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Creating a Social Media Strategy

Case EURES Finland

Thesis

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Thesis abstract

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The aim of the thesis was to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland, and with that, to help them develop their presence online, and to achieve their goals through it. As there was no previously existing strategy, it was built from the beginning. The aim was to create a model that could be used in the future, too, and that could easily be updated according to the changing needs of the organization. Additionally, the thesis highlights the perspective of a public organization in the creation of a social media strategy. The social media strategy model presented in the thesis can also be used by other organizations as a base for their similar strategies.

The study was conducted using a constructive research method. Besides creating the strategy, the aim was to bring a theoretical contribution to research in the field. The work aimed to confirm and define the concept of social media from the perspective of common people: to describe how social media is understood on a general level. The conclusion is that in practice, people tend to simply view platforms primarily created and used for communication as social media.

The main research question was: "What are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?" To find answers to it, two sub-questions were created: "What goals and success measures do the key persons on the field of EURES Finland's communication and marketing find important?" and "What is the current state of the EURES Finland's social media?".

The study was conducted using three different research methods: an interview with the key persons of EURES Finland's communications, a survey aimed at current social media followers, and extracting data with the analytics of EURES Finland's existing social media sites. The gathered information was analyzed using the content analysis method.

As a result, increasing visibility, diversifying the content, and strengthening the brand emerged as the most important goals, and to achieve them, some concrete goals were drawn out of them and listed as part of the strategy. The strategy itself follows the model developed by Schaffer (2013) and includes the application of Deming's cycle in social media strategies. Overall, the used model worked well in planning the social media strategy for a public organization, too, but with one addition: the strategy should include a section on the effects of the regulations on the scope of action. For example, in the case of EURES Finland, the regulations have influence on what can be done on social media.

¹ Keywords: social media strategy, communication, marketing, social media

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Opinnäytetyön tiivistelmä

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Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli luoda EURES Suomelle sosiaalisen median strategia, jonka avulla organisaatio voisi kehittää toimintaansa sosiaalisessa mediassa ja hyödyntää sitä entistä tehokkaammin tavoitteidensa saavuttamiseksi. Aikaisemman strategian puuttuessa liikkeelle lähdettiin alusta, ja pyrkimyksenä oli luoda jatkossakin hyödynnettävä malli, jota voidaan päivittää yhä uudelleen ja uudelleen ajankohtaiset tarpeet huomioiden. Lisäksi työ nostaa esille julkisen organisaation näkökulmaa sosiaalisen median strategioiden luomisessa. Työn esittelemää sosiaalisen median strategian mallia voivat hyödyntää myös muut organisaatiot pohjana vastaaville strategioille.

Tutkimus toteutettiin konstruktivisella metodilla, ja strategian luomisen ohella tavoitteena oli tuottaa teoreettista lisäarvoa aihealueen tutkimukseen. Työ pyrki vahvistamaan ja rajaamaan sosiaalisen median käsitettä tavallisten ihmisten näkökulmasta, eli tuomaan esille, mikä sosiaalinen media on yleisellä tasolla ymmärrettynä. Yleisen tason käsitys vaikuttaa kulminoituvan käytännönläheisesti siihen, että alustat, jotka on luotu ja joita käytetään pääasiassa kommunikoimisen välineinä, nähdään ensisijaisesti sosiaalisena mediana.

Liikkeelle lähdettiin tutkimuskysymyksellä ”mitkä ovat ne tavoitteet, joita EURES Suomi haluaisi sosiaalisen median läsnäolonsa kautta saavuttaa, ja kuinka se onnistuu”, ja kahdella täsmentävällä alakysymyksellä, eli ”mitä tavoitteita ja onnistumisen mittareita EURES Suomen sosiaalisen median ja markkinoinnin avainhenkilöt kokevat tärkeiksi” ja ”mikä EURES Suomen tämänhetkinen tila on”.

Tietoa koottiin kolmella eri menetelmällä: EURES Suomen viestinnän avainhenkilöiden haastattelulla, nykyisille sosiaalisen median seuraajille kohdennetulla kyselytutkimuksella ja EURES Suomen olemassa olevien sosiaalisen median sivustojen analytiikasta poimitulla datalla. Saatua tietoa analysoitiin sisällönanalyysin menetelmin.

Keskeisimmiksi tavoitteiksi nousivat näkyvyyden lisääminen, sisällön monipuolistaminen ja brändin vahvistaminen, ja niiden saavuttamiseksi kirjattiin konkreettisia tavoitteita, jotka listattiin osaksi strategiaa. Itse strategia seuraa Schafferin (2013) kehittämää mallia, johon sisältyy myös Demingin syklin soveltaminen sosiaalisen median strategiassa. Malli toimi muutoin hyvin myös julkisen organisaation sosiaalisen median strategian suunnittelussa, mutta todettakoon, että näissä tapauksissa tulisi strategiaan sisällyttää luku säädösten vaikutuksista toimintamahdollisuuksiin, sillä esimerkiksi EURES Suomen kohdalla ne vaikuttavat paljon siihen, mitä sosiaalisessa mediassa voidaan tehdä.

¹ Asiasanat: sosiaalisen median strategia, viestintä, markkinointi, sosiaalinen media

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Thesis abstract	2
Opinnäytetyön tiivistelmä	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
Figures and Tables	6
Terms and Abbreviations	7
1 INTRODUCTION.....	8
1.1 The background and the structure of the thesis	9
1.2 About the case organization	10
1.3 Research questions.....	12
2 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.....	14
2.1 Social Media – what is it?.....	14
2.2 The brief history of social media.....	16
2.3 Common perceptions of social media	19
2.4 Social media strategy and its purpose.....	20
2.5 Framework for creating a social media strategy	21
2.6 Ingredients for a good social media strategy	23
2.7 Different social media platforms	28
3 RESEARCH METHODS IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.....	32
3.1 Constructive research and information gathering methods	32
3.2 A focus-group interview for colleagues and management.....	34
3.3 A survey for followers in social media	36
3.4 Social Media Statistics and Data	37
4 PRESENT STATE ANALYSIS.....	38
4.1 Results from the focus group interview	38
4.2 Results from the follower survey	46
4.3 Data from the statistics and social media analytics	53
5 SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR EURES FINLAND	56
5.1 Diagnosis of the current situation, target groups and goals.....	56
5.2 Resources	61

5.3	Branding.....	62
5.4	Content, curation, and channels.....	63
5.5	Frequency and engagement	65
5.6	Gathering and listening the feedback.....	66
5.7	Campaigns, influencers, and brand ambassadors	67
5.8	Crisis and risk management.....	68
5.9	Staffing roles, responsibilities, and social media culture inside the organization.....	69
5.10	Social media guidelines for the employees	70
5.11	A social media calendar and a workflow	72
6	REFLECTION AND CONCLUSIONS	75
6.1	Concluding the research findings	75
6.2	Academic theoretical contribution.....	78
6.3	Reflections and future research.....	80
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	83
	APPENDICES	86

Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Deming Cycle.	22
Figure 2. Largest platforms according to Statista.....	29
Figure 3. Largest platforms according to Statistics Finland.....	30
Figure 4. Scores for different platforms.....	52
Figure 5. Scores of different sources.	52
Table 1. Schaffer’s social media strategy content.....	26
Table 2. Attendees and their roles.	39
Table 3. Demographics of the survey.	48
Table 4. Content ranking, 5 being very interested, 1 being not interested at all.....	50
Table 5. Average scores of aspects regarding EURES Finland’s social media, 5 being good, 1 being bad.	51
Table 6. EURES Finland’s social media statistics January 2022 – June 2022.	54
Table 7. Goals and metrics.	60
Table 8. Example workflow calendar for one month.	73

Terms and Abbreviations

KPI's	Key performance indicators. An indicator that describes how well an organization is reaching its central goals.
EURES adviser	Trained specialist, who works under an EURES organization and is a part of the EURES network.
Curation	Managing and organizing content.
ELA	European Labour Authority. A facet that was established to help European Commission and EU member countries with labour mobility and social security related issues.

1 INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a big part of people's everyday life. Especially in developed countries, nearly everyone owns a smartphone, and therefore they carry a small computer with them all the time. With internet on the hand all day, people are connected to each other more than ever before. This also poses opportunities to companies for reaching their target audiences and to be closer to people.

However, reaching correct people is not easy. Social media is full of all kinds of actors: common people, companies, organizations, influencers... The list goes on. It is easy to drown to the sea of content and standing out is hard work. Without a proper plan – without a strategy – one's potential is often left unfulfilled. Merely existing in social media is seldomly enough to achieve the goals that companies and organizations want to pursue through it.

A good and carefully conducted social media strategy could be the way out of the deep sea of content. According to Ang (2011), through strategies organizations can create uniqueness, which ultimately means standing out from the masses. And as Schaffer (2013, p. 14) puts it, a good social media strategy is a map that shows the way towards successful presence online and helps companies to pursue their goals there. For effective use of social media, it is important to agree on the goals, and then decide which steps to take towards them.

Still, more often than not, the social media strategies are overlooked and not prepared carefully. There can be numerous reasons for that, but one common is the lack of understanding social media and its impact on today's society. Especially when trying to connect with younger generations, social media seems to have a key role in marketing.

Another reason for not having a social media strategy is the lack of resources and information to create one. For the case organization of this thesis, EURES Finland, this was the situation. A need for a strategy was seen, but there was no time to focus on creating one. When the opportunity for this thesis to be made arose, all parties agreed that this project is welcome.

Besides made as a case project for EURES Finland, this thesis aims to be a functional base for creating social media strategies in general. Especially the theory chapter of the thesis can be useful for others who are planning on creating social media strategies themselves. The

research and conclusive chapters are made for EURES Finland, but they also show an example for others about how the theory can be implemented in practice and a social media strategy created based on that.

This thesis follows constructive research approach, and as Lehtiranta et al. (2015, p. 95) describe it in general, this thesis, too, aims to combine solving practical challenges with creating academic theoretical contribution. In this thesis this means that the practical solution will be the strategy itself, and the theoretical contribution comes from the research as side-production, and the aim is to clarify the term “social media” through indicating, how the term is commonly understood by both ordinary people and organizations.

1.1 The background and the structure of the thesis

As stated, the core purpose of this thesis is to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland. In this thesis EURES Finland is the case organization, although it is not a company in a traditional sense. Instead, it rather is a shared department of multiple public organizations both on a national and on the European level. The structure of it and its relationship with the European Union are explained in more detail in Chapter 1.2, and the reason why the case organization is referred as EURES Finland will be clarified in that chapter, too.

The current situation, and through it the reason why there is a need for the strategy, are explained in more detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis. To put it briefly, the social media of EURES Finland is merely existing, and there are no written rules, plans on how to act, nor decisions on where to be present and why. The structure is missing, and because the organization’s whole social media presence is unorganized, it is not giving the results it could with a proper strategy.

The EURES advisers and the management in charge of the department have also found the absence of the strategy problematic. There is unused potential, and they want the strategy to be created and developed so the potential could be realized. In the discussions with the management about the thesis subject, the proposal for this theme came up, and it was agreed that in any case, a social media strategy would be something that will be needed to create soon, and thus, it could be a suitable topic for this thesis.

The structure of the thesis is created in a way that it is logical and easy to follow. The first chapter is the introduction, where the topic and the case organization are presented, and the chosen research questions justified. The aim is to explain, what this project is about and how it is constructed, and what can be expected.

Chapter 2 forms the scientific frame for the thesis. It goes through what prior research and already existing materials say about the social media in general. It answers to what social media nowadays is, and especially, what kind of aspects are important to consider when creating a social media strategy. Chapter 2 underlines, what is the significance of such strategies and describes the tools that are available for creating and maintaining a social media strategy.

Chapter 3 presents the methods that are used in gathering necessary information prior starting to create the social media strategy for EURES Finland. The research methods and the information that is essential to gather is explained and argumentized by mirroring them on the literature review in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 consists of the actual research. First it goes through the results of the research, and then it summarizes the findings in one sub-chapter. Based on the findings and the literature review in Chapter 5, a proposal for a strategy for EURES Finland is created. Finally, in Chapter 6, some conclusions and reflections are made and suggestions for the future research and development given.

1.2 About the case organization

Disclaimer: there are a couple of major organizational changes coming in the near future that will affect to the EURES Finland and the organizations that provide the EURES services in Finland. All the changes are not yet known on a concrete level, and therefore the current situation and information based on the current organizational structure is used for this thesis. However, for the last parts of the thesis some of the known aspects of the upcoming changes are taken into account and explained, and the suggestions will consider them as well.

As stated earlier, EURES Finland itself is not a company, but rather a shared department of multiple public organizations. EURES is a brand under the European Union, and EU has power over all the EURES organizations around the Europe. The European Union (2023) has

created a portal for EURES related articles and services under their official website, and a descriptive section of the page explains EURES to be a cooperation network that is created to ensure and enable the free movement of workers within the EU area (also including Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland).

The European Union (2023) clarifies in the description section that EURES is an abbreviation from the words “European Employment Services” and that there is an EURES-organization – or at least the EURES-services must be organized somehow – in every EU/EEA-country. The countries themselves may decide how to organize the services, but they must be offered somehow and there are some general rules to follow. In Finland, the main responsibility of EURES is in the hands of the state, and the services are mainly state organized. There are also private companies that provide certain EURES services and are official members or partners of EURES, but their services are also coordinated by the same state-owned national coordination office, and they cooperate with the public EURES service provider, which is often referred to as EURES Finland. Hence, in this thesis, the case organization also goes by that title.

The Finnish EURES coordination office is in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, and the services are provided by the Unemployment and Economic Development offices and the Centres for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment (later ELY Centre). According to the webpage of the ELY Centres (2022), there are one Centre in every region in Finland (a couple of the regions have one shared centre), and the situation with the Unemployment and Economic development offices (2022) is the same and according to their webpage, they also have 15 offices in different parts of Finland. However, it is worth mentioning that both organizations may have multiple locations in the region, not only one, as while the organization is known by a name centre or office, they can be in multiple buildings and places in the region. The word office or centre in this sense does not mean a physical building, it is the term for the organization.

The structure of the organization of EURES Finland is rather complicated to explain since it is one department that functions in multiple different organizations. However, it still is functioning as one as all of the organizations are coordinated by the Ministry, and they share the same tools, and for example, all of the employees of public EURES have access to the same databases and intranets. Most of the EURES-advisers work for the Unemployment and Economic Development Offices and are in charge of a certain region.

1.3 Research questions

To be able to create a solid social media strategy for EURES Finland, certain questions need to be answered first. It helps the organization to see, which aspects to focus on, and how to use the resources effectively to achieve the desired results.

On a large scale, the main research question is the following: **what are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?** To be able to answer that, these two sub-questions need to be answered:

1. What goals and success measures do the key persons on the field of EURES Finland's communication and marketing find important?
2. What is the current state of the EURES Finland's social media?

The goals show the direction where all the actions done in the social media should point towards to. Without a goal, the social media presence is missing its purpose, and without a purpose, the actions done are often pointless and ineffective. The key people, who are working in relation to EURES Finland's social media, marketing, management, and communication, are the best ones to talk about the goals that EURES Finland have for their social media presence and in general, and therefore they were interviewed in order to gather answers to the first sub-question.

Once the goals are clarified, the next step is to find out, what actions are needed to take to achieve them. For knowing what actions are needed, it is essential to know the current state of the social media; who are the followers now, have the platforms reached the correct target groups and what could be done differently to reach the goals better, if they are not reached yet. Hence, the second question was created.

To get answers to the second question, two different research entities were conducted. Firstly, the current followers of the EURES Finland's social media were heard through a survey. The aim is to see who the current followers are and what they want, and a survey will give a good look who the platforms are reaching, why the current followers follow EURES Finland, and what their wishes are. Secondly, by going through the data and analytics that

the different platforms provide just to see, information about how well the posts reach people and what is the starting point can be measured, and it allows EURES Finland to also monitor later, whether the taken actions have a positive effect to the engagement et cetera.

