feed according to the established schedule. However, any employee may post stories or repost story mentions on Instagram as long as the posts comply with established guidelines.





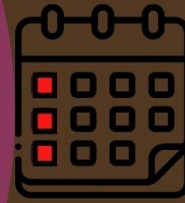
Content & Posting Schedule

Target Audience

Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's target audience is young professionals living in Amsterdam. The target audience should be considered throughout the creation and curation of content on the company's Instagram account. This includes understanding the target audience's current trends, interests, and lifestyle in order to create content that is relevant, engaging and relatable to them.

Feed Posts

As part of the content strategy, we will be posting feed pictures on a regular schedule. The goal is to post at least once a week on Mondays. This will help to ensure that our followers are consistently engaged with fresh, relevant content and that our account is active and up-to-date.



The Social Media Employee will be responsible for creating and scheduling these posts in advance, to ensure that they are posted on time and that they align with the company's content and posting schedule. They should also consider the best time of the day to post, as engagement rates can vary depending on the time of the day.

It's important to note that the posting schedule for feed pictures may change depending on the company's goals, events or the type of content that is being posted. The Social Media Employee will have to adapt the schedule to those changes and inform the employer of those.

As part of our content strategy, we will be posting a variety of feed posts on our Instagram account. These posts should align with our target audience and the company's overall goals and objectives. Some examples of types of feed posts that can be shared can be seen bellow with some examples.



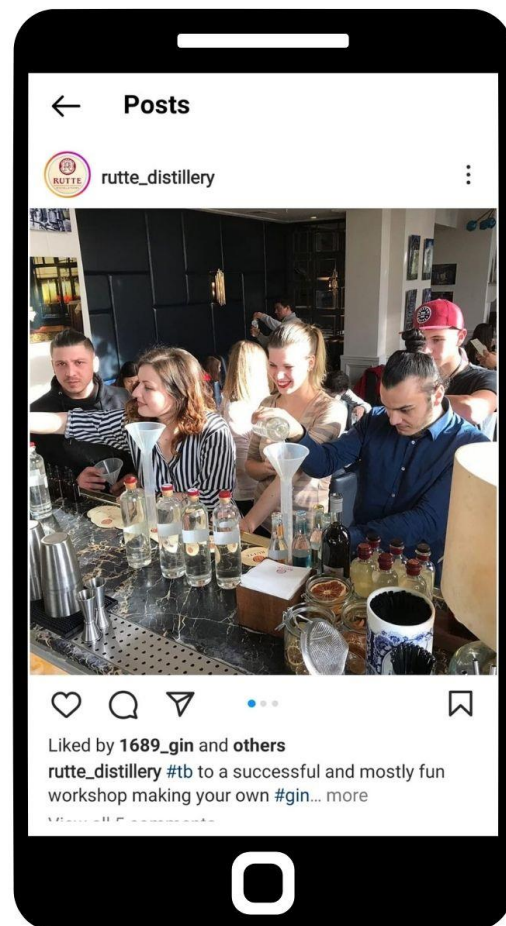
Product Posts: These posts can be used to showcase the company's products and services, and can include product images, descriptions, and pricing information.



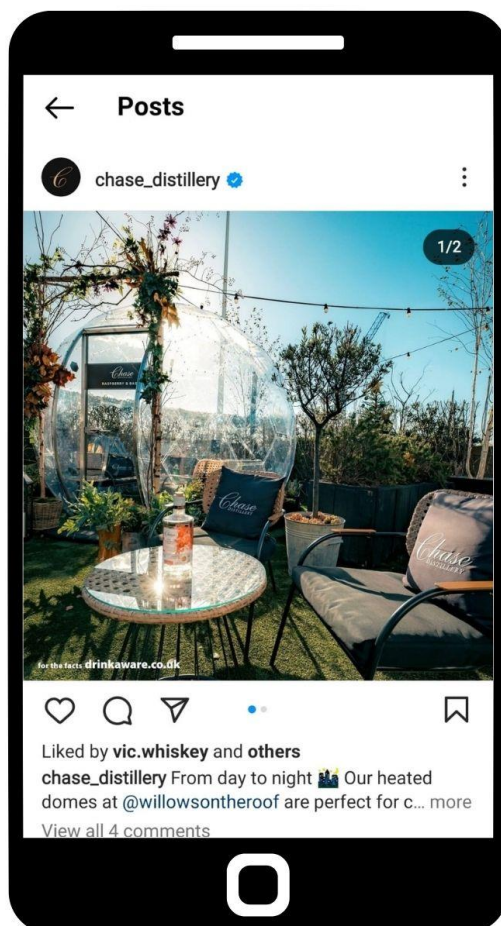
Employee and Customer Posts:

These posts can be used to give followers an inside look at the company and to showcase the impact of the company's products or services on customers.