The interview, the survey, and the method of gathering and analyzing the information from the social media data are explained in more detail in the third chapter of this thesis. They all serve the purpose of answering to the research questions, and thus giving a foundation for the strategy to be built on.

2 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

To be able to create a functional social media strategy, it is essential to understand the phenomena that is surrounding social media itself. Not even defining the term is as simple as one might think – during the years of social media's existence the definition has evolved and changed many times, and it still is evolving continuously. There are also lots of different interpretations existing coincidentally, and before creating a strategy, it must be clarified how social media is most commonly understood, and how it is nowadays perceived based on prior research.

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to first clarify what social media is: what the definition of the term is and how it should be interpreted according to the literature. Chapter 2 looks briefly into the history of the social media and through that it underlines and defines the meaning of it in today's society, and especially in the context of marketing. In Chapter 2, the scientific definition discusses with the perception that the common people and organizations have of it, and through that the following conclusions are made: what are the main features of the social media, who the users are, for what purposes do they use it, and finally, what is the significance of it for the people and what again for the organizations.

The second purpose of Chapter 2 is to gather and provide information about the social media platforms. It is necessary to see what platforms are used the most, what are the current trends in respect of it, and whether it is clear how the field will look in the near future – that information helps to create a foundation for the strategy and to see, which platforms are worth putting the most effort and resources in.

Thirdly, Chapter 2 goes through literature about social media marketing strategies. Main target is to understand the significance of these strategies, to find out how they are formed, and to learn, what aspects a good social media marketing strategy covers.

2.1 Social Media – what is it?

When defining a term, dictionaries are good places to start as they tend to have a short, well-encapsulated descriptions of all kinds of words and phrases. On the internet there are many dictionaries available, and for this thesis two options were found to be the most trustworthy: Finnish Terminology Center's TEPA Term Bank and Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

According to TEPA Term Bank (2022), social media is interactive and user-oriented way of communication. It is based on networking and uses technology, and through it the users can produce content to each other and maintain relationships. Even, for example, certain online stores (such as Ebay or Amazon) can be considered as social media platforms, too, as on those kind of sites people can communicate with each other while making purchases and leave feedback.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2022) summarizes TEPA Term Bank's explanation by describing social media as a set of electronic tools for communication. According to them, social media is used for creating and maintaining social networks, sharing information, thoughts, and all kinds of content from pictures to videos, for both entertainment and useful purposes.

The main difference between those descriptions is that TEPA Termbank categorizes the word "social media" as a way of communication, whereas Merriam-Webster describes it as a set of tools for communication. The difference is minor, the main idea behind the explanations is the same: social media is something where you can communicate with other people and organizations through technological solutions.

In other words, social media is a set of applications and websites that enable networking, creating, and sharing, and that are dedicated for communication and sharing interests with other people (Ang, 2011; Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2022; TEPA Term Bank, 2022). While those descriptions help to understand, what the social media is on a general level, it is important to understand that under these umbrella explanations there is a complex variety of applications and different technological systems. For example, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) present six social media categories: 1. projects based on collaboration, 2. blogs and microblogs, 3. communities that are for sharing content, 4. social networks, 5. virtual worlds / games, 6. virtual social worlds. While they all can be categorized as social media platforms, they may serve very different purposes. For example, Wikipedia as a collaborative project shares information to people that everyone can edit, whereas WhatsApp is an application used for messaging with people similarly as via text messages.

It can be argued that every technological tool for communication and networking there is, that uses internet, can be categorized as a tool for social media. This includes the ones that are no longer in use. As stated earlier, social media has evolved and is still evolving continuously, and together with the unclear definition of the term this creates challenges for

organizations when they are planning their social media presence. Hjorth and Hinton (2019, p. 1) describe the complicated nature of even writing about social media by stating how the practices of social media have probably changed before they were finished with writing their book. It is hard to keep up with the trends of social media when it is already difficult to get a grasp of it in the first place.

2.2 The brief history of social media

To understand better what the word “social media” means in nowadays’ society, it is a must to review the history of it and mirror it to the social media we have today. Not in chronological way nor reviewing every turn, but rather by going through critical points that have modified social media to become what it is nowadays. According to Hjorth and Hinton (2019, p. 34–35), by picturing the timeline through the critical points, one should be able to visualize where the trends of social media are heading, too. After that, the business context can be considered, and a better picture formed for companies about the field they are trying to function in. This helps companies to narrow down the platforms and choose, what choices serve their purposes the best and where they can achieve their target audience and goals the most efficiently.

Van Dijck (2013, p. 5–6) states that there are no clear starting points for social media. No one invented it purposefully while thinking that they are creating social media – social media is a result of evolution of communication. Before technology, people communicated through other methods, for example speech, writing and drawing. As technology and the civilizations in general have moved forward, the ways to communicate have advanced, too. Thus, social media has been born as a confluence of multiple events. In a way, it is consequence of human history and human nature. The idea of social media was found when people started noticing certain similar, social characteristics of different platforms online and then they decided to categorize them and refer the category with a term “social media”.

If that is what we refer to as social media, the starting point for it could be in 1991, when World Wide Web was invented. Van Dijck (2013, p. 10) explains that because of the World Wide Web, communicative networking was now possible. This meant being able to form groups online, and that again gave possibilities and channels for communication. Of course, as social media is nothing without people who are communicating there, Hjorth and Hinton

(2019, p. 40–41) are noting that it could also be viewed to be born later in the 1990's when the internet generalized.

According to Kirkpatrick (2010, p. 66–67), there were tools for electronic communication even before the 1990's, for example chat rooms and electronic mail existed earlier. People did not use their real names while interacting online, and usually they did not have real-life connections to the people they were communicating with. The first instant-message services functioned similarly; people used nicknames instead of their own, and networking through the platforms was not yet common nor even possible. In the 1990's, more personal approach was invented. Sites such as Geocities made it possible for people to create their own home pages, and in some of them it was also possible to create links to other members' web pages, too. The dating site Match.com and a page dedicated for finding former school contacts followed soon after. These pages were the first steps for using technology and the possibilities of the internet in communication and networking – this was the beginning of social media.

Taprial and Kanwar (2012, p. 6) add that in the early days of social media, the use of it required a lot of technological skills and expertise in the field. Thus, the number of users were limited, and there was a need for making the platforms user friendlier. They also explain that next great step after the generalization of the internet was the moment when instead of just being a passive bystander, common people were able to produce and share content online themselves. This made social media interactive.

It is also worth noting that social media did not evolve everywhere with similar steps. Culture and politics do have an impact to the use of social media in different countries. Hjorth and Hinton (2019, p. 39–40) state that the evolution of social media is not an exception to that rule, and in different parts of the world there have been different routes to the social media we have today. Therefore, social media does not have just one but rather multiple histories.

This adds a lot to the complexity of social media. However, the beginning and the reasons behind creating social medias remain the same. As stated, the evolution of social media is at least partly due to how we as human beings are. Humans have the need to communicate and connect and social media is the ultimate technological answer to that need. Van Dijck (2013, p. 13–14) concludes that social media is an outcome of sociotechnical ensemble; humans and technology shaping each other and resulting these inventions.

Therefore, it can be stated that in the core of the social media is the humane need of being social. It is the ultimate reason social media exists, but later there has come other aspects and needs on top of the original need. The target was no longer to only connect with people, but also to achieve different things via the tool. Some variations of that were invented before world wide web, and for example Taprial and Kanwar (2012, p. 11) mention examples of commercial online services existing already since 1979. However, as for common users the same goes for companies, too: as the social media has evolved to become more interactive, the ways of marketing have had to evolve to that direction as well.

Indeed, the trends and ways both organizations and common people use the social media go hand in hand with the evolution of the technology and possibilities of the internet. Technologies enabling social media evolve continuously, and like inventions generally, they evolve towards fulfilling the needs and wishes of their users. And when a need has been fulfilled, it may sometimes create new needs, possibilities, or basically just simple ideas on how things could be improved or developed further.

According to Taprial and Kanwar (2012, p. 6–7), the main timeline of the social media has gone this way: after generalization of the internet, people found out they could communicate online. Share ideas, create content, et cetera. Soon this possibility made them realize that they could express themselves and, in a way, make their voices heard. This was also an important turn for social media, as now it was not just a tool for people to communicate, but also a possibility for shifting power to the normal people. After this, the logical next step was the realization that through social media, people could cooperate and make a difference together. Many people began to turn into influencers in their networks, and this started a new era for social media, too. This is also something that politicians and organizations, for example, need to understand and consider. The power of social media should not be underestimated.

In conclusion, social media develops and evolves together with the society and technology. It is a continuation of humans' social tendencies and trends, via the possibilities that the advancing technology provides. The future cannot be predicted with certainty, but estimations can be made by looking what are the current trends, what common people and societies are hoping to achieve both individually and as a whole, and what inventions are made that will modify the possibilities of using technology in a social way.

2.3 Common perceptions of social media

While this is the evolution of the social media, and while it can be agreed that the field is ambiguous, for many common people nowadays social media simply means the few platforms that are used for communicating and networking, such as Facebook or Instagram. The knowledge of the term is based on the word “social”, and people do not think any more of it. Barlow and Thomas (2011, p. 4) explain that common people use the tools for the purposes they themselves feel beneficial in one way or another; for their own reasons. For example, entertainment is a reason in its simplicity, too.

Due to this, people do not really need to understand the complexity of social media, nor what platforms are counted as one. They will still use the platforms, they are basically created for them in mind, and they just need to know what benefits or disadvantages there are in the tools they decide to use. Social media or something else, that does not matter to them usually if they perceive it beneficial for themselves.

Sometimes companies – or, of course, the people working in companies – think alike and their understanding of social media is limited, as they think that just being present in Facebook is enough. Too often companies think that if they act as common people act in social media, or if they simply share information and introduce their products or services, it is enough for them. They wait that the customers are coming to them automatically, it does not matter what content they create, and that it is enough that they exist in social media. They do not see the meaning of a strategy; they might even think that it is waste of resources. As Sweeney and Craig (2011, p. 1) describe it, although it is tempting to jump into the world of social media quickly, one should at least consider their goals and target group first to make the best out of the social media’s opportunities. Walsh (2022) underlines that using social media effectively is not as easy as creating a Facebook page and waiting for the people to notice.

Indeed, companies should take the context into account. Li et al. (2020) say that the companies should be using social media as a tool for marketing and promoting their products or message, not just networking and sharing ideas. Social media provides new opportunities for businesses: they can connect to their customers, gather data, manage their customer relationships, form communities, and even create phenomena around their brands. Nevertheless, it is also important to understand the spirit of social media while being

present there. Schaffer (2013, p. 8) adds that while promoting the brand is important, it should not happen solely by pushing the company's agenda forward like in traditional way of marketing. The presence in social media should not be passive informing, but more like creating communities and being interactive. There should be a balance between promoting and creating value for the followers; giving something to the followers that they want and need and at the same time be able to say what the company wants to tell its followers.

When traditional way of marketing was the most efficient way to reach customers, the key behind being productive and successful was to create standards and follow them. This was the rule of thumb to make businesses thrive and managing, for example marketing, efficient. However, like Schaffer (2013, p. 15) underlines, social media does not follow that rule and creating standards and sticking to them can be even dangerous for the businesses. When the change is the only thing that remains, one should never stick to the strict one-time made strategies. They should be updated and checked regularly.

2.4 Social media strategy and its purpose

If the term "social media" is rather complicated to explain, so is the concept of social media strategies, too. Li et al. (2020) explain that there are numerous studies related to social media marketing and creating a strategy for it, but researchers have not found any clear consensus on a definition for the matter. The concept of the social media was described in Chapter 2.1 in this thesis, and by using the same dictionaries as sources, following descriptions can be given for the term "strategy": it is a plan that has been created carefully to achieve certain goals, and it is a conscious way of taking steps towards organizations' visions in the long term. Ang (2011) adds that a strategy can be seen as activities which target is to not only be efficient but to also create uniqueness for companies in the sense that they can differentiate themselves from their rivals.

Therefore, a simplified description for the social media strategy would be that it is a tool to create a plan on how to achieve certain goals by using social media. Schaffer (2013, p. 14) summarizes that it, as its best, is a road map towards those goals of the company. This definition also clarifies the purpose of creating such strategies.

According to Ang (2011), the goal of using social media as a tool is to create value for companies through it whether it be, for example, adding visibility or being able to communicate

with customers, and to use social media to differentiate themselves from other companies. A social media strategy is a carefully conducted plan that pictures the steps towards the goal and makes it achievable.

Schaffer (2013 p. 14) states that a written social media strategy can also have a role as an agreement of why and how social media will be used in company's marketing. All internal parties can sign the agreement and therefore it will be a binding plan that has the information about how the company will act in social media. For example, the information about the resources and tactics can be included, and a description of what to do and what not to do. This is also a way to ensure that the changes in staff, for example, do not affect to the company's performance in social media nor ability to achieve the set goals in there.

If done carefully, social media strategy will also be an essential tool for managing social media. As stated earlier, the nature of social media is to change all the time, and therefore it is important to not to just create one strategy and act like it is written into the stone. Like Schaffer (2013, p. 15, 141, 164) underlines, the strategy should be checked every now and then and optimized accordingly.

2.5 Framework for creating a social media strategy

Schaffer (2013, p. 15–16) argues that the Deming cycle, a framework often used in controlled lab experiments for quality control, can be exploited for social media strategies as well. He states that in a sense, acting in social media can be viewed as an experiment itself. Therefore, it only makes sense that the cycle can be utilized in creating a social media strategy, too. It helps to visualize how the strategy should be created as a continuing process rather than just a one-time package.

As can be seen from Figure 1, the Deming cycle has four phases: plan, do, check or study, and act. It is a cycle; the process starts over and over again and therefore; the process is ongoing all the time.

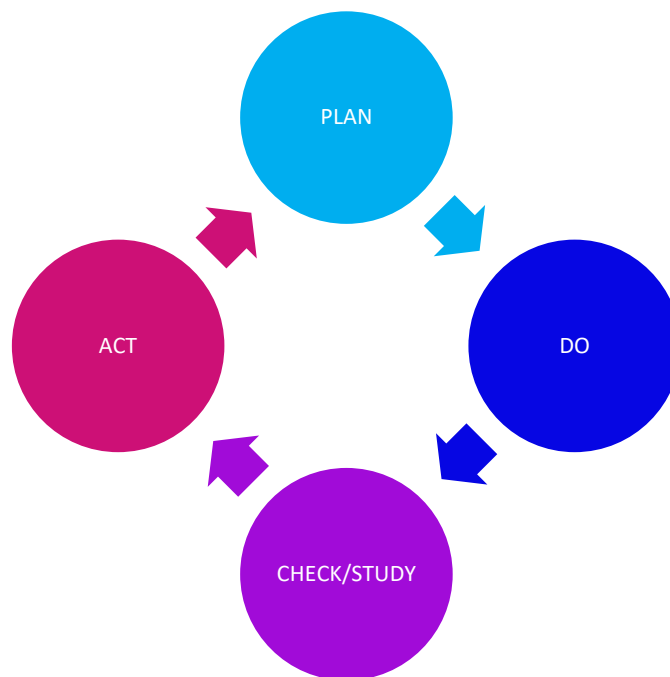


Figure 1. Deming Cycle.

The “plan” phase is the strategy itself. In this part it is important to find out, what are the goals the company wants to achieve and how they are planning to achieve them. Schaffer (2013, p. 19–20) and Henshall (2020) agree that the strategy should not only include the goals, but also the metrics how the achievements can be measured. They explain that the plan should cover the current situation and describe, what should be improved and how. Resources and what can be done in their frame realistically should also be considered. This often means prioritizing, and a good plan must analyze, which actions would be the most essential ones to achieve the most important goals. Then the plan should explain, how the actions will be managed and put into the practice.

The “do” part is the implementation of the strategy in practice. Henshall (2020) and Schaffer (2013, p. 16.) describe that in Deming cycle, the changes should be done rather slowly by testing them and documenting the steps. Through the steps it should be possible to understand, why certain changes caused certain outcomes and what that means in the respect of achieving the goals.

The “check” or “study” phase is continuation for that. Henshall (2020) explains that the difference between the “check” and “study” phases is that “check” focuses on the success or failure in a more superficial level, whereas in the “study” phase the results are reviewed more

deeply. In “study”, the outcome is compared to the strategy with a goal of being able to draw conclusions of why the outcome came instead of just asking, what was the outcome.

Schaffer (2013, p. 16) states that in social media strategies, during this phase one should review, how the company has performed during the “do” phase: what was done, why, and what is the outcome and why. This should happen by going through the KPI’s (key performance indicators) and other metrics. Then those results should be compared with the strategy and figure out, how well the goals were met and whether there is a need for changes.

The final phase before starting the cycle over is called “act”. Henshall (2020) and Schaffer (2013, p. 16) both describe the phase to be for acting accordingly to the findings from the previous phase: if there is anything to optimize, the optimizations should be made to the strategy and thus, the cycle has started from the beginning. The documented findings from the previous phase should be presented to the internal parties involved, and change recommendations created that can then be implemented and added to the plan.

Effing and Spil (2016) underline the importance of this step. They state that the maturity of a social media strategy can be divided into three levels, which are labeled as initiation (includes the key elements such as target audience), diffusion (deeper elements, such as goals and policies), and maturity. The third and the highest level, maturity, consists of content actions and monitoring, and they state the latter is too often looked upon and should be paid more attention to.

2.6 Ingredients for a good social media strategy

What makes a good social media marketing strategy, then? How should it be formed, what aspects should it cover? Where to start and how to proceed?

Ingredients for creating a good social media strategy are the same as for strategies in general. Strategy is a strategy, after all. Rumelt (2012) lists three elements that are the essential ones to take into consideration when making strategies: 1. diagnosis, 2. guiding policy, and 3. set of coherent actions.

With the term diagnosis, Rumelt (2012) means that the strategy should address the problems and challenges that will need to be found solutions for. It is a throughout description of the

current situation with the focus on the points that need to be improved. The second step, guiding policy, plays the role of a path towards the solutions for the challenges. This includes the description and a mention of the number of needed actions in order to solve the challenges – medicine for the diagnosed problems. The third step is to put the plan into action in coherent ways. The actions should be practical and coordinated, and they should play together by adding power to each other.

When it comes to creating social media strategies, Schaffer's (2013, p. 19–20, 35–51) approach is more extensive and detailed than other sources' approaches, and for this reason it is used as a base source in this chapter. According to him, the first step would be to determine the objective: what the company wants to achieve through the social media program. The objective should be clear, achievable, and concrete. Schaffer proposes current corporate strategy as a starting point in figuring out, in which areas social media presence could be helpful. Then, the company should determine, what success means for their social media strategy and how the company can judge return of its social media investment – or as Evans (2010, Chapter 4) puts it, return of conversation. This should be something that can be measured.

Evans (2010, Chapter 3) gives few examples of success metrics that could be convenient to use: the number of followers, likes, or shares; number of posts that are submitted to, for example, social news or blogs; rank in Google. However, a deeper approach could be more fruitful, although it requires more resources. The point in measuring return of conversation according to Evans is that the organizations should pursue to build lasting relationships with their social media communities. Connecting with the followers to become a community takes time, and building trust needs more than marketing campaigns – it requires showing to the community members that behind the brand there are people like them; people they can connect with and share the interest.

The second step, according to Schaffer (2013, p. 22–25), is to concretize the foundation on where the strategy will be built: target demographic group, market focus and branding guidelines. Finally, the current state of company's social media presence should be reviewed carefully.

Target demographic group -section of the strategy should consist of not only the current and the potential customers, but it should also include information about whom among them are

using which channels and in what ways. This helps on making decisions on what kind of content and which channels should be preferred. Evans (2010, Chapter 5) points out that the organizations should never assume who their actual audience in social media consists of, as the audience may be different online from the so-called offline audience; the people they are used to reaching with other methods and their current customers. Both Evans and Schaffer agree that it is important to understand the nature of different platforms and who their users are, and the target demographic group and what platforms they tend to use. Then the organizations should base the decision of their preferred platforms on that information.

According to Schaffer (2013 p. 22–24), at minimum, the company should find out the following demographic information: age, sex, spoken languages, location, education, profession, interests, media consumed (where they seek information) and social media channels that they use the most. However, the company should confine the information based on their specific needs, so even this list can be modified. This information can be gathered through surveys, by researching information online (web analytics, social media, competitor's fans on social media etc.).

Deciding market focus is also important. This, too, effects on what kind of content should be created and which platforms used. Focus could be for example on consumers, or other businesses, or for a certain region or the whole world. Schaffer (2013, p. 24) suggest focusing on only one demographic group and only one market in the first strategy, as it will be easier to handle it and it is still possible to widen the approach later.

The company's branding outlines should be followed in social media, too. Some aspects of it may need to be extended, such as tone of voice or imagery. Social media is usually less official in the tone when compared to normal corporate language. According to Schaffer (2013, p. 24–25), the most essential aspects to be considered are the usage of cover logos and background images or other profile pictures, the language and the tone of voice used. Evans (2010, Chapter 1) adds keywords and social media optimization to the list – while branding is important, the visibility of the brand should be considered, too. If the brand is not found, it is the same as if it would not exist at all.

Last thing before starting to create the strategy itself, the company should observe and make notes about its current condition regarding social media presence. Basically, the aim is to answer to the question of what is currently done in company's social media and what "holes"

should be filled in the future. Schaffer (2013, p. 27–33) lists that for example website ranks, posting frequency, engagement and influence should be checked. Also, it is worth it to look into similar organizations' social media and find so-called role models.

When the current situation is mapped carefully, it is time to move on to creating the strategy itself. There are different versions of what a social media strategy should include, but the most detailed and throughout version available is Schaffer's (2013, p. 35–51). Table 1 is based on his list. Other sources have similar aspects mentioned in their lists, too, but usually on a lighter level. Effing and Spil (2016), for example, have the same elements discerned in their theory of three maturity levels of social media strategy, but Schaffer's version breaks the matter into more concrete parts.

Table 1. Schaffer's social media strategy content.

What should be included in a social media strategy by Schaffer (2013)	
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deciding the name, voice, colors, and imagery for the social media
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deciding, what kind of content and how frequently those different types of the content are posted, creating "content buckets" - All published posts should be good quality and represent the brand
Curation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following pages such as blogs that provide relevant content that can be shared, gathering inspiration from sources employees use themselves - Keeping the social media feed relevant by unfollowing irrelevant pages.
Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choosing the platforms that are the most relevant for the company's goals
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning how frequently to create posts in different platforms - Frequency in different platforms may vary, as some of them require constant activity and some of them not - Monitoring ROI and planning frequency accordingly
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Posting new content and conversations proactively - Sharing content and information from others - Reacting and responding to people who reach out, both through comments and private messages

Listening feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listening feedback, both direct and indirect - Searching with keywords to see if people talk about the brand - Brand monitoring
Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good for engagement - Not campaigns in traditional sense –the social aspect needs to be considered - Goal is to create reactions that improve engagement - Surveys, quizzes, polls, crowdsourcing photos/videos/photos, product giveaways - Using themes to create content for campaigns (such as promotional content, something related to seasonal events) - Idea is to break the routines and monotony in content
Influencers and brand ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Figuring out, whether the organization has already some people willing to cooperate and promote the brand - Listing ways how the influencers or brand ambassadors could help
Crisis and risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check the possibly already existing crisis communication strategy and add social media aspect (if there is none, it should be created) - Thinking how to avoid risks (security risks, damage to reputation, loss of customer trust, lack of guidelines) - Creating a social media policy
Determining staffing roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the roles such as who is in charge of the strategy, operations, execution, creating teams - Teams will communicate together - Social media should be a shared job at first, dedicated role later and even then, it will be everyone's job in a certain way – everyone should take responsibility on producing ideas for content, for example
Inclusive social media culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sourcing ideas together, using employees as brand ambassadors and as extension to the social media team
Create social media guidelines for employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to act on social media, what kind of content is allowed, is there restrictions, good manners - Classified information should be kept as a secret - Encouraging people to be active on social media anyway and not afraid of mistakes
Create a social media calendar and workflow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What to do daily, monthly, etc. - When to go through the strategy and measure success / failure

2.7 Different social media platforms

Since the beginning of the internet, there has been numerous different social media platforms existing: big and small ones, national and international, for everyone and for closed groups, popular and unknown. Some of them have already been closed, some of them are still thriving. New ones are rising all the time, but there are few that become famous.

This chapter concentrates on the most popular platforms in the recent couple of years (2020 – 2022) on both national (Finnish) and international level. Sources that use data of monthly active users instead of total users are preferred – this way the data provided will show better, which platforms are now used the most in reality.

There are multiple statistics available online that are related to social media and the most popular platforms. Those sources were compared, and many of them seemed to have used information from the same original source: Statista. Statista is one of the most known international statistical sources, and it was chosen for this thesis as well due to high legitimacy and impartiality.

For national statistics the information from the Statistics Finland page were used. Statistics Finland is the facet that creates most of the official statistics from Finland and therefore they can also be viewed as valid and reliable.

Statista's newest statistics do not divide the number of users into any demographic groups, whereas Statistics Finland's charts have age and gender considered. Therefore, detailed comparison is not possible between national and international data, and both are presented in this thesis separately in charts.

Comparison and choosing the most used platforms is not easy in general, either, as depending on which platforms are considered as social media, the results may vary a lot. As this thesis concentrates on organizational level and the point of view is in marketing, all private messaging platforms such as WhatsApp can be left out as non-relevant to this case.

Statista lists the 17 most popular social media platforms around the world in January 2022. As the statistics are worldwide, the chart includes also big platforms that are used in certain areas and not necessarily anywhere else – in big countries such as China a platform may

have thousands of millions of users without the platform being used outside of China. Those country-specific platforms are also left out from this thesis as they do not serve the case either.

As seen from Figure 2, according to Statista, Facebook is the most used platform worldwide when all demographic groups are combined. The company that owns Facebook, Meta Platforms Inc., owns three other big social media platforms from the Statista's largest platforms list, too: WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook Messenger. According to Statista, all of them have over billion monthly users separately.

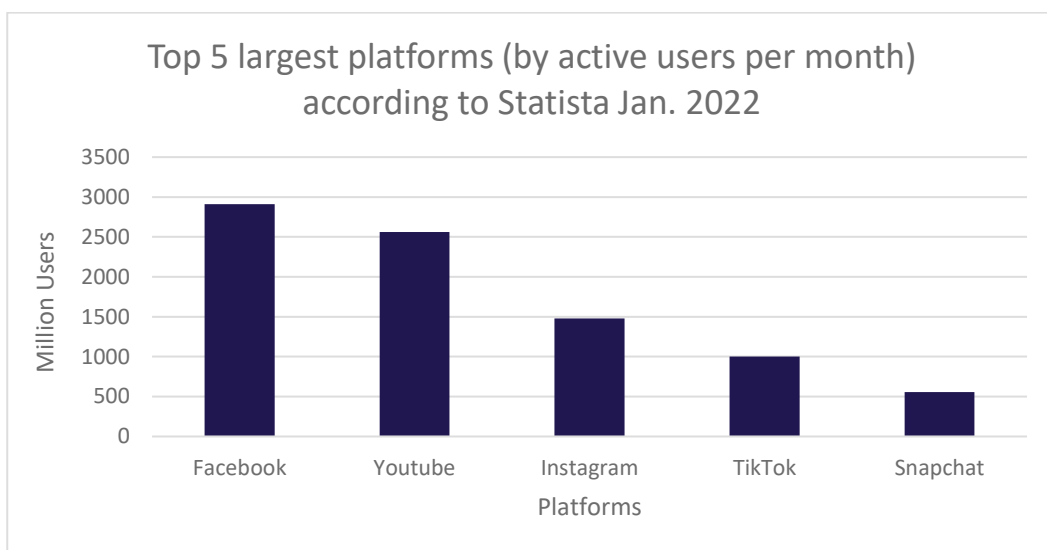


Figure 2. Largest platforms according to Statista.

What kind of platforms the top five are, then?

1. Meta Platforms Inc. (2023) describes Facebook as a platform, where everyone can connect with the people in their lives and with different communities that share interests with them. The description mentions features such as Watch, Marketplace and Groups.
2. YouTube's (2023) description states that the platform is for enjoying videos and music, and sharing one's own content.

3. Meta Platforms Inc. (2023) state that the aim of Instagram is to inspire, and to bring people closer to each other and to the things they are interested in. The platform is based on sharing pictures and short videos.
4. TikTok (2023) description states that it is an application where people can watch millions of short videos and share their own. TikTok claims to be the world's largest platform for short mobile videos.
5. Snapchat (2023) summarizes their philosophy in the following sentence: "Life's more fun when you live in the moment" and "the fastest way to share a moment", and the platform is indeed created for content that people share on the spot and that will disappear after a while. Snapchat is an app for private messaging, but people can also share videos publicly there.

In Finland, Facebook is also the most popular social media platform used according to Statistics Finland (2022). It is worth noting that Statistics Finland's list does not have YouTube on it, but it may be because YouTube is not always perceived as a social media platform, and thus, it might not have been included. Therefore, it is hard to say, how popular YouTube is among Finns. Instagram again is very commonly used in Finland, too. Figure 3 shows the five largest platforms used in Finland between the ages 16-89.

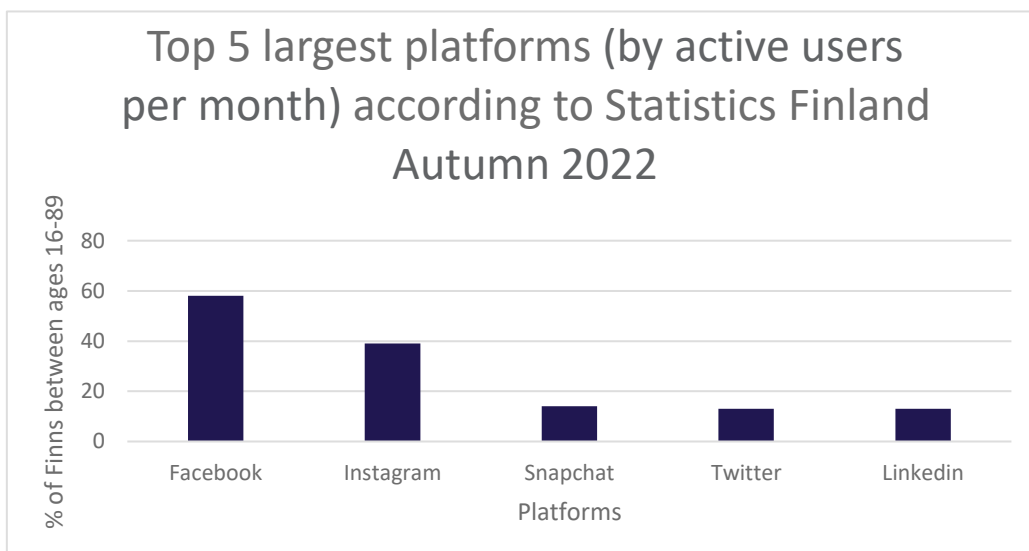


Figure 3. Largest platforms according to Statistics Finland.

The Finnish statistics show differences between generations, too, and for example people from the age group 16–24 use Instagram and Snapchat more than Facebook. Also, for young

people platforms like TikTok are more popular than Twitter or LinkedIn, whereas especially LinkedIn seems to be quite popular among Finns aged 25 to 54.