- Consent should always be obtained from the person before featuring any user-generated content on the company's Instagram account.



Educational Posts: These posts can be used to educate the audience on topics related to the company's products or services, and can include tips, tutorials, and how-to guides. Like good jenever and beer pairings



Carousel Posts: These are a series of images or videos that can be swiped through in a single post. Carousel posts are a great way to showcase multiple images or videos within a single post. Carousel posts tend to gain a lot of





Holiday and Special Occasion Posts:

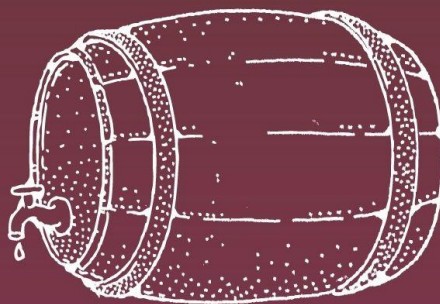
These posts can be used to promote any upcoming holiday or special event related to the company and should be accompanied by appropriate captions.

Neutje Posts: Distillery's bar cat Neutje should be posted in the feed regularly. Posts can be of Neutje hanging around the distillery or doing something like interacting with guests or employees.



Feed posts can also be used to inform customers of any changes or ongoing events happening within the company. For example, feed posts can be used to inform customers of changes in business hours, upcoming events, and special offers or promotions. Additionally, feed posts can also be used to inform customers of any changes to the company's products or services, such as new product launches, discontinuing of products or any changes in the prices. The Social Media Employee should make sure that these posts are posted in a timely manner, ideally at least a few days before the change or event, so that customers have ample time to plan accordingly. The post should be clear and concise and should include all the necessary information such as date, time and location of the event.

The Social Media Employee should aim to post a mix of these types of post to keep the audience engaged and interested in the company's Instagram account. They should also alternate the types of post to avoid monotony and predictability.



Stories

As part of our content strategy, we will be posting stories on a regular basis. The goal is to post at least one story per day, but no more than 7. This will help to ensure that our followers are consistently engaged with fresh, relevant content and that our account is active and up to date.

As previously mentioned, all employees of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep are encouraged to capture moments throughout their workday and share them on the company's Instagram stories, as long as they adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

When creating stories for our Instagram, all employees should aim to post a mix of content types to keep the audience engaged and interested in the company's Instagram account. Some examples of types of stories that can be shared include:

Behind-the-scenes content: These stories can give our followers an inside look at our company and can include photos and videos of employees at work, events, and company culture. For example, how is our jenever made, bottled and then sold or setting up the bar.





Product/service demonstrations: These stories can be used to showcase the company's products and services, and can include tips, tutorials, and how-to guides. For example, how to pour a perfect serving of liquor or which beers pair with various liquors or jenever.

User-generated content: These can include reposting our customer photos or videos or featuring customer testimonials.

- It's important to note that prior consent should always be obtained from the person before featuring any user-generated content on the company's Instagram account.



Live events: These can include Instagram Live sessions, Q&A sessions, and other interactive events that allow followers to engage with our company in real-time.

- It's important to note that these live events should be scheduled during downtimes, such as during rainy days or other periods when the bar is less busy, in order to ensure that employee(s) are able to give their full attention to the live event and to avoid interrupting the operations of the bar. Additionally, all live events should be discussed with the employee or the Social Media Employee beforehand, to ensure that the event aligns with the company's content and posting schedule, and that all necessary preparations have been made.



It's also important to keep in mind that stories are ephemeral, meaning that they disappear after 24 hours, so employees posting on stories should consider the time frame in which the story will be posted and how much time the audience will have to see it.

In order to maintain consistency with the company's overall aesthetic, it is important to use the brand colors when creating text or drawings for stories. The Social Media Employee can assist getting these brand colors on Instagram stories. The font that should be used for all text on stories should be the first font option available. The employee can choose to use a background for the text or leave it out, as long as the color used is one of the brand colors. See next chapter

The Social Media Employee is responsible for adding past stories to highlights on the company's Instagram profile. This helps to organize and categorize the content for the audience and make it more easily accessible. These highlights are:



Proeflokaal highlight should feature stories that showcase the company's tasting room and give followers a behind-the-scenes look at the place. Distillery highlights should feature stories that focus on the company's distillery, including the equipment, the distillery process, and the people who work there. Neutje highlight should feature stories that are centered around our bar cat Neutje. Lastly, the Product highlight should feature stories that showcase our products and the different ways they can be used.