As Twitter and LinkedIn are missing from the Statista's list and therefore, not yet presented, they will be introduced here:

6. Twitter (2023) presents itself this way: "Twitter is what's happening and what people are talking about right now." The platform allows people to share short posts and discuss openly about current things. It is a tool that offers a place for public discussions about anything, and everyone can take part.
7. LinkedIn's (2023) description states that it "connects the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful". The platform is targeted for professionals, and through the platform it is possible to for example recruit employees.

When deciding which platforms to use in organizations' marketing, there are multiple factors to take into account. As learned from the Statistics Finland's materials, there are differences between different age groups, and therefore it is important to consider one's target group and try to find out, which platforms they especially use. Also, in different countries different platforms are often popular, and if the organization functions on an international level, they should also figure out the most popular platforms among the people from their target countries. Another important point is that these statistics do not take into account the purpose of different platforms and the reason why people use them, nor whether they are suitable for pursuing the organizations' goals. These charts give a good general idea of how much certain platforms are used and where people spend their time online, but according to Evans (2010, Chapter 5), the importance of understanding different purposes of the platforms should not be overlooked either. Therefore, before deciding which platforms to use, organizations should pay attention to what the platforms are used for, and whether they are relevant for their goals.

3 RESEARCH METHODS IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The main purpose of this thesis is to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland, and as presented in the introduction of this paper, to find answers to the following main research question: **what are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?**

As learned from the prior research and the literature presented in Chapter 2, there are certain aspects that need to be considered in order to create a good social media strategy. The first aspect is to understand that creating a social media strategy is an ongoing process – as Schaffer (2013, p. 15–16) explains through applying the Deming cycle into social media strategy planning, the process has four phases, which are, as stated, plan, do, study, and act. This thesis and the strategy itself are the “plan” phase that is created now in this thesis for EURES Finland. After it, the plan should be implemented, then the consequences and achievements analyzed prior starting over again by updating the strategy accordingly.

This chapter explains how the foundation for the social media strategy for EURES Finland is made, what methods are used and why. The reasoning behind the chosen methods is explained and mirrored to the prior research and the literature review in Chapter 2.

3.1 Constructive research and information gathering methods

Constructive research method

The aim of this thesis is to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland, which will be a tool for the organization to improve and maintain their social media presence and through that, achieve certain goals they have set for themselves. The problem is rather practical, but the solution needed theory to back up the decisions made. Therefore, the most suitable research method to use for this whole thesis was constructive method.

According to Lehtiranta et al. (2015, p. 95), constructive research method combines solving practical challenges with creating academic theoretical contribution. As a result, there will be for example practices or tools that an organization can use. In other words, the aim is to develop knowledge that can be used to finding and creating solutions for certain problems. In

this case, the result will be a strategy that will help EURES Finland to improve their presence in the social media.

Lehtiranta et al. (2015, p. 95) explain that the constructive research method has six steps, and this thesis will also go through all of them. First step is to choose a relevant problem, and in this case, it is the research question. Second step is to gain comprehensive understanding of the area of study, which in this thesis is achieved through the second chapter's theoretical framework and through gathering information from the interview, survey, and social media analytics. The rest of the steps are creating solutions, analyzing the feasibility of them, linking the results to the theory and seeing their practical contribution, and finally, evaluating whether the research results could be generalized. These aspects can be found from the thesis' chapters 5 and 6.

Information gathering methods

One of the most essential parts of the plan phase is to define the goals that the company wants to achieve through social media and to reason, how it should be done. As Schaffer (2013, p. 19–20) and Henshall (2020) state, it is also important to define the metrics so the achievements can be measured, and the success of the strategy evaluated.

To ensure that the evaluation of success will be possible, the current situation has to be known well. This enables the possibilities for comparison and therefore, seeing if the situation has changed and if so, for better or for worse. Exploring the current situation will also help to see, what is the foundation for building the strategy – what is the starting point and the situation before any actions. Like Rumelt (2012) puts it, the diagnosis of the current state of the social media should be done, and the problems and challenges that are in a need for solving should be listed.

To find out on a concrete level what is the current state of EURES Finland's social media, some research must be done. In this thesis, the research part is divided into three different sections that all have their own value and purpose for the process. The methods to gather information for this thesis are a focus-group interview, a survey, and collecting data from social media analytics.

Information analyzing methods

Finally, the gathered information needs to be analyzed. The aim is to understand, what are the most important issues that rise through the research, what the core messages are, and what the main points to consider when making the strategy are. The aim is to take a step further in answering the main research question “what are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?”, and it will be done by taking a look to the two sub-questions mentioned in the introduction chapter: 1. What goals and success measures do the key persons on the field of EURES Finland’s communication and marketing find important? and 2. what is the current state of the EURES Finland’s social media?

As the aim is to identify and evaluate certain patterns inside the gathered material, the chosen analyzing method is content analyzing. According to Warren (2020), the aim in content analysis is to create codes out of the larger amount of text and then categorize them and possibly count the frequency of concepts or variables inside the text. She states that due to this, content analysis offers a hint of quantitative way of thinking inside a qualitative method. It is important to keep the research questions in mind when analyzing the data, so the focus will be clear, and the amount of information will not suffocate the purpose of the analysis.

3.2 A focus-group interview for colleagues and management

First, a focus-group interview is held for the representatives of the management and EURES colleagues. The colleagues were hand-picked based on their relevance to the subject, and therefore, the ones that belong to the EURES Finland’s communication team were chosen. The communication team and management representatives are the ones that know what the goals are and what is the message that EURES Finland wants to get through with its social media. They also know the current situation well, and the resources, and therefore it is fruitful to hear, what they have to say.

The time limit of the interview is one hour, and to be able to get the needed information, some questions are prepared in advance and the discussion will be moderated with them in mind. Otherwise, the conversation is hoped to be open, and the interviewees can talk in a semi-free manner. The questions are prepared with the literature review in mind, and in this chapter, it is explained why the exact questions were chosen.

According to Schaffer (2013, p. 19), the whole strategy starts with determining the objective and finding out, what is the purpose of the social media program for the company. Therefore, among the first questions to be asked during the interview will be what in the interviewees' opinions the main purpose for the EURES Finland's social media presence is. Also, for the same reason it will be asked what the most important things for EURES Finland are to achieve through its social media, and if possible, if the interviewees could list three or four of them that are the most essential ones.

The third question related to the objective is how the interviewees would determine success. What concrete measurements could be used in their opinion to evaluate success? Even though some of the metrics are quite given – such as the ones Evans (2010, Chapter 3) list, one example being the number of shares, comments, or likes – it is good to hear the views from inside the organization. Schaffer (2013, p. 20) states also that the success should be measured in a concrete way, and to be able to do that, it is essential to understand, what exactly is the number of likes, for example, that can be considered successful for EURES Finland according to the people inside the organization. As an example, the idea is to find out what is the number of comments that is, in fact, helping EURES to reach its goals.

After having the answer to these questions related to the purpose of EURES Finland's social media presence, the next step would be to decide on the market focus. Schaffer (2013, p. 24) states that it is wise to focus on less target groups in the beginning and, in a way, to master reaching them through the platforms first and if that works, then decide on adding other target groups to the picture. Evans (2010, Chapter 5) explains that knowing your audience and what they do on social media helps to make decisions related on what platforms to use and what content to create. Figuring out, who the current followers are will be one main points during Chapter 3.3 that handles the survey for the followers. However, to be able to see, whether EURES Finland is reaching the correct people, it is essential to find out, who EURES Finland is willing to reach and if the answers match with the reality or not. Therefore, the next question will be who the interviewees think would be the most important target audience to reach through the social media platforms.

Rumelt (2012) adds that the social media strategy needs to address the existing problems in the current social media presence that need to be solved. As the problem can be something that any party faces – the customer, management, communications team, et cetera – it is important to take everyone's point of view into consideration. Therefore, in both this interview

and the survey in Chapter 3.3 the question concerning this needs to be handled: when thinking of EURES Finland's social media, what aspects of it the interviewees think are the most important ones in need of improvement?

Last questions are more open and their purpose is to map, what are the interviewees' own needs and wishes towards the EURES Finland's social media. This is the part where the interviewees can tell, if there are some aspects that should be considered in the strategy – upcoming organizational changes included. If nothing else, feedback about both the social media itself and the interview is welcome, and if there is time left, the interviewees are free to add anything they wish. They will also have two days' time to add comments via email, if there is something they forgot to say or they could not say in the group for any reason.

The questions and the structure of the interview can be found from the attachments of this thesis.

3.3 A survey for followers in social media

Second, a survey was created for the current followers and fans of EURES Finland's existing social media platforms. The goal is to find out who the followers are, why they follow and what kind of content they wish to see.

The survey is created with the Webropol-tool and shared in EURES Finland's social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter). Schaffer (2013, p. 22–24) lists that at the minimum, the following demographic information should be defined: age, sex, spoken languages, location, education, profession, interests, where they seek information, and social media channels that they use the most. The first questions of the survey are drafted from this list. Only thing left out is spoken languages, as it is not relevant information. Instead, there is a question about which language would the respondent like to see content in the EURES Finland's page: English, Finnish or Swedish. They are the official languages of the organization and the only options that are available for use.

Most of the questions will be in a multiple choice -format, but some of them have a function where the respondent can put the option in preferred order. The questions about the used social media channels and which places the respondents search for information about EURES are in this format. Additionally, there are three open questions: one about the education,

profession and interests of the respondent, another about what kind of content they would like to have on the EURES Finland's social media, and lastly a possibility to leave any other kind of feedback.

The survey questions can be found from the attachments of this thesis.

3.4 Social Media Statistics and Data

Third part of the research is to go through the data from EURES Finland's current social media platforms to map the situation where the strategy will be built on. The aim is to make observations about the current condition of EURES Finland's social media presence and to figure out, what is currently happening, what is done, and what aspects should be improved. As Schaffer (2013, p. 28–33) lists, aspects such as website ranks, posting frequency, engagement and influence is going to be mapped. The findings are then compared to other countries' EURES pages and other that provide similar services. The point is to seek role models and get the idea, how others are managing their social media – especially the ones that seem successful.

4 PRESENT STATE ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the information that has been collected through the three methods presented in Chapter 3: from the focus group interview, from the survey for EURES Finland's social media followers, and from statistics and data of the social media platforms that are currently used by EURES Finland. The collected information gives an image of EURES Finland's social media presence and its current state, who the current social media is reaching, and it also aims to present the goals and needs of both sides – the organization's and its clients'.

Together with the theory, the information gathered through this present state analysis forms a foundation where the strategy can be built on. This data helps to narrow down the options and guides the choices towards the most suitable ones in order to achieve the desired goals that are also clarified in this chapter.

4.1 Results from the focus group interview

The interview was held on 19th January 2023. From the six invitees five were able to attend, and the group consisted of both EURES advisers from the communication group and representative from the management, ministry of economic affairs and employment. Interview was held online through Microsoft Teams -tool, and it was recorded with all attendees' permissions. The duration of the interview was one hour, and all the pre-planned questions were covered during the meeting. The group was given an opportunity to send additional comments via email after the interview, too, if something important in their opinion were left unsaid. However, no one felt the need to do so, so all the information was gathered from the interview itself.

Table 2. introduces the interviewed attendees and explains their roles. Names are not used in this thesis to keep the attendees anonymous, and for the parts where attendees' opinions could be too revealing of their identities are not quoted directly.

Table 2. Attendees and their roles.

	Role
Interviewee 1	Representative of the ministry of economic affairs and employment and EURES Finland's national coordination office
Interviewee 2	EURES adviser, coordinating role
Interviewee 3	EURES adviser, coordinating role, part of the communications group
Interviewee 4	EURES adviser, part of the communications group
Interviewee 5	EURES adviser, part of the communications group

Purpose

The first handled topic was the main purpose of EURES Finland's social media. The interviewees were listing reasons why EURES Finland uses social media, and what are the main goals that are tried to be achieved through it. The group was unanimous in their opinion: EURES Finland wants to reach people and be more visible and known, and therefore it is important to be there where the current and potential service users are; as interviewee 4 put it, "you have to be where the customers are, and according to my experience, people use social media a lot and seek information from there, too." Therefore, social media is a way to be close to people and to be easily approached. Both employer and personal customers are using social media, and it is a fast and effective way to reach people and to be present to them.

Interviewee 3 raised another point of view in the discussion by adding that EURES (both on national and on the European level) is trying to be more and more dynamic and youthful. Interviewees agreed that on a large scale, relatively young people are one of the main target

groups for EURES, and therefore, they should be kept in mind when planning marketing strategies. Being modern, interesting and being able to merge into the young people's world in social media is something that EURES Finland wants to pursue. However, at the same time EURES does not want to be too playful, as it wants to be viewed as credible and fill its role as a facet that ethically communicates about mobility services in Europe, and shares information about it in a responsible way.

Interviewee 2 brought up the last point for the first question by stating that "social media could be a good way for EURES Finland to strengthen its brand image and become clearer in its communication towards its clients". In a way, this summarizes the purpose of EURES Finland's social media presence in one sentence. Indeed, according to the interviewees, in the heart of the purpose is the idea of being visible, and to be able to communicate effectively with the target group, and this way to fill the role EU has given to EURES about enabling mobility of workforce inside the EU.

Goals

The discussion flowed naturally towards the second question about the main goals that EURES Finland wants to achieve through their social media presence. Interviewee 2 commented that "on a large scale, filling the role and enabling mobility in the EU area is the main goal from a strategic point of view". Interviewee 3 added that "for Finland and EURES Finland, the big goal is to attract workforce to Finland and fill the gaps in the need of certain workers". The interviewees agreed that the goals for the social media should then support these strategic goals and be, in a sense, bridges towards them.

How social media could be used for it to help EURES Finland to achieve said goals – this was the next question the interviewees were pondering. This point of the interview caused the most conflicted thoughts as there are many different aspects to be taken into account. The discussion went a little bit off track in this part, but as the risen issue is relevant to the subject of this thesis, it will be included to this chapter as well.

Conflict about the brand name

As stated, EU has its own goals for EURES Finland to achieve, but so does Finnish government, and to certain length these two have some guidelines that conflict with each other. Also, as the most of the EURES advisers work in the Employment and Economic Development Office, the governments' wishes are basically something that is a must to follow, but then again EURES is under certain EU regulations, too, and there are also some obligations to comply with.

As EURES is a department under the EU, there are some general goals that are given from the EU level. One of the key goals is to make EURES known, and the interviewees noted that social media has helped to achieve the goal. EURES has not been very well-known service especially in Finland, and to change the situation, social media plays a big role.

EURES as a department has its own purpose and goals to fulfill, but it still has a role from the government's point of view, too, and there are upcoming major changes that are going to effect on how EURES is going to be able to function and be visible in the near future. The biggest change that influences EURES Finland is that it will be moved under the "Work in Finland" -concept. It is a concept that gathers public international services under one roof, and EURES will be one of the many services that are offered under it. The services and tools that EURES offers will remain, but the wish is that the term "EURES" would be more hidden, or even removed, and instead the title "Work in Finland" would be emphasized in all marketing et cetera. The details of how EURES will settle under the concept and how the social media, for example, will be modified after that is still not clear, but it will affect nevertheless, and therefore this topic cannot be disdained.

As one of the EU's interests is to strengthen the EURES brand all around the Europe, and to make it more visible, this situation creates the main conflicted issue here. The interviewees were discussing about the issue, and some ideas about possible solutions were shared. Majority of the interviewees agreed that the best solution would be to still use the name of EURES, but in a way that it would be clear that it is part of the concept of Work in Finland. One given example of that was Denmark's style, as they have similar concept and for example, in their social media they still use the title "Workindenmark / EURES Denmark". Some interviewees stated that they do not think using both titles are excluding each other, and that for clarity it would be important to still have the EURES brand existing as well, as it is still

going to be used in other EU-countries and that one of the core ideas of EURES network is to share the brand and the services.