It's important to note that the Social Media Employee should regularly update the highlights and remove older stories that are no longer relevant, product no longer available or stories including outdated information. Additionally, the Social Media Employee should monitor the engagement on the highlights to understand which stories are performing well and which are not and adjust the strategy accordingly.



Reels & Videos

Reels should ideally use trending sounds and follow current trends on the app.

Reel or video be posted at least every two weeks, with the goal of increasing frequency to once a week, and eventually, twice a week.

While the posting day may vary, it is recommended to post Reels during peak engagement hours, typically in the early morning.



The Social Media Employee is responsible for the scheduling and posting of Reels. However, all employees are encouraged to contribute ideas for Reels and to stay informed of current trends and popular sounds on the app. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Reels feature, it is recommended to incorporate trending sounds and align with current trends and the target audience on the platform.



Aesthetics

To maintain a consistent aesthetic across all posts on our social media, all images and videos should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Use of a consistent color palette, which should be in line with the company's branding.
- Use of high-quality images and videos, with good lighting and composition.
- Use of consistent typography, including font, size, and color.
- Use of consistent branding elements, such as the company's logo and watermark.

Brand Colors

The brand colors for Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep are based on the company's logo. The main colors are dark brown and yellow-lime green. The bright lime green color represents the company's innovative and dynamic approach to distilling. While the brown color represents the company's commitment to traditional methods and high-quality ingredients. It was also chosen to represent the company's traditional and authentic personality



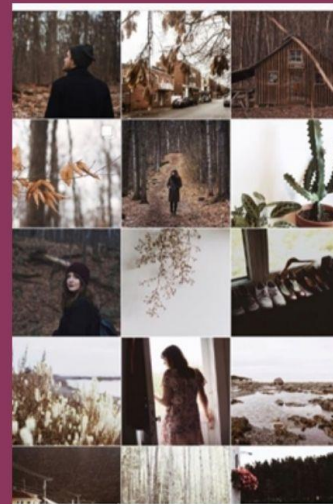
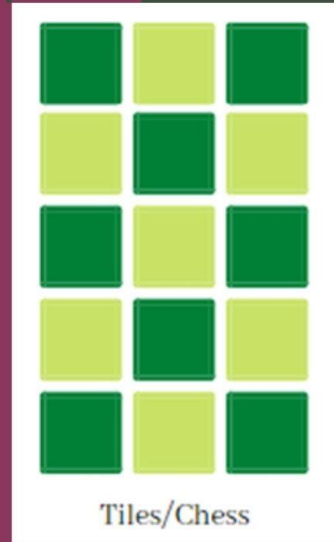
In addition to the main colors, the brand also incorporates three additional colors: muted version of the yellow-lime green, forest green and purple. These additional colors are used to complement and enhance the main colors, creating a cohesive visual identity that represents the company's brand.

It's important to note that the brand colors may change over time, for example if the company logo is updated. The employer will inform all employees if there are any changes to the brand colors.

Layout

The layout of Distilleerderij 't Nieuwe Diep's Instagram account should follow a consistent pattern in order to maintain a cohesive and visually pleasing aesthetic. The recommended pattern is the check pattern, also known as the tile pattern, which involves alternating light and dark color schemes in the posts. This can be observed in the examples below (example account shown @sarah.la.lune)

The Social Media Employee may use online tools to plan and organize the grid layout of the account. However, any significant changes to the layout, such as switching to a monochromatic or rainbow theme, must be discussed with the employer in advance and should be in line with the overall aesthetic guidelines.



Hashtags & Captions

In order to increase visibility and engagement on the company's Instagram account, it is important to use relevant hashtags in each post. The following hashtags should be included in every post:

#Distilleerderijnieuwediep
#genever
#liqueur
#proeflokaal
#distillery

Additionally, post-specific hashtags that are relevant to the content of the post should be used. For example, all posts showing Neutje the bar cat should include the hashtags:

#Neutje
#barcat



Captions for all posts should be written in English. It is important to use clear and professional language and to proofread for spelling errors. The tone of captions should be slightly playful and youthful, but always appropriate. Captions should be kept short, but microblogs are occasionally allowed for certain types of content such as historical information or storytelling. However, the topic of these microblogs should be discussed with the employer in advance. Emojis can be used in captions, as long as they are relevant to the post or caption.

APPENDIX 2

INSTAGRAM @NIEUWE_DIEP

STORY 1-7/day

FEED 1/week

REEL 2/month

CHECK LIST BEFORE POSTING:

- ☐ Check previous posts
- ☐ Have a clear purpose for the post
- ☐ Grid layout
- ☐ Ask for consent
- ☐ Double-check caption
- ☐ Call to Action
- ☐ Hashtags
- ☐ Brand colors