The objecting statement was that the brand of Work in Finland is different from EURES, and even though the EURES services will remain, the title should not be used visibly as it could be confusing for the clients. Then again, the other opinions stated that it would be as confusing to not to use the EURES term, as the services are European and other countries will refer to them as EURES services. Bottom line is that the conflict is real, and it should be settled before making real decisions about the marketing et cetera.

The interviewees then concluded that nevertheless, the main goals would be to make the services more visible and known, with or without the name of EURES. The goal of the services provided is to help employers to find workers and jobseekers to find jobs. Enabling this through making the services visible and known is the core target, no matter what the title would be. The EURES Finland's social media should focus on spreading information about mobility and the services that are available and help potential service users to find the suitable ways of using the services and to know more about them.

Measurements

The next question to discuss about was that what measures could be used to evaluate success of EURES Finland's social media. Currently, some basic data is collected for reports that are sent to European Labor Authority ELA. This includes numbers such as engagement, impressions, shares, reach, followers and likes. These numbers give data about how seen the posts are and how interested and engaged the followers are. As the old reports exist, it would be possible to compare whether the new social media strategy and its implementation grow these numbers. Interviewees suggested creating an observation analysis about the numbers and their changes, where the success of certain acts during a certain period of time could be evaluated based on the data.

Interviewee 2 was also pondering whether or not it would be possible to monitor in any way how often and how much social media actually brings new customers for the EURES services. If so, it could give important and concrete information about the success. Interviewee 3 presented an idea of adding more possibilities for the followers to be more interactive on the EURES Finland's platforms and then see, how many followers would contact EURES that

way. However, the interviewees were then discussing whether there are enough resources for that as there officially is only one person in charge of the social media, and the members of the communication group are a part of the group on top of their other responsibilities, and therefore they cannot spend too much time on communication tasks.

Target audience

The next topic concerned target audiences and especially what would be the most important audience to reach through the EURES Finland's social media platforms. The interviewees agreed on this one: the focus at the moment is on the needs of Finnish employers, and currently they need more employees. Therefore, the task is to attract suitable workers to Finland, and this makes both the foreigners, who would be interested in moving to work in Finland, and Finnish employers, the main target audience of EURES Finland's social media.

EURES Finland continues to offer services to other target groups, too, and they cannot be forgotten either, but the focus should be on these two. Interviewees suggested that as different platforms are used, some of them could focus more on the different target groups than the others. For example, interviewee 3 states that "LinkedIn could be a good platform to reach the employers".

Interviewee 1 adds that "in addition to these, we cannot forget the third group of clients either – the people living in Finland, who would like to work in another EU-country. According to the EURES regulations, every EU country has to offer services to all these target groups, and therefore we need to keep them in mind in social media, too". The interviewees continued to discuss whether it would be convenient to use different platforms to reach different target groups or even create a couple of different accounts to certain platforms for different target groups. No final conclusion was made, as there is no clear best solution existing, but as interviewee 3 states, "what is sure, we cannot think that all of the platforms will have the same content published at the same time and in the same ways, it's not working out. We have to reconsider the purposes and target groups of our platforms and act accordingly".

Aspects in need of improvement

The discussion continued with a notion from the interviewees that EURES Finland should indeed create a LinkedIn profile, and that it could be more useful than the already existing

Twitter profile. In their point of view, especially employer clients in Finland use LinkedIn and recently there has been happening some unclear situations in Twitter that has resulted a lot of especially public organizations to leave Twitter behind. Interviewee 3 calls for “foresighted thinking, in order to avoid any crises”, and this now with Twitter, but also in the future with any platform that changes to something that EURES Finland could not be a part of. Also, the current social media EURES Finland has does not reach employers enough at all, so creating a platform targeting them could be a good idea. Therefore, EURES Finland should also think through whether Twitter is the best place to be if only few platforms are to be chosen, and maybe consider LinkedIn instead. “We have to think how to reach the employer sector through social media better, too, and in my experience, LinkedIn would be the best option for that”, concludes Interviewee 2.

This topic took the discussion towards the aspects in need of improvement on the EURES Finland’s social media presence. Besides selecting the best platforms, the types of content and making it more interesting and engaging was the most agreed aspect.

Currently, the content has focused solely on providing information and facts in a straightforward way. There have been ads about upcoming events and open positions et cetera. The interviewees were thinking that creating content in a more storytelling way could increase interest towards the EURES Finland’s profiles and services. Interviewee 5 states that “creating interesting content through storytelling could even be a goal in itself, as that is something EURES Finland should try to aim for”. Interviewee 3 agrees and adds that “the content could include real people and real experiences with EURES, for example in a form of a video where they talk about their success stories about moving to Finland for, let’s say, seasonal work.”

Increasing interactivity would also be something to consider, and the interviewees suggested polls and raffles to create possibilities for the followers to feel more connected with EURES. A chat option was also mentioned, and Work in Finland will have a chatbot, so creating ways to utilize and promote the possibility in EURES Finland’s social media could add interactivity in a way, too.

The idea of success stories was the most talked option, as it could be a way to offer both employers and jobseekers peer support and encourage them to seize the opportunities that EURES offers. As examples the interviewees offered stories from a farm owner who has hired workers from other countries successfully. On the other hand, an employee, who has

come to Finland to work and stayed here and created a career could also be something worth promoting, too.

The point is that stories in general are interesting to people, and they also open good possibilities to share many different types of information in an understandable and effective way. If for example, EURES Finland would like to promote working in other EU countries as well, they could publish a story about a Finn who works in another country and shares their experience about how EURES helped them to get the job et cetera. Also, this way EURES could share information about other countries, and one idea was to choose a country of month and share stories about that more for one month, and maybe even cooperate with the EURES in that country.

Unemployment and economic development offices in Finland have also this webinar tool “TE-live” that shares live videos, interviews for example, about different topics related to employment. Interviewee 3 discusses that “EURES has not yet utilized it very much, and that opportunity could be something to dig deeper into. Sharing those videos on the social media platforms could be a good way to create interesting content, too, for example about living and working in Finland.”

Aspects to consider in the strategy

Last actual question was about things to take into consideration when creating the strategy. As already discussed at earlier point, the name of the brand, and also how EURES Finland will settle under Work in Finland concept, were brought up once again and therefore, they are something essential to think through in the strategy and especially before putting the strategy into practice.

However, this issue is not going to be solved before finishing this thesis, and in the future, changes will occur, too, and therefore, the strategy should be made in a form that it is easily updated and developed further. Interviewees were agreeing that at least once a year the strategy should be checked and updated, so the changes could be taken into consideration always and the strategy would remain effective.

Also, it was suggested that as Work in Finland will create a communication plan soon, this strategy could be given to them to read, too, so they could receive the EURES Finland’s

current state and visions into consideration when creating it. Also, a short summarization or presentation about the thesis and the strategy could be made, where the main points would be explained.

Other comments and conclusion

The last question was whether the interviewees wanted to add anything. The interviewees did not have anything to add, they simply stated that the strategy is indeed needed, and that the social media has unused potential, which could be released with more interactive and storytelling approach.

As a conclusion from the whole interview following aspects seem to be the most important ones for the interviewees:

1. to make content more interesting and engaging through storytelling and possible polls and raffles.
2. to keep all three target groups (employers, foreign jobseekers who want to find a job from Finland, Finnish jobseekers who want to find a job from other EU-countries) in mind when creating the strategy, it is not possible to focus to only one, the EU regulations are binding for EURES Finland in that.
3. to keep Work in Finland -entity in mind when creating the strategy, as it will be affecting on the social media presence, too.
4. LinkedIn-profile should be created, and Twitter-account possibly deleted.

4.2 Results from the follower survey

The survey was created by using the Webropol tool, and the answers were gathered by sharing the survey on EURES Finland's Facebook and Twitter pages. The survey was officially open from 16th February to 24th February, but due to low response rate it was left open through another weekend and finally closed on Monday 27th February. However, the total number of respondents was still 8, and majority of them were EURES advisers or similar. Therefore, the results do not give throughout presentation of the social media followers nor describe their views well.

Nevertheless, the results will be presented in this chapter. The low participation rate can be viewed as a result itself, too: the survey did not reach a wide range of people, and those who it reached were clearly not feeling engaged enough to the EURES Finland's social media to participate. Potentially, there could have been slightly more interest to participate if there would have been a raffle between the participants to win a prize, but unfortunately it turned out to not to be possible to arrange one, and therefore the survey was arranged as it was.

The results are not analyzed in depth as it is known that with this participation rate they cannot be generalized. The results do not represent the views of the whole group of EURES Finland's social media followers either and therefore, any general conclusions made with this information cannot be used as a comprehensive truth. However, the results can be viewed as additional information to the other research information that was gathered in this thesis through the interview and data collecting from the statistics. Also, all the ratings and comments about the social media content can be viewed as indicative information and taken into account in a light way.

Demographic information

Although, not much about the demographics of the followers can be deduced from the survey, the information about the survey participants is presented in Table 3. All of the participants were over 25, and majority of them Finnish females currently located in Finland.

Table 3. Demographics of the survey.

Gender	<p>Gender</p> <p>■ Female ■ Male ■ Other / Don't want to tell</p>
Age	<p>Age</p> <p>6 4 2 0</p> <p>Under 18 19-24 25-39 40-59 60+</p> <p>■ Age</p>
Nationality	Finland 7, Outside of the EU 1
Location	Finland 7, Outside of the EU 1

For the question about profession, educational background, and interests, participants answered in the following ways:

1. "Studied business at university of applied sciences, working as EURES-adviser currently. Interested in music, traveling and animals."
2. "Please accept non Europe unions country professional experience work in construction project job"
3. "MBA. travel and tourism"
4. "Higher education in social sciences, currently working for the Finnish government in international recruitment matters."

5. "Recruitment professional"
6. "EURES"
7. "higher education, EURES adviser"
8. "-----"

Four participants mentioned higher education, three mentioned EURES as their profession, and in addition to that, two mentioned working in the field of either recruitment or traveling.

To the question about why the participants are following EURES Finland in the social media, 7 out of 8 participants answered that the "page is useful to me in my work (e.g. I am an EURES-adviser myself or similar)". As the question allowed to choose multiple options, some other options received answers as well: one is interested in finding a job from Finland, one wants to find employees from Finland, and one wants to find employees from other EU-countries. No one chose the option of wanting to find a job from another EU county.

Opinions about EURES Finland's social media

The participants preferred English as the content's language, as seven of the eight participants chose that option. Four chose also Finnish, and none chose Swedish. Table 4. presents the ranking of what kind of content the participants would like to see on EURES Finland's social media pages. One participant answered to the optional open question and added their suggestion for content: "short videos e.g. about taxes, EURES, Jobs, Events etc."

Table 4. Content ranking, 5 being very interested, 1 being not interested at all.

Average score out of 5	
1. Event information (Finland works - event, other EURES event ads)	4,9
2. Information about EURES Services	4,4
3. Information/trivia about Finland	4,1
4. Information about open positions in other EU-countries	3,9
5. Information/trivia about other EU countries	2,8

Information related to events were viewed as the most interesting content to share. Also, information about the EURES services, and about Finland in general, were found interesting amongst the participants as they also got a score of above 4. Information about open positions in the other EU-countries were also found slightly interesting, but trivia about other EU-countries were not viewed as interesting, but rather slightly vice versa.

The participants also gave scores to different aspects, such as visual image and visibility, of EURES Finland's social media and the content of it. Table 5. shows the scores. As the table shows, all aspects got a score between 3 and 4. The scores can be viewed as decent, but there is still room for improvement, and especially visual image and the placement of important information should be checked according to the participants' opinions.

Table 5. Average scores of aspects regarding EURES Finland's social media, 5 being good, 1 being bad.

Average score out of 5	
Content of the EURES Suomi social media page(s) is interesting	3,8
Visual image of the page(s) is good	3,5
Important information is visible and easily found	3,6
The page(s) is clear and the content is understandable	3,9

Preferred platforms

The participants gave scores to different social media platforms based on how important they perceived them to be for themselves 1 being not important at all and 5 being very important. Figure 4 shows the comparison of the scores between six platforms that were chosen to the survey based on the list from Statista and Statistics Finland in chapter 2.7 in this thesis.

The platforms that got a score above 3 are important for the participants, and the platforms that got below 3 are not. Therefore, according to the survey, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn are important.

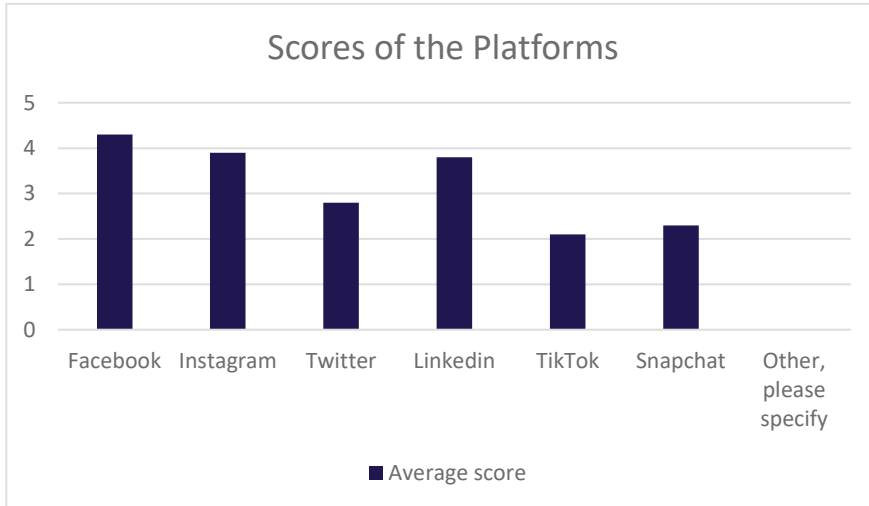


Figure 4. Scores for different platforms.

Where the participants seek information about EURES

Again, participants were asked to estimate the sources where they would seek information about EURES Finland's services on a scale 1 to 5, where 1 is not important and 5 very important source. Figure 5 presents the results. EURES Portal and local government websites are the top two sources, and social media is third with a score that is slightly above 3.

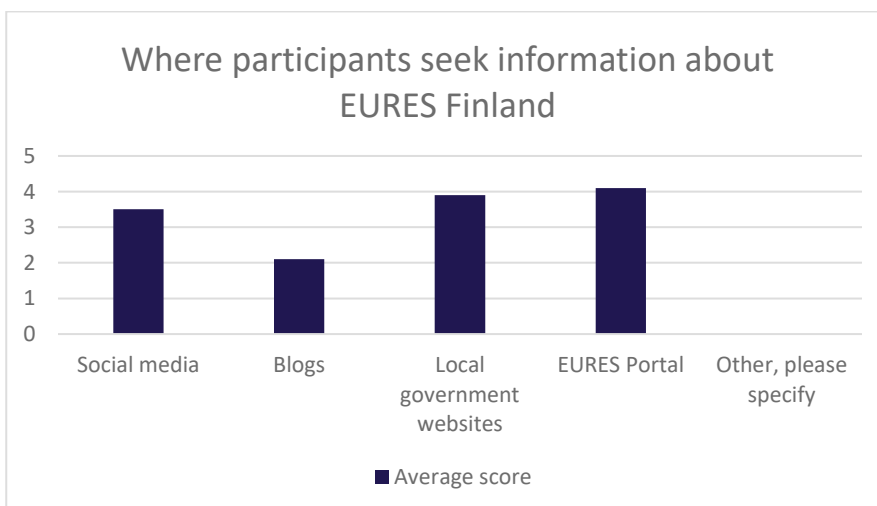


Figure 5. Scores of different sources.

Conclusion

As stated, the survey was not successful in a sense that it could be used as a trustworthy source for the strategy. As the group of participants were rather homogenous and not representing the core target group, the opinions about what kind of content and in which platforms cannot be used as a solid base for the strategy. The results can be viewed as a supporting, additional information for the interview and the statistical data.

Unfortunately, the results leave the social media followers still unknown, and it cannot be confirmed, whether EURES Finland reaches their target customers through the platforms they currently use. However, it can be concluded that there is room for improving the visibility and engagement of the posts anyway, and in Chapter 4.3 it will be checked, how well the posts reach people in general and how much people share, like and overall engage with them.

The survey had also a possibility for feedback, and one serious answer was received through it. It stated a wish to include more information for employers in EURES Finland's content. Otherwise, the findings from the survey can be concluded as the need of improving visibility of EURES Finland's social media and making the visual image of it more appealing.

4.3 Data from the statistics and social media analytics

Currently EURES Finland is using three different platforms: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; and out of them, Facebook is used the most. Every six months the data from the social media analytics are reported to the European Labour Authority, and the newest confirmed report is from January 2022 to June 2022. The report of July 2022 to December 2022 is already finished as well, but the counting system changed mid-season, and the numbers of the last four months include the reach and impressions of EURES Finland's parent organization EURES's posts concerning Finland. Therefore, the report of that period is not consistent, and therefore, the data of previous report is used to get the most coherent view of the situation. Table 6 presents the statistics taken from the report.

Table 6. EURES Finland's social media statistics January 2022 – June 2022.

	Number of posts	Reach / impressions of all posts	Comments	Likes	Shares	Total engagement (comments + likes + shares)	Number of followers
Facebook	25	18745	3	122	34	159	3100
Twitter	6	1878	0	20	18	38	295
Instagram	4	1357	8	80	0	88	880

As can be seen from the table, Facebook was the most used and Instagram least used platform. However, even though Instagram was not used much, it did reach people quite well when compared to Twitter or even Facebook, and the posts gathered likes and comments better than the other two platforms. In other words, Instagram seems to be more effective in terms of having engagement.

All the EU countries have EURES services offered in some form, and many other countries do have social media platforms used as well. Most common platform in use seems to be Facebook, and also Instagram and Twitter are quite used as well. Some countries do use other platforms as well, and for example LinkedIn is used commonly.

After a quick search a small comparison between other EURES social media accounts can be made. When using Instagram's search option and with a keyword EURES, the Spanish and Slovakian accounts come first after the EURES parent organization's account. The parent account has 13 thousand followers, and their posts receive likes from 20 to 130 in general. Spanish account has over 5000 followers, and their posts gain usually 20 to 30 likes, sometimes even 70. Slovakian platform is smaller, it has 800 followers, and the posts gain usually from 10 to 15 likes.

On Facebook, the parent organization's page has 323 000 followers, and the posts gain 20 to 60 likes in general. Work in Denmark's EURES page has 11 thousand followers, and the posts gain from 10 to 50 likes. EURES Finland's page has currently 3 200 followers, and

many other countries have similar numbers, for example Slovakian account has 2 100 followers. The number of likes vary from a couple to 20, which is also the case usually in EURES Finland's posts as well and to majority of other countries' accounts.

On Twitter, EURES parent organization has 43.9 thousand followers, and Spain has 19 thousand as well. However, other countries' accounts have a lot less followers there, most commonly only few hundreds or maximum of couple thousands. The numbers of likes in Spanish posts are under ten per post, and the same goes to the parent organization as well.

As stated, LinkedIn is also used by some other EURES countries and EURES parent organization. The parent organization has 81 thousand followers, and EURES Spain 9 000. Their posts receive likes approximately from 5 to 40 each. EURES Ireland and Portugal have 3 000 followers, and their posts usually get a couple of likes. Work in Denmark's EURES page has 13 thousand followers, and their posts get from 20 to 60 likes.

As a conclusion it can be stated that when compared with each other, it seems that Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn have potential, but Twitter not necessarily that much. The number of followers does not correlate with the amount of engagement, and also it is worth noting that before deciding the platform where to be present, one should consider the target group they try to reach. For example, if trying to reach employers, would LinkedIn be better option than Instagram. Also, one should analyze, what kind of content they could create, and which platform would offer the best ways of presenting it.

5 SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR EURES FINLAND

With the tools and knowledge gained from the prior research and literature in Chapter 2., the outcome from the research in Chapter 4. can be handled and utilized in order to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland. This chapter includes the first version of the strategy, and in the future, it can be checked and modified according to the needs of EURES Finland and their goals.

The strategy is created by following Schaffer's (2013, p. 35–51) model presented in Chapter 2.6, and Rumelt's (2012) list of three important elements to take into consideration when making a strategy: 1. diagnosis, 2. guiding policy, and 3. set of coherent actions. The titles of the sub-chapters follow mainly the list Schaffer presented, and in addition to that, as him and Rumelt both state is important, a chapter concentrating on the current state diagnosis and the main goals. The focus will be on the points that need to be improved, and the rest of the chapters will describe how.

As Schaffer (2013 p. 14) suggests, a chapter about resources is added due to the fact that they will have an effect to the abilities to arrange certain functions. The information about the resources is gathered separately from the interview from the management of the organizations handling EURES Finland's communications.

5.1 Diagnosis of the current situation, target groups and goals

The diagnosis is handled in detail in Chapter 4 where the results of the interview, the results from the survey, and the information of EURES Finland's social media analytics are presented. This chapter concludes some of the main points from Chapter 4 and describes the chosen main goals.

Main challenges

The common problem that Sweeney and Craig (2011, p. 1) describe, concerns EURES Finland, too: the current approach to social media is to just quickly be present there, and there is no strategy existing. The posts are informative, but not engaging, and this shows especially in the number of comments and likes in EURES Finland's posts. For example, during the January 2022 – June 2022 period, EURES Finland's 25 Facebook posts gathered only three

comments total, six tweets on Twitter got zero comments, and four Instagram posts got total of 8 comments.

The results from the survey confirm this to certain length, as it got only eight responses, and therefore it can be stated that it failed to attract people. Of course, there might have been other reasons behind the results, too, such as the survey being too long or un motivating, but nevertheless, it did not get the attention of people and the same goes to the whole Facebook-page, too.

Currently EURES Finland's social media platforms are all targeted to all of their target groups: to both Finnish jobseekers willing to find employment from other EU-countries and foreigners willing to find employment from Finland, and also for employers who seek work-force from other countries. It is impossible to create content that serves everyone, and thus it makes the content entity messy and unappealing to all target groups.

Schaffer (2013, p. 24) suggests focusing on only one demographic group and market in the first strategy to keep the strategy easier to maintain, but unfortunately, it will not be possible for EURES Finland. As the interviewees in chapter 4.1 explained, there are EU-regulations that bind EURES Finland to offer their services to all the target groups, and therefore, focusing on only one would be an infraction. However, some solutions for this situation should be made, and a good compromise done within the limits of what is possible.

Maybe the most complicated part of creating a strategy for EURES Finland's social media is the fact how many different facets are affecting to the decisions. EU has their regulations for EURES, and they must be followed. They also create a communications strategy that has certain points to follow, and although it has not included a social media strategy for now, it is possible in the future, nevertheless. Then again, EURES is functioning under Finland's government and their goals and decisions affect to EURES Finland a lot. They create their own regulations, they decide about the resources, and they have the power to make decisions on how the EURES services will be offered and how EURES should be presented in social media, too. As stated in this thesis in multiple occasions, the upcoming Work in Finland -cooperation will also affect on EURES Finland's social media presence and currently it is yet unclear in which all ways, but nevertheless, it should be taken into account in planning as the change will be important part of EURES Finland's future. Sometimes these different facets may have

different opinions on certain aspects, and that may bring complications on how EURES Finland should act in social media, too.

Target groups

EURES Finland wants to reach all of their target groups, which are employers, foreign jobseekers who want to find a job from Finland, and Finnish jobseekers who want to find a job from other EU-countries. Unfortunately, as the survey did not gather enough responses, it is impossible to say, whether the current social media platforms reach correct people. However, it seems that it does not reach any of the target groups well enough, so improvements in that should be made and one goal is to increase engagement. Another is to create more targeted content to all of the target groups, and to solve the problem about how to serve all of the target groups without making the content messy.

To narrow the target demographic group down a little, some sub-target groups inside the target groups can be described. The employers, who are targeted, are the ones that are seeking workforce and capable of hiring people from different countries and who are interested in hiring international talents or who are not sure yet, whether they could or should hire people from outside of Finland. However, EURES Finland wants to encourage employers to seek international employees as well, especially in fields where there are labor shortages in Finland.

Narrowing down the target group of jobseekers is simpler, as there are more targeted qualifications for them. For foreign jobseekers, the main target group would be working-aged people, preferably from other EU-countries as they are the initial target group for EURES, and from the fields Finnish companies have a labor shortage. From Finnish jobseekers the target group would be the ones who are interested in working abroad or have skills needed elsewhere inside the EU but not necessarily in Finland.

The fields currently having the most severe labor shortages are listed on the Occupational Barometer (2022) website that shows the situation in Finland and in certain regions in Finland separately, as there are differences between the regions and their needs. For Finland in general, the most issues seem to be on social and healthcare sector, and health care assistants, nurses, social workers, and early childhood educators are needed at vastly increasing rate. Also, waiters, cooks and cleaners are needed. This information should be considered in social media marketing, and the campaigns for example, could be targeted to healthcare

workers for on the platforms targeted to foreign workforce. Then again, on the platforms that are targeted to Finns who would like to work abroad, these fields could be more limited in marketing, and the sectors with excessive number of workers when compared to available positions could be highlighted. The latest report states that general secretaries are the largest group that has oversupply. Other professions with oversupply are, for example, tailors, journalists, graphic designers and library clerks.

The main target group is, according to the interviewees in chapter 4.1, the jobseekers from another EU-countries who have skills in the fields where Finnish employers need more employees. But as stated, other target groups cannot be forgotten completely in social media marketing.

Goals

Table 7 is created based on the answers of the interviewees in Chapter 4.1. The table lists EURES Finland's main goals for their social media presence, and adds a concrete goal based on that that could be monitored. The ultimate goal is to fill the role EU has given to EURES about enabling mobility of workforce inside the EU, but this table concentrates on the steps that are needed to take in order to fulfill that.

Table 7. Goals and metrics.

Goals described by the interviewees	Concrete goal that can be monitored
To reach more people, be visible, known, to communicate	To gain more followers on each social media platform used. If new ones are created, the target is to gain 2000 followers within a year (LinkedIn, new Facebook or Instagram -pages), and old Facebook-page should have 4000 followers in a year (now 3200) and old Instagram 2000 (now 890).
To be more dynamic and youthful, but still credible and responsible	Adding more engaging content, such as webinars, videos, polls, raffles (if possible), the amount of this kind of content should grow from 0% to 30% of all content within a year, meaning that 3 out of 10 posts should be something else than advertisements of events or shared websites, or general informative posts with text and pictures.
To strengthen the brand image (either EURES or Work in Finland, or Finland-brand in general), be clearer in communication	To grow the total number of contacts by 20% within the first year including all the target groups. This includes the number of registered jobseekers and employers in the European Online Jobdays -events.

The number of reached employers – or the number of open positions they want to be filled – and jobseekers should be approximately in a ratio of one to one. This is important because it allows EURES Finland to fulfill its purpose – to match a jobseeker with an available position. Therefore, in order for the employer clients to be happy with EURES Finland’s services, there should be enough interested jobseekers with suitable skills to be interested in applying to the positions they have open. The balance between this demand and supply of jobseekers and positions should be taken into account at all times when creating content and planning campaigns.

5.2 Resources

Currently there is only one person in charge of the social media. Some other EURES advisers do have access to the Facebook account, and they sometimes post something, but as there is no strategy, the consistency is not steady and the quality of posts do not follow any guidelines, as there are none.

EURES Finland does not have an employee, who is solely in charge of communications nor social media. Even the person in charge of the social media, and the communications group, are all doing the communication related tasks on top of their other tasks. Therefore, the time to create content is limited.

The best solution would be to hire a person, who would be solely in charge of EURES communications and social media with no other tasks, EURES communications manager or coordinator or such. The person would have the responsibility of managing the communications and social media related matters with the help of the communication team. However, there might not be resources for hiring new people, so even though this would be ideal, it may not be realistic. However, if Work in Finland -concept brings the opportunity, this kind of position would be efficient to have. Another option could be to outsource this, and to buy the social media management as a service at least for some of the functions, so the amount of social media related work for the EURES advisers would remain manageable.

Otherwise, the responsibility of social media should be divided. If there are to be multiple different platforms in use, maybe different members of communication group or other EURES advisers could take one of them to administer (one or two platforms per person). Only one person cannot handle all the platforms in an efficient way on top of their regular tasks, so either the number of platforms used should be minimized or the amount of people using them increased.

All the staff using social media should receive orientation to the strategy and use of certain platforms, and all should have so-called back-up people for the vacations, sick leaves, or possible changes in staff.

Money resources are dependent on the government and EU funds that are targeted to different functions. If there would be money to use for communications, it could be used for paid

ad-promotions, influencer marketing, campaigns, or even possible prizes of the raffles, if applicable. However, the amount of money varies, and it cannot be guaranteed, and therefore the planning of the strategy will lean on the possibilities that are free of charge. Some options that require money, are presented, but not counted on.

5.3 Branding

Schaffer (2013, p. 36) lists that this part includes the following attributes: the name, voice, colors, and imagery of the social media. EURES Finland has recently created a graphic identity to themselves, and it includes colors, imagery, and a font named Finlandica. The identity is similar with EURES parent organization's identity, and partly goes hand in hand with it – the colors and imagery resemble each other, and the point is to look similar with the EURES network all around the EU.

Now, as the Work in Finland -concept is coming to picture, it will probably affect to the brand of EURES Finland a lot. The idea is to move EURES Finland under the roof of Work in Finland as a part of their services family. Work in Finland has their own graphic identity, and EURES Finland is expected to follow it once it becomes a part of it. Denmark has similar concept, and they also have their own graphic identity apart of EURES, so it will not probably be a problem, simply a change to consider by EURES Finland in their materials.

For now, the suggestion of this strategy is to EURES Finland to continue using their own graphic identity for now, and once Work in Finland confirms theirs and after the discussions about the final look, and how EURES will be a part of it, has been finalized, EURES Finland will act accordingly, and add the information about the identity and how to use it to their instructions and to the strategy.

The current name of the social media platforms is EURES Suomi, which is EURES Finland in Finnish. The Work in Finland concept may affect this as well, and for example in Denmark their social media pages go by name "Work in Denmark / EURES". For now, the page names could remain the same, only that it would be better to change them in English, especially the ones targeted to foreign jobseekers. The name of the potential page targeted to Finnish jobseekers, who would like to find employment in another EU-countries, could be "EURES Suomi – EU-alueen työnhakupalvelut" which translates to "EURES Finland – the services for jobseekers seeking jobs from the EU".

The tone of voice for EURES Finland would be neutral, official but relaxed, and everything that is told through the platforms will be based on concrete facts, as EURES is a reliable, public facet. The language used will not contain slang or unclear abbreviations, the target is to be clear and informative. The tone will remain polite and encouraging, and the idea is to seem approachable, reliable, and friendly – the use of clear language helps non-native English-speakers to understand the posts and helps EURES Finland to seem down-to-earth - people, which also represents the way Finnish people want to be perceived in general.

5.4 Content, curation, and channels

Both prior research and the research in this thesis supports choosing the following platforms for EURES Finland to use: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. According to the statistics, those three are the popular platforms in Finland and Facebook and Instagram outside of Finland as well. As LinkedIn-profile will be targeted to Finnish employers, it will be suitable platform to use even though it was not on the Statista's top 5 list most popular social media platforms.

For Facebook, EURES Finland should create two accounts: one for foreign jobseekers and one for Finnish jobseekers. If human resources are too limited, joint profile can be used to target both groups of jobseekers, but it will affect to the clarity of the page. However, Facebook will be a good platform to share all kinds of content easily, and the reach is relatively good everywhere. It is also convenient place for sharing upcoming events, as the Facebook's event tool is handy and promoting events through it together with the parent organization is possible.

For Instagram, the focus should be on young foreign jobseekers. The tool allows to create reels, stories and share pictures, and these options should be used more. The content from Instagram could be shared through Facebook, too, every now and then, and this would help to reach the goal of having more variety in the content. Elder people use Instagram less, but younger generations may use it more frequently than Facebook, and the engagement in Instagram has been good even now when compared to the engagement in EURES Finland's Twitter or Facebook. This should be exploited more.

A LinkedIn -profile should be created, and the focus would be on Finnish employers. LinkedIn provides a good platform to reach employers as it is widely used in Finland and especially by professionals.

Schaffer (2013, p. 41) suggests unfollowing all the irrelevant pages, so the feed would remain relevant and provide interesting content that could be shared or used as inspiration for own original content. However, in Facebook this is not necessary anymore, as one can choose to be a follower, but not to receive their posts to the feed. In other words, it is possible modify the feed as one likes without unfollowing. However, to certain length it is still good to go through the sites that are followed, as others may see them and especially if there would be anything controversial or even just political parties, others may get a wrong idea of EURES Finland's ideology, and this endangers the neutrality.

When it comes to content, as listed to the goals, EURES Finland should start producing different types of content and about different topics. The topics can vary between different platforms as they have different target audiences, but nevertheless, some so called content buckets could be made. This means that possible content ideas are divided into categories, and when publishing new content, it would be good to change the bucket where to take the topic of the post from every now and then. This helps to keep the variety in the content, which again helps the feed to remain interesting.

Content buckets for EURES Finland could be the following: 1. Educational posts (for example about Finland) 2. Posts related to events 3. Service information 4. Customer stories and cases 5. Polls or raffles 6. National and global holidays 7. Tips (for example how to create a good CV)

With these different types of content, the page will turn into being more interesting and engaging. The idea would be that every post should be from a different bucket than the previous one, and therefore there would automatically be more variety. Some of the buckets can be used more than the others, for example posts related to events could be shared more often than educational posts, but nevertheless, something from all of the buckets should be shared every now and then.

The quality of the posts should be good, and it is more important than quantity. Of course, content should be shared frequently, but not at the quality's expense. All content should also

be related to EURES Finland's brand (or Work in Finland's) and be relevant to the goals. The difference between a personal account and company's account is that through personal account one can share all kinds of content that they find interesting, but company should keep relevance in their mind. For example, EURES Finland can share a post about Finnish culture, as it is something potentially interesting to their foreign target group thinking about moving to Finland, but then again sharing a post about the most sold fruits in the EU is not relevant for the target audience even though it might be interesting to read. The difference is small, but important to acknowledge.

5.5 Frequency and engagement

Frequency and consistency are important issues when managing a social media platform. However, it is as important to estimate, how many posts would be too much content, as sometimes people unfollow accounts that spam too much content and their feeds are full of only one creator's material.

To plan frequency, monitoring return of investment is necessary. Therefore, for the first strategy, the estimation of frequency is only indeed an estimation, and it should be checked after few months to see if it should be changed. The return of investment should also be estimated every time the strategy is checked, as situations may change and especially social media algorithms can change and for example, require more frequent posting in order to be visible in people's feeds.

At this point, when the social media strategy is launched and taken into practice, content should be created at least weekly, preferably multiple times a week, Instagram stories could be shared even multiple times a day. However, as there are limited resources, one quality post per week for each platform seems to be already rather optimistic goal, especially if the content aspires to be varied, interesting and creative, such as stories or tips or educational content. Therefore, one post per week per platform will be the first target to reach. After that, the ROI will be checked and new suggestions made based on that, and if the resources allow, actions made based on that.

Also, if conversations arise on the comment sections of the posts, EURES Finland should take part to them and answer to the ones that require answering and are not bots, for example. This makes the communication interactive, and that adds to the engagement. Being a

part of conversations show the followers that EURES Finland is present and not only a cold corporate that merely exists online. However, for EURES Finland, private messaging through the platforms' tools is not suggested, as they are not safe enough environments to handle confidential information and therefore, not seen as a possibility for a public facet in Finland to have a conversation with clients. An automatic message can be created that answers to the private message sent by a client and tells them, how to contact EURES Finland safely, for example through the customer service email.

Sharing other accounts' content and information helps to keep the feed alive when there is not enough own, original content to share. This also creates an image of being interactive, as sharing can be perceived taking part to the conversation especially if adding forewords to the post. When sharing content, it is also important to remember that the content needs to be relevant to the EURES Finland's goals and brand image.

5.6 Gathering and listening the feedback

Brand monitoring should be frequent, and at the same time it is good to check, whether people talk about EURES Finland in social media. However, as EURES is multinational organization and the brand name is used by other organizations, both public and private in Finland and all around the EU, it is hard to see if someone uses it without a permission. Only, if someone else claims to be the national coordination office of EURES Finland, it could be noticed.

Indirect feedback can be checked by searching with relevant keywords from different social media platforms to see, if there are any results and if something is found, to check, what they say about EURES Finland. If the comment is something that could be seen as feedback, it should be copied and saved for internal use, of course depending on if it is something worth taking into account. For example, comments about the level of service or ideas how to improve them could be considered, but inappropriate comments or racism towards foreign workforce could be ignored. Constructive feedback about recruiting foreigners could of course be noted, however it is not relevant for EURES Finland as they do not make decisions about the policies, they just implement the laws and regulations.

Direct feedback can also be either constructive and justifiable or inappropriate and related to something EURES Finland does not have power over. Nevertheless, all feedback should be

checked, and the serious ones listened. A good practice could be to write all relevant feedback down to a certain document that can be checked in communication team's meetings if necessary, or at least once the strategy is checked and updated.

If there is an issue, where opinions of followers would be needed, a poll or a survey could be arranged and shared through the social media platforms. However, as learned from the survey in this thesis, the participation rate may be low, and something to encourage people to answer would be needed. A simple raffle between participants could be arranged if it is legally possible. This should be clarified, as for now the situation with the raffles was unclear and the different facets administering EURES Finland were having contradicting thoughts of whether it is allowed or not.

5.7 Campaigns, influencers, and brand ambassadors

As Schaffer (2013, p. 48–49) puts it, the goal in campaigns is to create reactions, and to be social in a way that improves engagement. It does not mean traditional campaigns, as their one-way approach is not engaging enough to fill the social aspect. Instead, the social media campaigns could include quizzes, product giveaways or for example crowdsourced videos, where the followers could take part in creating content. For EURES Finland this could mean, for example, asking the followers to share their EURES stories with photos and videos and text about their experiences when working abroad. This would help EURES Finland to reach the goal set by the interviewees as well: to be more dynamic and increase engagement through varying content.

Schaffer (2013, p. 49) suggests using themes for creating content for campaigns. This could for example be promotional content or content related to certain seasonal events such as New Year's Eve or Midsummer's festival in Finland. The idea behind it is to break the monotony in the content, and special events are one good opportunity to do so. For example, around Midsummer's festival, EURES Finland could share information about the traditions during that period of time, share quizzes and then share a video of immigrants, who have moved to Finland to work and who share their experiences about the festival and about working in Finland. If a New Year's campaign would be launched, it could be something related to a theme "New Year, New job in Finland".

Cooperation with other EURES countries could also be something to consider. For the Facebook page targeted to Finnish jobseekers, there could be theme weeks about other EU countries and they could even take over the channel for a week or so, to introduce themselves, their services, their country, and the available opportunities there.

Using influencers and brand ambassadors could also be a possibility especially if there would be extra resources for social media marketing. For example, social media influencers, who have moved from other countries to Finland, could be asked to cooperate with EURES Finland and produce promoting videos they could share on their platforms and that EURES Finland could share on theirs, too. This could be for example sketches about living in Finland or seeking a job from Finland, and how EURES could help.

Another opportunity is employers inside the organization – maybe there are already people who create content in social media and their audience is matching with the target audience of EURES. If this kind of opportunity would arise, EURES Finland could utilize it. For now, there is no known employees with such platforms, but other official accounts from the public sector's organizations, such as unemployment and economic development offices' accounts in different regions of Finland could also be cooperated with.

5.8 Crisis and risk management

The different EURES organizations have their own crisis communication strategies, which usually include aspects from natural disasters to reputational damage. The crisis communication instructions and strategies base on the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment's instructions (internal data source, 31 March 2023), and therefore, it is used in this chapter, too.

The main instruction for the employees is the following: "each employee of the ELY Centre has the responsibility to react to any special situations, and to inform their supervisor or the person responsible for the said sector. If people from the management are not available, communications staff should be contacted: the communications manager or publicist".

This includes the social media aspect, too. If a crisis would arise, management should be informed as soon as possible so they can decide on the actions that will be taken. Internal communication also takes an important part of the process, as the management should then

immediately inform all employees about how to react, and to whom the possible queries about the situation can be directed to. It is important to understand that the employees should not try to solve the issue by themselves, but let the management know and make the decision on how the further risks can be minimized.

The instructions state that communication in a special situation requires following things: 1. foresight, the ability to identify signs and then the needs required by the said special situation 2. enhanced internal and/or external communication 3. initiative (by the management), speed and reliability 4. factuality, adherence to the facts 5. correcting false information and refuting rumors, and 6. news reporting/publicity monitoring. This concerns especially the managers, who should be the ones to take the steps towards action and find the best ways to handle the situation. The goal is to avoid further risks, such as damage to reputation or security risks.

Preventative actions should also be a part of any organizations' social media strategies. For EURES Finland employees, social media guidelines are handled in Chapter 5.10. Also, as interviewees brought up, sometimes it is good to monitor whether a certain platform's culture is changing, and therefore, being part of it and continuing to use it could be seen as a statement itself, which can lead to a crisis. It is important to stay mindful of surroundings as well as one's own content.

Schaffer (2013, p. 14, 131) mentions that a social media strategy including such guidelines can also have a role as an agreement on how social media will be used in company's marketing and how employees can act there. The agreement would be a binding contract, which helps to manage risks regarding employees' actions online. This ensures that the changes in staff, for example, do not risk company's performance in social media nor change the ability to achieve the goals in there.

5.9 Staffing roles, responsibilities, and social media culture inside the organization

The management of EURES Finland, which means the national coordination office in ministry of economic affairs and employment, should be the facet to decide, how the roles and responsibilities are arranged, especially after the Work in Finland concept will take place. However, this chapter includes a suggestion on how to arrange the roles and responsibilities based on the current situation.

The communications team should be in charge of the strategy at first, and they should monitor and update it accordingly. If possible, a separate social media team could be created to take the task to themselves, and they could focus solely on social media related tasks whereas communication's team could focus on other communication related tasks. At least one person should be a part of both groups, so the communication between the groups would be smooth. This person could either be the communication manager, or the person who currently handles the social media the most inside the communications group.

The social media group would be in charge of managing social media strategy, operations related to it, and the execution of the tasks. They could delegate the tasks to other employees if needed. The team should have at least as many members as there are social media platforms, and one person should be in charge of one platform, and at the same time be a back-up for one other platform. In EURES Finland's case this would mean to include four members to the social media team.

Even though the social media team would be in charge of the social media of EURES Finland, all employees, especially EURES advisers, should be encouraged to share their ideas for content or even create content, if they have suitable skills. Social media team could arrange once or twice a year a social media brainstorming -event for the colleagues, where they could discuss about social media and share ideas.

However, for example current Facebook-page has numerous people who have access to the account and can publish there. All people not belonging to the social media team should be removed in order to ensure that all employees who share content are aware of the social media guidelines and can use the correct brand imagery in the posts. If someone else has something to share on social media, they could send their idea to the social media team, who will then publish the post if it fulfills the requirements.

5.10 Social media guidelines for the employees

The social media guidelines concern not only the people posting through EURES Finland's platforms, but also everyone who uses social media privately and can be recognized as EURES employees.

The most important guidelines are the general ones: to act with good manners and to not to share any classified information. If someone outside of EURES is talking about the organization, its services, or even a topic related to it in a bad manner, employees should not take part to the discussion without manager's permission. This is to ensure that the possible response to the issue will be following the tone of voice of EURES Finland and will be given through official ways. If an employee sees such discussions online, they should report it forward to their managers and to EURES social media team, who will again report it further if needed.

No political, religious, nor other similar opinions should be shared through EURES Finland's platforms. EURES Finland serves everyone, and therefore they should remain neutral and focus on delivering information related to their core tasks. When presenting Finnish culture, religious traditions can be presented, but not in a way that would be a declaration.

The same goes for employer's private accounts too, if they show in their profile that they are working for EURES. However, if they would still like to share their own opinions, a statement where they explain that their posts and opinions are their own and not representing the employer, should be added to the profile. Nevertheless, they should still act with good manners and remember that they will represent their employer online as well.

The resources used in EURES Finland's social media should always be trustworthy and official, and based on facts. If something can be categorized as a rumor, it should not be shared. If already posted content will turn out to include false information, the facts should be corrected as soon as possible with a clear statement that the previous given information was false.

However, it is important to note that mistakes happen, and it is not the end of the world. Especially when everyone tries their best, and do not do any bad deeds on purpose, the issues can be resolved. Therefore, no one should be afraid of creating content and being active on social media, it will help EURES Finland more than being inactive.

5.11 A social media calendar and a workflow

Schaffer (2013, p. 15) reminds that for social media it is dangerous to stick to the one-time-made standards and strategies. Changes will happen, both internal and external, and therefore updating the strategy is essential in order to keep the social media platforms relevant.

Schaffer (2013, p. 15–16) presented the Deming cycle for social media strategy planning, and it can be followed in this strategy as well. The four phases of the cycle are plan, do, check or study, and act. Creating the strategy falls under the phase “plan”, and the next step, “do”, will take place once this plan is implemented in practice. After that, the plan and the results from implementing it (which can happen through data from analytics and from feedback, for example) and finally, the organization should act upon the findings. This includes updating the strategy again, and the cycle starts from the beginning.

The interviewees agreed that the strategy should be updated at least once a year. Therefore, the length of the cycle would be one year, too. However, throughout the year, monitoring should be done, and information gathered about the strategy’s success and whether the return of investment is worth it – does the taken actions help EURES Finland to reach their goals, and to meet the decided metrics.

The social media analytics are checked monthly and reported to European Labour Authority every 6 months. The number of contacts is also reported every 6 months, so therefore, all of the metrics mentioned to measure success are already followed and can be used to monitor the success of the strategy as well. In addition to that, possible feedback should also be gathered to one place, so they could be taken into account when updating the strategy.

In summarization, the information and data should be gathered monthly, and reports checked twice a year. Then, if nothing urgent arises before that once a year the whole strategy checked and updated accordingly to the received information and possible feedback. However, sometimes some issues require faster reactions and cannot wait until the one-year-checkup, so if these kinds of issues arise, the strategy can of course be updated in between the cycle phases.

To plan the weekly and monthly workflow, a concrete calendar should be updated. During updating the strategy once a year, the social media team should plan the goals and a workflow

for the year, and estimate what kind of major events are going to take place in which yearly quarters and what kind of things to concentrate on during those times. Then, every month the next month's workflow and calendar should be prepared, and the posts should be planned. Table 8. is an example of said calendar, with different platforms and descriptions of different content to publish on different weeks. The content is gathered from different content buckets, and the goals are kept in mind while planning the functions.

Table 8. Example workflow calendar for one month.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Facebook for foreign jobseekers	Monday: a customer story video Friday: Raffle, "like and comment, what things in Finland you find the most intriguing"	Wednesday: Share a picture made from the answers of the raffle, together with an announcement of the next online recruitment event, "save the date".	Wednesday: Post about mid-summer festivities in Finland, a picture and short text about the festival with wishes for a happy mid-summer's festival.	Wednesday: Service information post about Work in Finland -entity
Facebook for Finns going abroad	Cooperation month with EURES Spain, Tuesday: sharing a blogpost about typical job application processes in Spain and what to consider in applications	Cooperation month with EURES Spain, Tuesday: Ad about upcoming webinar with EURES Spain, "send your questions for them in advance" Thursday: a service information post: leaving for a 3 month job seeking period	Cooperation month with EURES Spain, Tuesday: Finns in Spain share their traditions of celebrating mid-summer in Spain, and how to mix Finnish and Spanish traditions together	Cooperation with EURES Spain, Tuesday: Webinar with EURES Spain telling about the opportunities in Spain and answering the questions sent in advance Thursday: ad for the next upcoming Spanish European online recruitment event
Instagram	Monday: a customer story reel, person X talks about her experiences after working in Finland for 6 months	Monday: educational post about Finland, "work-life balance in a Finnish workplace"	Wednesday: Post about mid-summer festivities in Finland, a picture and short text about the festival with wishes for a happy mid-summer's festival	Wednesday: Service information post about Work in Finland -entity
LinkedIn / employers	Wednesday: a service information post: European Online Jobdays -events explained	Tuesday: a customer story reel, company X tells their experiences of hiring people through EURES	Thursday: Wishes for a happy mid-summer's festival	Thursday: a service information post about Work in Finland -entity

In reality, the calendar could be more detailed with the names of the people responsible of the posting and creating content especially if there is more than one person in charge. Besides Excel, Microsoft Planner could be a good tool for creating the calendar and the workflow, as there all of the group members could follow the tasks and their progress, mark people responsible for different tasks and mark the tasks done. Adding tasks and updating the workflow would be possible that way, too, and the tool helps to make the workflow dynamic yet easy to follow.

6 REFLECTION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the thesis project was to create a social media strategy for EURES Finland. The main research question was “what are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?”, and this chapter will once again investigate the question and summarize the answers given to it in this thesis.

As the thesis followed constructive research approach, another aim, besides solving the practical challenge of not having a social media strategy, was to produce academic theoretical contribution and therefore, to clarify, how the term “social media” is commonly understood by organizations and common people. This contribution will also be concluded in this final chapter.

Overall, this chapter analyzes, how well the goals of the thesis were achieved, and what can be deduced from both the literary and the research done for this thesis in general, and finally, some remarks are given for future research and for other organizations, who are planning on creating a social media strategy.

6.1 Concluding the research findings

To conclude the research findings, the research question will be answered and the main points from the research that answer to the main question and the sub-questions, will be summarized.

The two sub-questions were: 1. What goals and success measures do the key persons on the field of EURES Finland’s communication and marketing find important? and 2. what is the current state of the EURES Finland’s social media?

Goals and success measures

The key persons of EURES Finland’s communication and marketing were interviewed, and their visions about the goals and success factors heard. The overall main points of the interview were gathered to a list, and the goals and suitable metrics to monitor them were gathered in a table 7. The metrics mentioned are based on the data EURES Finland already gathers and therefore surely have access to, and that are also mentioned by Evans (2010,

Chapter 3): the number of followers, likes, and shares, and number of posts that are published – and as nowadays is possible, engagement, reach, and impressions, too. In addition to Evans' list, Schaffer's (2013, p, 57) suggestion about content buckets will be implemented and then counted, how many out-of-ordinary -posts will be published. Also, the number of contacts will be followed as well, as the new social media strategy should affect to it and it also is something that EURES Finland already follows, and therefore the data is accessible.

Table 7 in Chapter 5.1 concludes the chosen goals and success measure metrics in a compact package. In the table, the main goals described by the interviewees were listed and transformed into concrete, monitorable goals. Three goal entities were created:

1. To reach more people, to be more visible and known, to communicate → To gain more followers, new platforms 2000 within a year and existing grow their number of followers to 4000 within a year
2. To be more dynamic and youthful, yet credible and responsible → Increasing the amount of engaging content from 0% to 30% of total content within a year
3. To strengthen the brand image, be clearer in communication → To grow the number of contacts by 20% within the first year including all the target groups

Interviewees also suggested creating an observation analysis about the numbers and their changes in addition to the normal reports, which would allow EURES Finland to follow the success of their acts on social media. This data analysis will be used as an attachment to the social media strategy in the future.

Current state of EURES Finland's social media

The current state of EURES Finland's social media was analyzed through all three research entities: the interview, the survey from the followers, and finally, the data gathered from the previous reports and social media analytic tools.

The interviewees stated that while the current state of the social media is not too bad, there is still numerous aspects to improve. Four main issues were listed based on the interview as a whole: 1. The content should be improved to be more interesting and engaging through storytelling and possible polls and raffles, 2. EURES Finland should keep all the three target

groups (employers, foreign jobseekers who want to find a job from Finland, Finnish jobseekers who want to find a job from other EU-countries) in mind when creating the strategy, it is not possible to focus to only one, as the EU regulations are binding for EURES Finland in that, 3. Work in Finland -entity will affect to the EURES Finland's social media in the future, and therefore, it should be kept in mind when creating the strategy, and 4. a LinkedIn-profile should be created, and Twitter-account possibly deleted as it seems to not be worth the investment.

The participation rate of the survey was too low to be used as a credible source of information and they do not give throughout presentation of the social media followers nor describe their views well. However, the low participation rate can be viewed as a result itself in the sense that it at least to a certain length confirms that EURES Finland's platforms do not reach wide audiences and they fail to engage people. The data from the analytics confirm this, as the number of likes, shares, and comments in all EURES Finland's platforms stay low. Also, when compared the used platforms with each other, it seems that Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn still have potential, but Twitter does not.

Unfortunately, as the survey did not gather enough responses, it was impossible to gather data from the current followers. Therefore, it is hard to say, who EURES Finland is currently reaching, besides the fact that nevertheless, the engagement is low and therefore, the overall reach should be improved.

The main goals and how they could be achieved

When it comes to the actual research question, "what are the goals that EURES Finland would like to achieve through its social media presence, and how they could be achieved?", the answer can be found from Table 7 and from the created strategy in Chapter 5. To summarize the goals, at the core of them is the aim of reaching the correct audience better, to strengthen the brand, to create better and more engaging content, and finally, to be closer to the target audiences.

To the question of how these goals could be achieved, Chapter 5 offers all kinds of solutions in a form of a strategy based on Schaffer's (2013, p. 35–51) model for a good social media strategy. The most important ones are about the platforms, about the content and curation,

and about the responsibilities as they present the most straightforward solutions to the research question.

EURES Finland should focus on one target group per platform. On Facebook, they should create one additional account in addition to the existing one, and their target groups would be jobseekers – one account for foreign jobseekers seeking jobs from Finland and another account for Finns seeking jobs from the EU. Secondly, they should focus their Instagram to reach young, foreign jobseekers, who want to come to Finland – the most important target group for EURES Finland at the moment. And finally, a LinkedIn profile should be created to reach employers better, and Twitter account deleted as ineffective tool.

The content should be more versatile, and for that, following content buckets are suggested: 1. Educational posts (for example about Finland) 2. Posts related to events 3. Service information 4. Customer stories and cases 5. Polls or raffles 6. National and global holidays 7. Tips (for example how to create a good CV). When publishing content from all the buckets variously, the content will become more interesting and if engaging posts are included, it will help EURES Finland to seem more approachable as well.

Finally, it is suggested to create a social media team in addition to the already existing communications team, where the responsibilities of social media publishing could be shared and the strategy maintained, monitored, and updated.

6.2 Academic theoretical contribution

Now that the research has been conducted, the prior research and the research findings of this thesis' research can be compared and analyzed to see, what kind of new aspects can be conducted, and what contribution the findings brought in addition to the prior theory. As stated in the beginning of the thesis, the aim – besides creating the strategy for EURES Finland – was to clarify the term “social media” through indicating, how the term is commonly understood by both ordinary people and organizations.

The prior research claims that the term “social media” can be understood in many ways. While the dictionaries and researchers tend to put wider, deeper meanings to the term, in practice, especially when the ordinary people's perception matter's, the meaning is something else, something simpler, something more convenient in use in one's everyday life. The

same goes for organizations – the term “social media” to them is relevant only in the sense where they can utilize it, and therefore, it is commonly understood through the practical point of view.

Therefore, even though it is true that the term social media can be interpreted in different ways, the practice, including the research in this thesis, shows that for common people the description of the term is rather simple and to certain length, united. People do not use time and energy to analyze the term and its meaning, and their idea of it has formed through their experiences.

Indeed, for common people the core purpose of social media is communicating, networking and sometimes influencing, and the tools that offer possibilities for doing those things are counted as a part of social media. The practice confirms Barlow’s and Thomas’ (2011, p. 4) statement that common people use social media simply in the ways they benefit from it. They do not need to understand the complexity of the term “social media”, they will basically just need to know the advantages or disadvantages about the platforms, how they are used and if the social aspect is present, they will view them as social media.

The same goes for companies, too, as the companies are consisting of common people, and the idea of social media they have go hand in hand with the idea their employees and management have.

While interviewing EURES employees and asking questions about social media, they immediately started talking about Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn... The list seems to include only the platforms that allow people to share content, and to be a part of communities, and to offer possibilities to meet and connect with people in the same way as in real life, but just online. In other words, the list included platforms that are created for social purposes, and excluded ones that may have opportunities for being social, but without it being the main purpose.

Social media for common people and for organizations, too, are basically all platforms that allow to feel connected and maintain the connections, nothing more complicated. Organizations may have slightly different approach on what kind of connections, as they usually pursue clients, but nevertheless, it still is simply seeking connections.

Therefore, it could be stated that in the core level of social media, there still is the humane need of being part of something and feeling connected, and the platforms that offers tools for this are the social media in the way common people and organizations understand it.

Another point that stood out was how almost all of the theory described creating a social media strategy for a private organization, and as EURES Finland is a public organization, some of the instructions for creating a social media strategy could not be followed straight. The biggest issue was that for public organizations, there often are all kinds of regulations that may affect to the organization's ability to do certain tasks or act in general. For example, in EURES Finland's case, EU regulations concerning EURES and the free mobility of workers inside the EU, and also, Finnish law and regulations concerning the facets where EURES is located under, have effect on the possibilities on what can be done in social media et cetera. This can mean, for example, the use of resources, possibilities to use certain features online, or mandatory use of certain visuals.

Therefore, it can be stated that this thesis provides academic theoretical contribution also in the sense that it gives an additional view of public organization's perspective to the matter of creating a social media strategy. Due to that, it can be suggested to add a chapter about affecting regulations to social media strategies of public organizations.

6.3 Reflections and future research

Overall, the goals of the thesis were achieved well. The research questions together with the sub-questions were all answered, and a social media strategy was created based on both prior and new research. The created strategy will allow EURES Finland to take the next step in improving their social media presence, and now they will have a concrete tool for continuing to monitor and improve their actions online. Therefore, the thesis met its main expectations.

The prior research clarified the concept of social media by going through the history of it and how the term is understood. Companies must understand the nature of the social media before taking part in it – as Walsh (2022) state, companies should not think that just being present in Facebook is enough, it requires more. It is important to understand, how social media evolves continuously, and that nowadays the traditional approach may not be enough to gain attention of the wide audiences. Schaffer (2013 p. 48) concludes that the presence in social

media should not be passive push-marketing, but more like creating communities in an interactive way.

The prior research also proved the importance of a strategy, and Schaffer (2013 p. 14) summarizes the purpose of it as a road map towards reaching the goals a company has and wants to achieve through their social media – or even in general. In order to create and maintain a functioning social media strategy, Schaffer (2013, p. 35–51) presented a throughout framework, which was also used as a backbone for EURES Finland's social media strategy.

The interview with the EURES Finland's relevant employees were successful, and their ideas were usable in the strategy and gave insight of what should be done and in which ways. However, the survey for the followers was unsuccessful, as the participation rate was very low, and the results could not be utilized as planned. In the future, when the taken actions on social media have increased the reach of EURES Finland's posts and the engagement, a new, similar survey could be conducted and before updating the strategy again. To ensure higher participation rate, the participants could get something in return of answering the survey, for example a ticket to a raffle, if it would be possible. Getting the information about the followers, who they are and how they perceive the content would be fruitful in planning the strategy again. This is something other companies planning on creating social media strategies should consider.

The data from social media analytics showed that the engagement and the reach of EURES Finland's all current platforms are low, and that they should be improved. This supported the chosen goals, as one of them was to reach more people, and the data showed that it indeed would be an important aspect in need of improvement.

If some other companies would like to create their own social media strategies, Schaffer's (2013, p. 35–51) model would be a convenient tool for it, and as it worked well for EURES Finland, it can be recommended for others as well. However, if the organization is a public facet like EURES Finland, a separate chapter concerning possible affecting regulations should be included into the strategy. This helps to visualize the actual possibilities that can be implemented in practice, and also to help the organization to take these regulations in consideration when acting online. This again helps to prevent breaking the rules accidentally, for example.

However, as social media is constantly evolving, one should never follow the instructions blindly, but add and remove aspects according to the modern situation. Also, the data presented in this thesis concerning the biggest platforms should be checked before making decisions, as the situation may change within a short period of time. Otherwise, this thesis could offer a guide in creating a social media strategy for other companies as well, especially on other public organizations located in Finland.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview questions for colleagues and management

Appendix 2. Survey questions for the followers of the current social media

Appendix 1. Interview questions for colleagues and management

1. In your opinion, what is the main purpose of the social media for EURES Finland?
2. What are the main goals that EURES Finland wants to achieve through their social media presence?
3. What measurements could be used in your opinion to evaluate success of EURES Finland's social media?
4. Who do you think would be the most important target audience to reach through the social media platforms?
5. When you think of the EURES Finland's social media, what aspects of it you think are the most important ones in need of improvement?
6. What aspects do you think should be taken into consideration when creating the strategy?
7. Would you like to add anything else? Feedback about the current state of social media, feedback about this interview?

Appendix 2. Survey questions for the followers of the current social media

Survey for the followers of EURES Finland's social media

Mandatory questions are marked with a star (*)

1. Your gender *

- Male
 Female
 Other / Don't want to tell

2. Your age *

- Under 18
 18 - 24
 25 - 39
 40 - 59
 60+

3. Your nationality *

- Finland
 EU-citizen from other EU-country than Finland
 Other

4. Your current location *

- Finland
 Other EU-country
 Other

5. Please, tell us briefly about your educational background, profession and interests *

6. I am following EURES Suomi -Facebook page because...

(Choose the options that describe you the most) You can choose multiple options. *

- I am interested in finding a job from Finland
- I am interested in finding a job from another EU-country
- I want to find employees from Finland
- I want to find employees from other EU-countries
- This page is useful to me in my work (e.g. I am an EURES-adviser myself or similar)
- Other reasons, please specify

7. Which language(s) would you prefer to see our content in? You can choose multiple options. *

- Finland
- Swedish
- English

8. What kind of content you like to see on EURES Finland's social media? Rate from 1 to 5 (1 = not interested at all, 5 = very interested) *

	1	2	3	4	5
Event information (Finland works -event, other EURES event ads)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information/trivia about Finland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information about EURES Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information about open positions in other EU-countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information/trivia about other EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Would you like to add anything else? What other kind of content you would like to see on EURES Finland's social media? Optional question.

10. Rate the following aspects
(1 not true at all - 5 definitely true) *

	1	2	3	4	5
Content of the page is interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visual image of the page is good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important information is visible and easily found	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The page is clear and the content is understandable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. From 1 to 5, how important these platforms are for you? 1 = not important, 5 = very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Linkedin *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiktok *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. When looking for information about EURES and its services, how important these sources are to you on a scale 1 - 5? (1 = not important, 5 = very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Social media *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government websites *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EURES Portal *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Feel free to leave feedback concerning our social media, our services or this survey here:
