



TikTok as a Marketing Tool for Prisma Kaleva

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ABSTRACT

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Social media is constantly evolving. This puts pressure on companies marketing efforts as they constantly have to adapt their marketing efforts to new trends and social media platforms. TikTok has risen in popularity extremely fast and has become one of the most popular platforms. This means that it has become a powerful marketing tool for businesses. The purpose of this thesis was to create TikTok marketing recommendations for the hypermarket store Prisma Kaleva. The objective was to find ways for them to utilize the platform effectively to gain awareness of the brand and their values.

To create these recommendations extensive theoretical research was done. A literature review was conducted to provide the research theoretical framework on why the platform should be utilized in the commissioner's social media marketing efforts. In addition to this a benchmark research was conducted. Three competitor TikTok accounts were analysed to provide practical examples of how to implement the information gathered in the theoretical framework. Content analysis was also done on the commissioner's current TikTok account to gather information on what has been successful and what is the starting point for the commissioner when implementing these recommendations into their practices.

The results of this research included practical recommendations on how Prisma Kaleva can utilize TikTok most effectively for their specific needs. By implementing these recommendations into their practices the hypermarket store will be able to gain awareness on the store and express what makes their store unique in the field. These recommendations have been gathered to support the commissioner when creating a TikTok marketing strategy in the future.

Key words: tiktok, social media, organic marketing, hypermarket

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1 Introduction

1.1 Thesis Topic

This thesis is a commissioned by a supermarket in the city of Tampere. In this thesis the aim is to create TikTok marketing recommendations for Prisma Kaleva. So that they can utilize the platform to gain awareness. The supermarket has a TikTok account, but no knowledge about the potential of the platform, or how to use it to its full potential. With TikTok constantly growing in popularity, now is the time for businesses to find their place on the platform before it gets too saturated. Making yourself known in the community is essential for businesses these days and especially for such a big supermarket in the region.

1.2 Thesis Objective, Purpose and Research Questions

As the commissioner has very little knowledge about the platform TikTok and what opportunities it could bring, this thesis will provide them with guidance and information on how to optimize their TikTok marketing to its full capacity. The purpose of this research in the end is to show and help the commissioner understand in-depth what the platform has to offer and what they could achieve through this channel. In addition, to explain the benefits of putting time and effort into this marketing channel, and to support them in the future in developing a TikTok marketing strategy.

As this supermarket has already a large presence on social media it makes sense for them to expand to TikTok too. Currently their Instagram and Facebook account reach a older target group, but now they would have a great opportunity to also attract their younger customers as they are a large customer segment for them too. The aim in this thesis is to understand their place on the platform and their potential, and how they can succeed in creating a successful TikTok account. Understanding in-depth what content and trends attracts their potential customers. In addition, finding that perfect mix of entertainment and advertisement. The commissioner wishes to communicate their humble and down to earth message to their customers through their marketing strategies so this will be considered in the end result.

1.3 Key concepts

As this area of marketing is still very new to most people and some concepts related to the topic can be foreign to some readers. Here are some key concepts defined.

TikTok – an short-form video-sharing application that is one of the most-used and fastest-growing platforms in the world (Dellatto, 2021).

Viral trends – The term “viral” means to become popular in a small space of time (Cambridge, n.d.). The term “trend” means for a subject, word, or name to be mentioned often on a social media platform (Cambridge, n.d.). Viral trends are subjects, words, or names that become popular very quickly specifically on social media platforms.

TikTok algorithm – TikTok algorithm is a system within the application which determines what videos show up on your personalized “For You” page (Newberry, 2023).

Call-to-action – In marketing call-to-action is content that is aimed to direct the viewer to do a specific act, which typically is to purchase a service or product (Oxford, n.d.).

Captions – A short piece of text underneath a post on social media that describes the post, or explains what is shown (Cambridge, n.d.).

Organic marketing – Organic marketing is a marketing strategy with the purpose of increasing brand awareness through unpaid methods. For example, unpaid social media posts, guest posts, and blog posts. (Riserbato, 2021)

Voiceover – A voiceover done by a person who is not shown in the video. It is usually a description of what is happening in the video (Cambridge, n.d.).

Brand tone of voice – The tone of voice of your brand communicates your personality to the public. The tone of voice should reflect your values as a company and be unique to your brand. (Forsey, 2022)

1.4 Working Methods and Data

In order to make a successful TikTok marketing recommendations for the commissioner, in-depth research will have to be done. To gather the necessary data needed to prove the importance of investing time and recourses into TikTok as a marketing channel.

The methodology used to gather data in this research will be, a benchmarking analysis. As the author is managing the TikTok account at the moment, most data needed regarding the outcomes of the project will be easily accessible. Theory and data will be collected also through websites, although theory on this topic is fairly limited as it is a new concept, there is a lot of data on TikTok's own webpages. In addition to this theory related to marketing and digital marketing will be used as data. The TikTok account itself serves this research with a lot of data, and competitors accounts on the platform. Benchmarking is the main research method in this thesis as this will show theory in practice and be a great example of the potential in TikTok marketing.

2 TikTok

TikTok is a social media platform that was launched in 2016 by the Chinese company ByteDance. Originally the platform operated under that name of A.me and later on Douyin, but once ByteDance began to grow outside of China in 2017, they changed the name to TikTok (West, 2022). In the year of 2023, TikTok is now one of the biggest short-form mobile video platforms (TikTok, 2023). With over 2 billion downloads in the year 2022. The platform is constantly growing and evolving as it is the hugely popular in the Gen Z community which has a massive influence on culinary trends (McLachlan, 2022).

Although TikTok being a relatively new platform, it has grown to be as just as big as the older familiar social media platforms. TikTok is one of the most fastest growing platforms in the world. TikTok's peak of downloads was in the first quarter of 2020, with over 313.5 million downloads worldwide. (Ceci, 2023) COVID-19 became a pandemic in March 2020. This had major positive effects on the platform as multiple countries around the world implemented quarantines to stop the virus from spreading. (Prevention, 2023) This meant people had more time to spare.

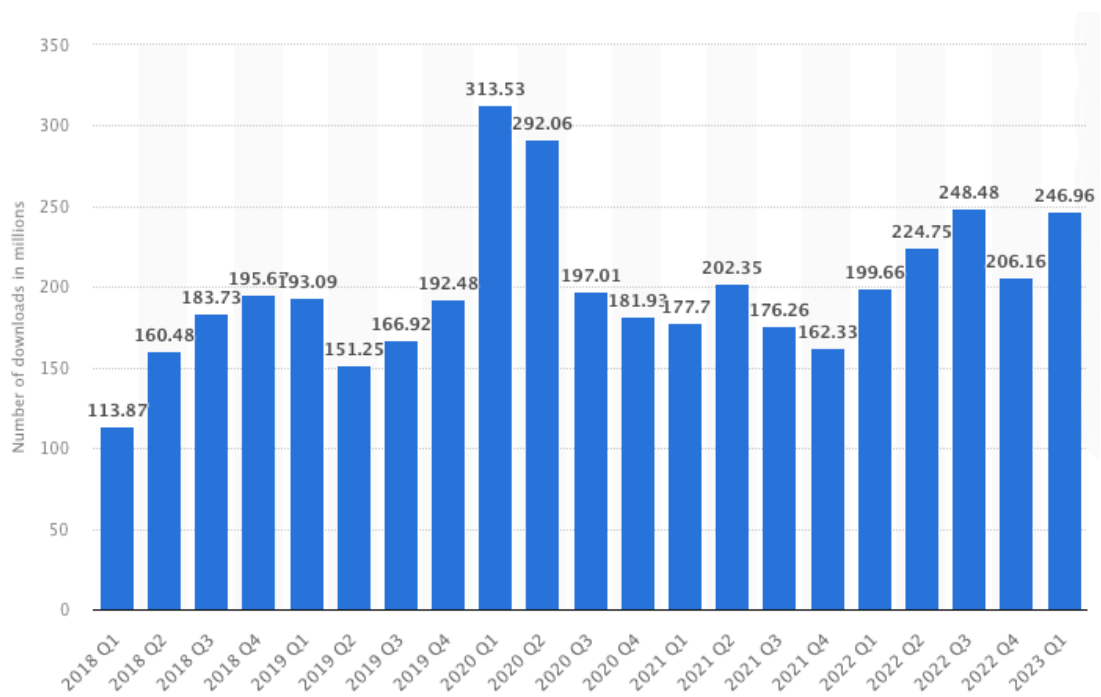


Figure 1: Number of TikTok Downloads from 1st Quarter 2018 to 1st Quarter 2023 (Ceci, 2023)

According to Statista TikTok was the most downloaded entertainment and video streaming application worldwide in 2022, with 672 million downloads. This is 507 million more downloads than the second most downloaded entertainment and video streaming application Netflix. (Ceci, 2023)

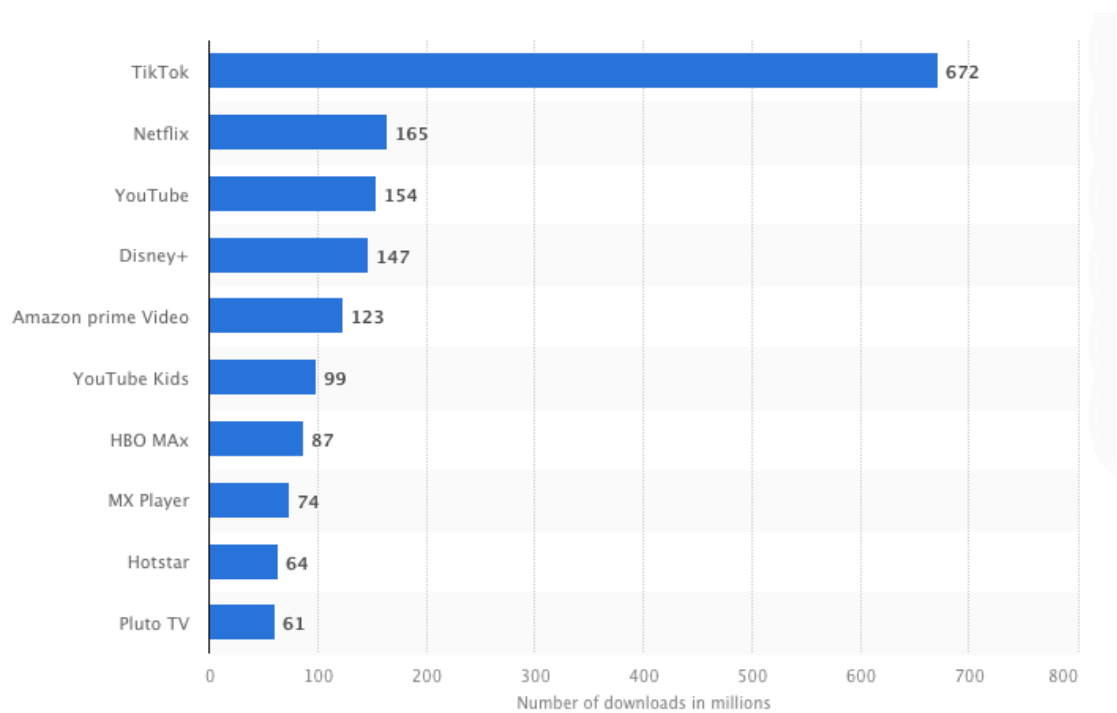


Figure 2: Leading Entertainment and Video Streaming Apps Worldwide in 2022, By Downloads (in millions) (Ceci, 2023)

2.1 TikTok Users

Although TikTok is considered a social media platform used most by teenagers, 24% of its 1 billion active users are women between the age of 18 to 24 years old. Male users between the age of 18 to 24 years old make up 18% of the audience. 25 to 35 year old users make up 31% of the audience of TikTok users. (McLachlan, 2023)

TikTok is not only used for entertainment, users use the platform as an education, news, research and shopping channel. TikTok can also bring communities together, as it is a huge communication tool. Entertaining content is what 78% of TikTok users use TikTok for. Brands play a big role in the TikTok community and trends, 31.1% of users use the platform to find more information on a brand or to follow their accounts. Information and news spreads across TikTok extremely fast and this is why 32.4% of TikTok users use the platform as a news tool to find the most current events. (McLachlan, 2023)

TikTok reaches 1,2 million users in Finland with the help of paid advertising. In Finland just under half of the users are between the age of 18-24 years old (Figure 3). At the moment TikTok users in Finland are younger than other platform users such as Instagram and Facebook, but with TikTok content evolving this could change. 22% of TikTok users in Finland are 25-34 years old and 16% 13-17 years old (Figure 3). (Yliluoma, 2021)



Figure 3: TikTok users in Finland, by age in November 2021 (Louhos Digital Oy 2021)

2.2 TikTok Interface

TikTok's interface layout is similar to other social media applications. The bottom bar displays all of the different pages available. On TikTok these are, the **Home Page**, **Now**, **Inbox**, **Profile** and the symbol in the middle of the bar is the page where users can create and publish their own content (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Screenshot of TikTok Home Page (TikTok 2023)

Within the Home page there are multiple different sections where users can watch content. **For You** is the landing page that is shown when users tap the Home page icon (Figure 4). This section shows users content through TikTok algorithm which is controlled by the users interactions on the application. This interaction can be the user liking, sharing, commenting and watching videos for a certain duration of time.

The **Following** section consists of content published by the accounts that the user follows (Figure 4).

Discover section is a search bar for users to search for specific content that they wish to watch. Users can search for content through key words, hashtags or searching for a specific account. Companies can utilize the discover section when planning content. Through the discover section they can find inspiration, trending music and content (Figure 4).

Live is a section in the Home page that has live streaming content from users and creators. Users watching the live stream can send gifts to the user streaming,

and these gifts are bought with real money. To start streaming live on TikTok, and sending and receiving gifts, you must be at least 18 years old. (TikTok, n.d.)

TikTok interface also includes the **Now** page, which includes two main sections, **Friends** and **Now**. Friends section is a place to connect with your contacts on your phone, and see their activity on the application. Now is a new addition to the TikTok application. This section is where users capture a certain moment into a 10 second video using their front and back camera. Users are sent a daily prompt to capture these moments. (TikTok, n.d.)

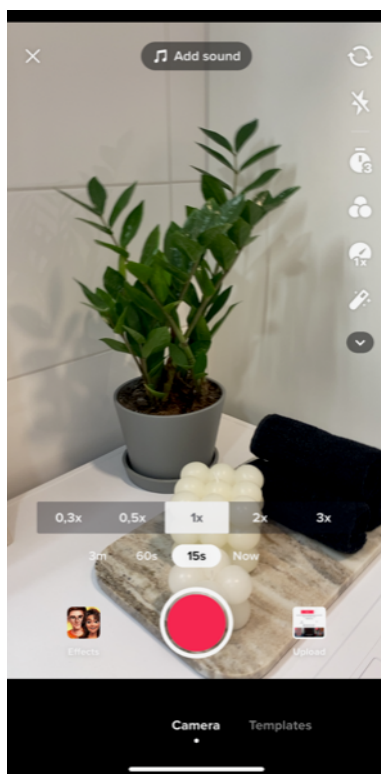


Figure 5: Screenshot of content creating page on TikTok (TikTok 2023)

In the middle of the bar is the **+** symbol which is the content creation page for users. This is the page where users can create TikTok content. They can record, upload, edit and post content onto the platform (Figure 5).

Inbox is where all notifications about in-app activity is located. These include likes, comments, direct messages, followers and any other activity.

Profile is the last page on the bar and is where the user can find their personal account. This is where users can see their followers, who they follow, total

amount of likes, see their own content, edit their setting preferences, see the analytics tool, and switch to another account.

2.3 TikTok Content

TikTok is a short form video content platform, with videos between 15 seconds and 3 minutes. The most popular content on TikTok is entertainment, but you can find various different types of content on TikTok too (Figure 6). With users constantly evolving on the platform, more mature content has become popular on the platform and content for all ages and gender is available.

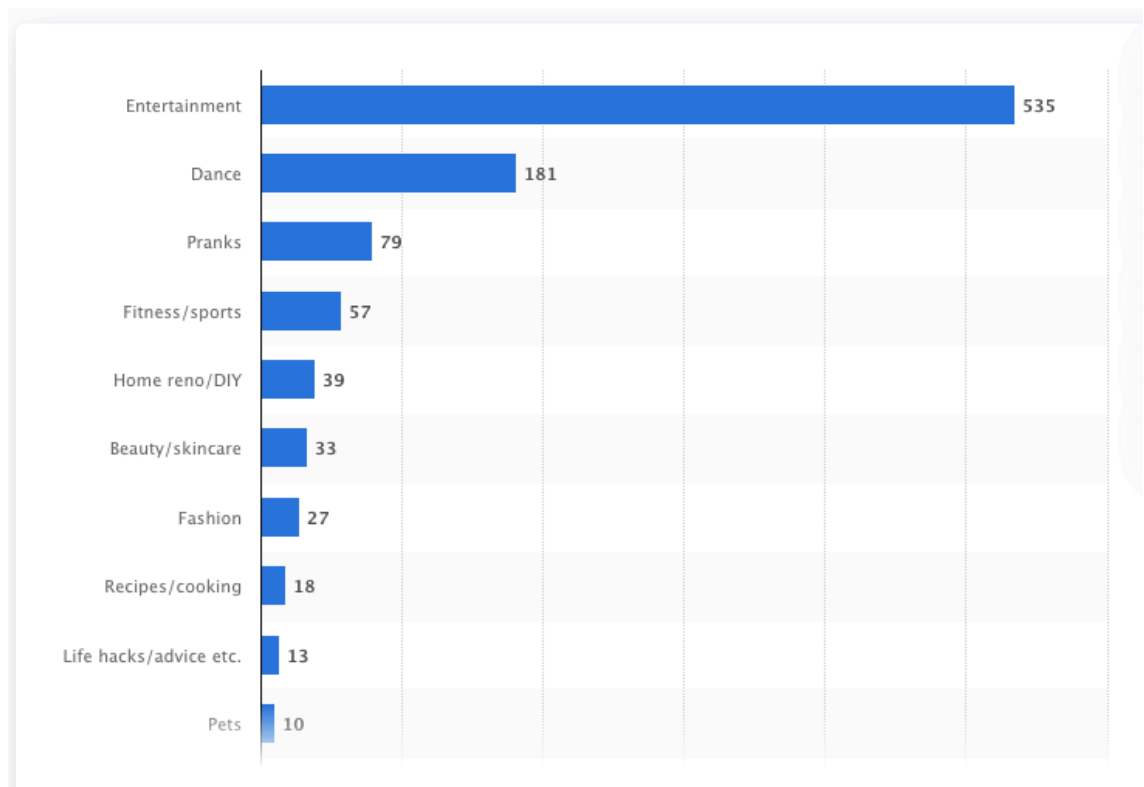


Figure 6: Most popular content categories on TikTok worldwide as of July 2020, by number of hashtag views (Statista 2023)

Other content types on TikTok are **Duet** and **Stitch** videos. A duet is a video that is split into two videos. The user who is creating the duet video usually reacts to the original video and encourages building relationships with other users. (TikTok, 2023) Stitch is a video that incorporates clips from the original video into the users video that they are creating. They can utilize parts of another users video into their video, which encourages co-creation. (TikTok, n.d.)

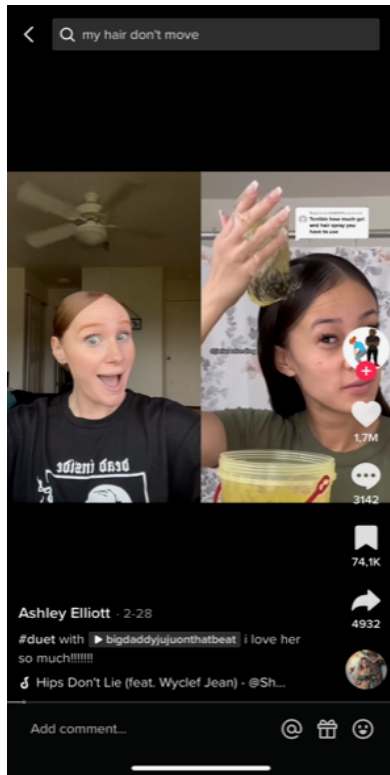


Figure 7: Screenshot of Duet by @ash.e.e

3 Social Media Marketing

Social media is content published on to social networks by regular people. This content is consumed by others. Creating and consuming this content can be done in various different forms. For example, commenting on a post, sharing photos to a photo-sharing network, communicating with friends through social media channels, and posting a blog post. All of this activity and content makes up social media and social media would be nothing without the active users. (Singh & Diamond, 2020) The definition of social media marketing according to Singh and Diamond (2020) *“is a technique that employs social media”*, which are different social media channels, blogs, message boards, vlogs, internet communities and podcasts. (Singh & Diamond 2020)

3.1 Applying Social Media Marketing into the Marketing Funnel

The marketing funnel is used in some way by every marketer as it helps differentiate prospects and customers, and define the exact journey of the customer from discovering the product or service, to the purchase of it. According to Forrester, the typical marketing funnel consists of five sections, awareness, consideration, preference, action, and loyalty (figure 7).

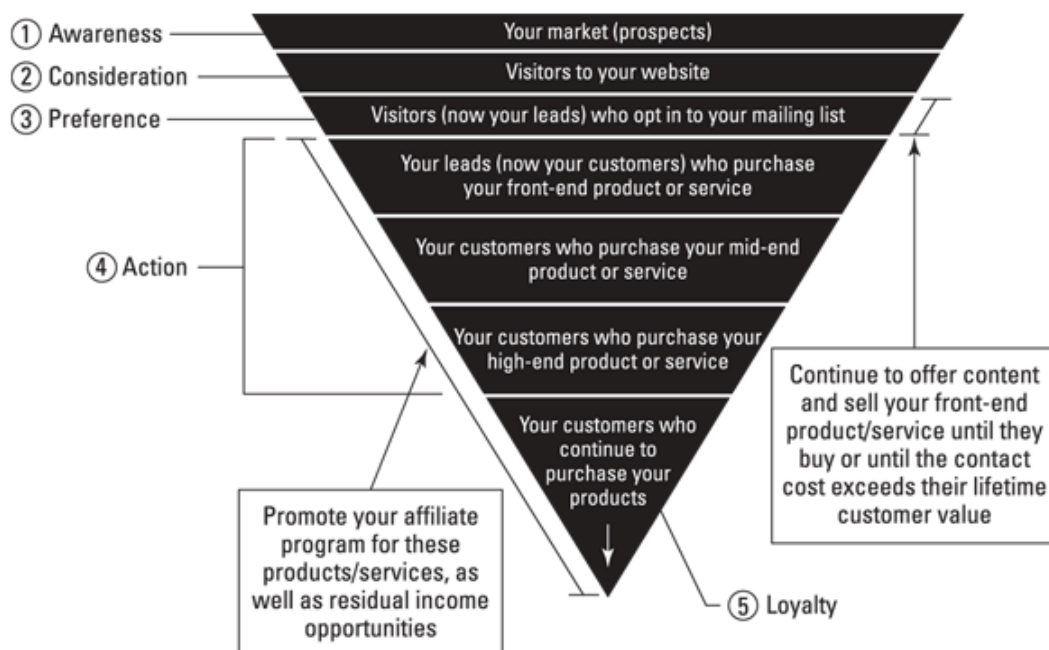


Figure 8: Marketing Funnel (Singh & Diamond 2020)

Different marketing tactics must be used in every stage to move customers and prospects down the funnel. These amount of movement between these stages must be measured precisely, and more marketing efforts should be applied to the stages with less movement. The measurement and investments applied to these stages varies with the company and product category. Social media marketing can be applied to these stages and push movement through the tunnel. The marketing funnel is used by every company differently and can be applied in different ways. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

The awareness stage of the marketing funnel is all about showing the public what the company and brand is. Gaining awareness enough so that the potential customers remember the company further down the marketing tunnel. Creating awareness through social media can be done easily in various different ways but some examples are building relationships with social media influencers. Building these relationships can be done by sending samples of products, inviting them to events or sponsoring a post published on one of their platforms. Companies can also set up Twitter accounts, a LinkedIn profile or a Facebook page. Other tactics can be publishing advertising videos on YouTube or encouraging customers to share their purchase on social networks. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

Consideration is next in the marketing funnel. This stage is one of the most important as it is the part where the potential customer begins the purchasing decision. Social media is a crucial part of this stage, as customers use the help of influencers, experts, and friends to help them decide on their purchasing decision. People use social media platforms and the internet to search for reviews and advice when considering a product they might want to purchase. At this stage the marketer should connect the potential customer with these sources. As customers prefer to base their decisions on reliable information and prefer to purchase from a company that provides them with this information easily. Some practical ways of encouraging this on social media are, publishing reviews on the company website, highlighting credible third-party reviews, and encouraging discussion about the products on social media platforms. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

The preference stage is the third step in the funnel. This is when the customer has decided his options and wants reassurance that the purchase is worth the

money he will be spending and fulfil his needs. At the stage the customer might of built a emotional connection with your brand. This is why at this stage you must be careful that you build a reliable relationship with the potential customer. Some social media marketing tactics at this stage are for example, creating a blog discussing and showcasing the product, posting videos on Youtube demonstrating the product or discussing the product on podcasts. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

The action stage is when the potential customer becomes a buying customer and purchases the product. At this stage it is important to make the process seamless and as pleasant as possible for the customer. To make sure what they expect out of the product is delivered. Some tactics that can be used in this stage are, recommending other related products to encourage impulse purchases and to suggest the customer remarkets the product they just purchased. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

The last stage of the marketing funnel is the loyalty stage. This stage is for the companies loyal customers who are extremely important in marketing the products of the company. Using incentives to create these long lasting relationships with customers. Encouraging loyal customers to recommend and review products is essential for this stage too. The loyalty stage is important as a lot of marketing in this stage is done by the companies own customers which is extremely valuable. (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

4 TikTok as a Marketing Tool

As TikTok is one of the most popular social media platforms at the moment and still growing, it is becoming a massive marketing channel for businesses. The platform gives all different sized companies a chance to go viral and gain awareness. TikTok algorithm gives visibility to all accounts despite how many followers they might have, which helps businesses grow fast on the platform. With TikTok making marketing so seamless for companies, they launched TikTok Business in 2020. This is a site for businesses to control and manage all of their marketing efforts and optimize the platform to its full potential. Influencer outreach is also managed through TikTok Business. In 2020 TikTok already had 106,000 influencers. The platform has made it extremely easy for creators to go viral with the help of hashtags, sound files and features like Dueting and Stitching. These features allow creators to create content with others and spread awareness. (HubSpot, n.d.)

TikTok algorithm is what makes TikTok different from other platforms. The default landing page called For You uses algorithm to control what content users see. Content on a user's For You page is based on other videos that the users interact with. Recommended videos on the For You page can be based on different factors, for example music, hashtags, trends, similar creators that the user is interested in. (Tran, 2021)

It is important businesses create algorithm friendly content, so that they make sure they have all of the potential to get onto users For You pages. There are a few factors businesses should remember when creating TikTok content to make sure they are creating algorithm friendly videos. Firstly, understanding that the more interaction other accounts have with your videos the more the video will be recommended to other users. This can be comments, likes, views, and shares. Businesses should make sure that they have all of the sharing possibilities enabled on their videos so that their content can be shared onto other platforms. Dueting and Stitching are also important to enable other creators to interact and co-create with the businesses account. It is also important to use on trending hashtags, and sounds in the videos being posted. TikTok's trends are fast to change and businesses should keep track of the latest challenges, or viral

sounds. Even though viral content changes often on the platform, users are always up to date with the most trending content. Captions can also play an important role in the video. Lastly, the country that the user is located in and language used in the video all play big roles in the content that is recommended on the users For You page. (Tran, 2021)

TikTok content should be entertaining enough so that the user scrolling does not scroll past the video. This means videos should be entertaining, have personality, and be creative in their own way to capture people's attention. So that the business gives a good first impression. With these important factors take into account there are various different types of videos businesses can create. (Tran, 2021)

Trending TikTok's are all about creating something memorable. **Stories, songs and jokes** are all more memorable than explaining facts about a product or service. If a business wants to show their products, services or even about the company itself, they should do this in a storytelling way with an interesting angle to the video. This way it will catch viewers' attention and stay in people's minds. Companies should also remember to have action happening throughout the entire video. (Tran, 2021)

Another way to communicate what a company's values are or how a product is made can be done through **informative videos**. This is a great way to clear misinformation about a company and engage with other users by contributing to conversations in the comments section, and replying to questions. This could also be done by Duetting or Stitching other videos if there is misinformation spread on the platform. Informative videos are a great way to expand abroad as other countries might be interested in the way that a company operates or products that they have never seen before. (Tran, 2021)

Creating a **brand hashtag** is another great way to gain awareness on the platform. Creating a hashtag around campaign or challenges is a great way to build a community around your brand. This also makes it easy for users to search for the campaign or challenge. It is important to keep other parts of the video entertaining, with interesting titles and colours. Effects and other editing features on the platform are great ways to keep the video exciting to watch. (Tran, 2021)

Posting videos about **national holidays** is a way to show the companies values. Explaining to viewers why certain holidays are important to the company. Creating videos that provoke emotion is an easy way to gain views and interaction with the video, which results in awareness of the company. (Tran, 2021)

Video tutorials and tips are a great way to show potential customers how to optimise the company's products to their best potential. This is a great way to give tips on how something can be used more efficiently or easily. (Tran, 2021)

Different types of **captions** are a great way to get viewers' attention. This can be either a question or explanation at the bottom of the video or text on the video itself. Captions determine a lot if the viewer watches the video too the end. This is why captions help keep the video interesting and engaging. (Tran, 2021)

If an account has over 1000 followers they can hold **live** streams on the platform. This is a way to engage with users live and for example answer questions that they might have and get a better understanding about the customer segment they have. (Tran, 2021)

5 Research

This chapter explains the qualitative research methods used in this thesis. Explaining the methods from a theoretical point of view, and why they have been chosen for this case. The qualitative research methods used in this thesis are benchmarking and content analysis.

Qualitative research is a method used to gather and analyse a problem, and result in new ideas to solve this problem. Qualitative data is non-numerical, meaning it is the opposite to quantitative research which involves numerical data and statistical analysis. Qualitative research is used to understand the motives, concepts, and causes of certain cases. (Bhandari, 2023)

5.1 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a method used to gather information on how a company or department is running their operations and to apply that new information into the existing company. The research is usually focused on a specific problem that the company is trying to improve or change. The information that is gathered in this process is then analysed and compared to the company who are conducting the research. Benchmarking information is used to apply to the company and adapt to their processes. (Vuorinen, 2013)

Benchmarking can be conducted in four different ways. These are all dependent on the goals of the research. Internal benchmarking is when a company conducts benchmarking research within their own company. The company analyses different departments or hierarchy within the business. Through this analysis the company can get a picture of the whole process and find out how to optimize all of its resources in the most efficient way. (Vuorinen, 2013)

External benchmarking is when a company analyses a competitor in the same industry and compares the competitors operations to their own. Through this method learning how other organizations solve the problem in the same field can be very insightful. (Vuorinen, 2013)

Functional benchmarking is when a company wishes to improve a certain function within their operations. They analyse other companies operations and learn how they operate in that certain department in the most efficient way. (Vuorinen, 2013)

Benchmarking within the company itself is done when a company wants to find the best practices within the business. This way they understand how this effects of operations within the company. Through this method everyone involved is able to learn something new when skills and practices are shared. (Vuorinen, 2013)

The benchmarking process is formed by five steps:

1. The company should first understand their current situation and the problems that they need to solve. Understanding the current situation of how the company operates is important to start with so that the core problem is found.
2. After this the problem that the company wants to solve should be defined and an example of what the improvement goal of this problem is.
3. After finding a comparison, the company should learn about how the problem is solved in that organisation.
4. Once information is gathered this should be analysed and compared with the company's current situation.
5. Once the results have been gathered, this information should be applied to the companies own operations and the outcome evaluated. (Vuorinen, 2013)

5.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is conducted by systematically gathering data which can be anything from books, interviews, social media content, photographs, videos, to magazines. As content analysis can be used in various different fields of research, this means with this method of research it is possible to achieve a large variety of different goals. Although through content analysis it is possible to achieve different goals it is used to recognize patterns in documented communication. (Luo, 2022)

The process of content analysis always starts with a research question. This is the core to the research, and helps keep the analysis process clear. After the research question is clear the analysis can be conducted following five main steps:

1. Defining the content that will be analysed.
2. Defining the level of analysis that will be conducted on the content. Making clear what are the units of meaning and the categories in the research.
3. Making clear outlines and rules that the research will follow. Explaining in-depth what will and will not be included.
4. Gather the content according to the set rules and definitions made in the previous steps.
5. Lastly, analyse the content and document the results. (Luo, 2022)

6 Benchmarking Results

In the following chapter and sub-chapters the analysis of the chosen benchmarking accounts are explained. The analysis will be done on the case company's own current account, and direct and indirect competitors accounts.

The competitors selected for the analysis are, Prisma Seppälä, K-Supermarket Muurame and K-Citymarket Kupittaa. External and internal benchmarking is used in this analysis. Internal benchmarking is used because the case company already has an existing TikTok account. External benchmarking will be done on the competitors accounts. In this analysis the author will analyse the overall aesthetic of the accounts, the content, and engagement with viewers and followers on the TikTok accounts. The period of research was conducted from the 2nd of May to 9th of June.

6.1 Prisma Seppälä

Prisma Seppälä is a part of the Finnish hypermarket chain that belongs to the retailing cooperative organisation S-Group. Prisma Seppälä is the first Prisma hypermarket store to open in Finland in Jyväskylä 1972. The hypermarket's selection includes food, clothing, toys, sports goods, electronics, building equipment, and home décor products. (S-Kanava, n.d.)

This competitor was chosen for the benchmarking analysis because they belong to the same hypermarket chain as the case company. This makes the competitor a direct competitor and an excellent benchmarking target. In addition to this, Prisma Seppälä's TikTok account is main source of inspiration for the case company's current TikTok account.

Prisma Seppälä began posting on their TikTok account in July 2021. They have accumulated 13,900 thousand followers and 168 000 thousand likes all together. Videos are posted on average about twice a week on the account. Prisma Seppälä's TikTok profile has a bio that expresses what makes their store unique, and their Instagram account name. They have also added a button to their questions and answers page in their bio, where other accounts can ask questions all

in the same place. Below this different are different content category buttons, so that users can find specific videos if they wish to. This also shows users visiting the profile a great introduction to the different content this account has to offer and making it faster and easier for users to engage with Prisma Seppälä's videos. The accounts most engaged with videos have been pinned to the top of the profile. These videos give other users viewing the profile a good first impression with showing the accounts best content and potential. (Figure 9)

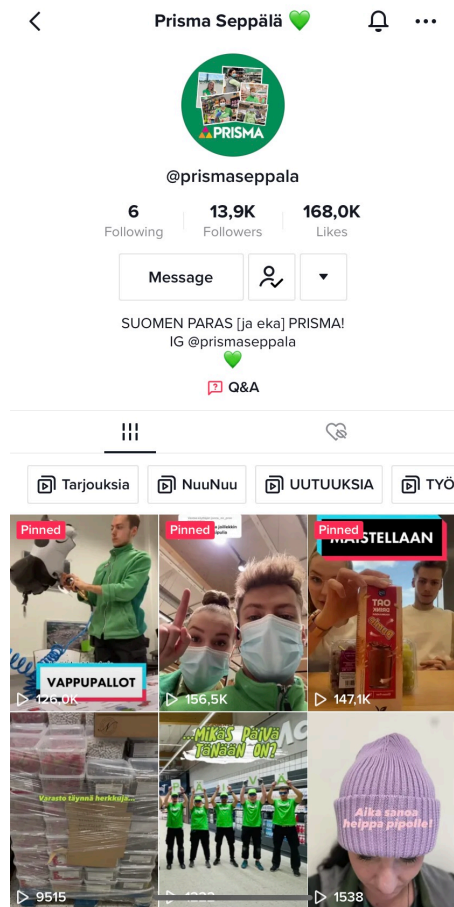


Figure 9: Screenshot of @prismaseppala TikTok profile page.

Scrolling down the profile most videos have short titles on their cover photos, this gives an overall aesthetically good visual look and a professional look to the profile. With videos titled this also helps users navigate their way easily to their preferred videos. (Figure 10)



Figure 10: Screenshot of @prismaseppala TikTok profile page.

Prisma Seppälä's TikTok accounts content has a clear theme of authenticity that appears in every video. Videos show honesty and transparency to viewers. In most videos the same people are shown, this helps build a relationship with viewers. Increasing customer loyalty and trust. Prisma Seppälä's TikTok account's content is divided into four different categories. These are **informative content**, **interactive content**, **trending content**, and **giveaways**.

Informative content is one of the most shown forms of content on the account. These videos are usually, tours of storage areas, tours of construction areas in the store and giving sneak peeks of what is to come, or even how a task is done by workers in the store. These videos are often initiated by the viewers themselves. The viewers are often intrigued about how tasks are done around the store and send in questions and requests to see or learn about certain things. Prisma Seppälä then answer to the questions and requests through informative videos. This increases engagement with viewers and potential customers. One

great example of this is a video Prisma Seppälä posted about how they change the advertising banners in the store (Figure 11). This video got over 20 000 views and over a 1000 likes.



Figure 11: Screenshot of an example of informative content @prismaseppala TikTok account.

Most of Prisma Seppälä's TikTok content is **interactive content**. Giveaways, informative and trending content are all engaging with viewers in some way. This could be, answering to viewers questions or requests, encouraging viewers to engage with the video, or using features like Dueting to co-create content with other accounts. An example of interactive content is a video posted, where they answer to a viewer's question about whether their pick and mix sweets are 4,00€ (Figure 12). This video got over 2000 likes and was viewed 37 000 times.



Figure 12: Screenshot of an example of interactive content on @prismaseppala TikTok account.

Keeping up with trends is extremely important on TikTok and Prisma Seppälä have made sure to keep up with the latest trends. Recreating **trending content** also pushes the accounts content on to more users For You page. This results in more engagement with more accounts and improving the awareness of their presence on the platform. Prisma Seppälä posted a video about their stores anniversary, and their offers and events happening that week. This was done using a trending sound and dance. This video received over 8000 likes and 198,2 thousand views. This is a great example of how trending content can boost engagement and push creators content on to the For You page.

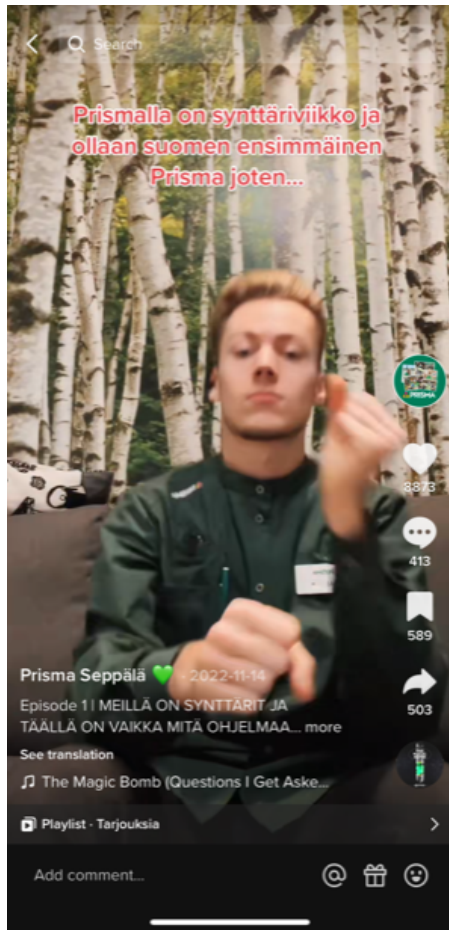


Figure 13: Screenshot of an example of trending content on @prismaseppala TikTok account.

Starting their TikTok presence in 2021, Prisma Seppälä began with **giveaways** on their account. This tactic is a great way of drawing large amounts of awareness initially to the account. Giving them a great base of followers to start sharing content too. This also start their TikTok journey off with building a relationship with their viewers and this then lead to them being able to post the content that they currently do. Prisma Seppälä's second video on their channel was a giveaway to win Airpods, and two different gift bags (Figure 14). The giveaway rules included, following the account. Once the account got 6000 followers they would giveaway the first gift bag, the second bag at 8000 followers and the Airpods would be given away to a follower once they got 10 000 followers. This video has over 36 000 views and over 2000 likes.

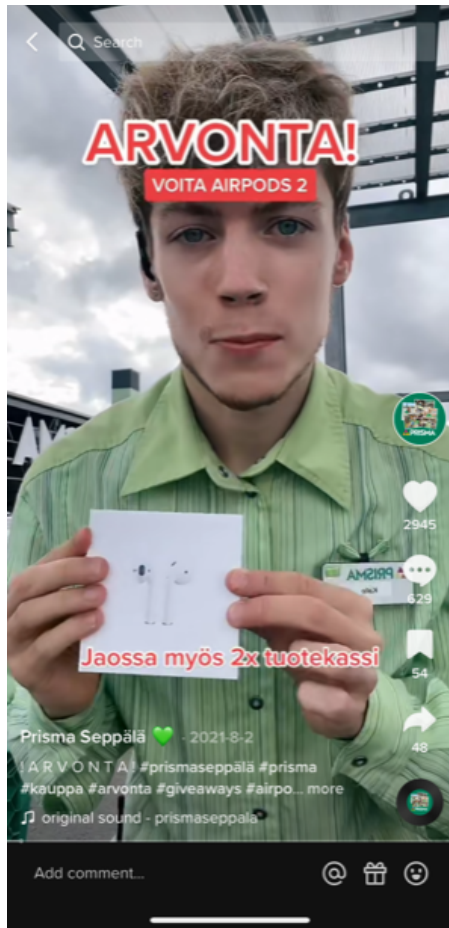


Figure 14: Screenshot of an example of a giveaway on @prismaseppala TikTok account.

6.2 K-Supermarket Muurame

K-Supermarket Muurame is part of Kesko Corporation, with head offices in Helsinki, Finland. The store is located in the county Muurame, close to the city Jyväskylä. K-supermarket's selection includes a large variety of food, drinks and household products. (K-Ruoka, n.d.)

The competitor was chosen for the benchmarking analysis because Kesko is S-groups biggest competitor and the case company is part of S-group. K-supermarket is not a hypermarket store but still is a large supermarket offering a similar selection of products as the case company.

K-Supermarket Muurame began posting on TikTok in April 2020. The account has accumulated 20,7 thousand followers and 711,6 thousand likes. They have

kept their profile page bio simple with displaying the location of the store and some emojis. Below this is a button that viewers can press to be directed straight to there “Pätkis saaga” videos. K-Supermarket Muurame has also pinned three of their most popular videos to the top of their page. (Figure 15) Giving viewers a good insight into their content. The supermarket posts TikTok two to three times a week, but this is not always frequent, sometimes there can be a couple of weeks without posting any content.

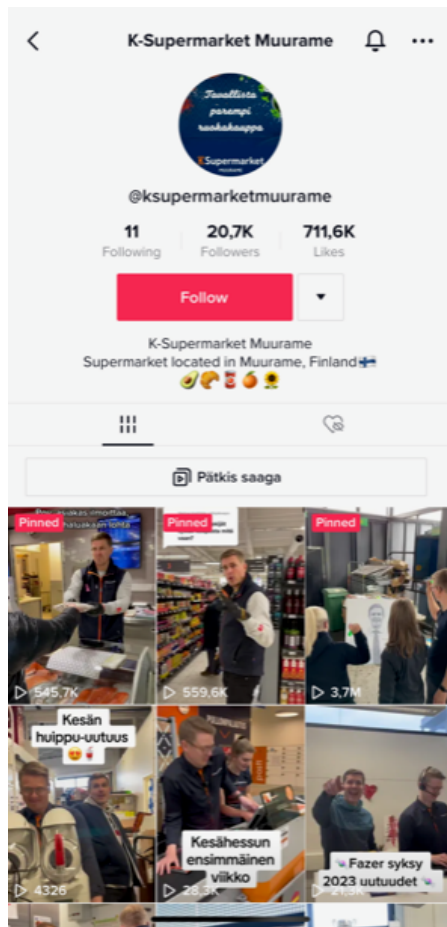


Figure 15: Screenshot of @ksupermarketmuurame TikTok profile page.

The K-Supermarket’s content is divided into three content categories, **jokes and entertaining content**, **interactive content**, and **“maistelunurkkaus” series**. The accounts content is honest and straight to the point. Most videos has the store owner appear in them which helps keep structure throughout the content and build a relationship with viewers.

Jokes and amusing content is definitely the theme of the K-Supermarket's TikTok content. New products, open positions and answering viewers questions and requests, are shown in a form of a joke or in an entertaining story. This makes the content amusing and easy to watch. Lastly, it catches viewers' attention which is an important strategy to have in producing TikTok content as users' For You pages are heavily saturated with content to choose from. A practical example of how this form of content was conducted was the account's most successful video (Figure 16). This video got over 3 million views and has 80 thousand likes. In the video workers make a joke about how the store manager is on holiday, and they then decide to throw darts at a picture of him, before he surprises them at work. This is a great way to catch viewers' attention and gain awareness on the platform.



Figure 16: Screenshot of an example of entertaining content on @ksupermarketmuurame TikTok account.

The TikTok's posted by Muurame are very **interactive**. Answering to viewers questions and comments is common in their videos. The comments chosen to answer are usually funny requests or sometimes even complaints. This gives them a great an opportunity to correct rumours and be transparent with potential customers. A good example of this is,



Figure 17: Screenshot of interactive content on @ksupermarketmuurame TikTok account.

“**Maistelunurkkaus**” is a series where the workers taste test new Fazer products coming into stores (Figure 18). They use jokes and stories when explaining about the products. When tasting the products they are honest and transparent about their personal preferences, which creates a trustworthy and transparent connection with the viewers.



Figure 18: Screenshot of "maistelunurkkaus" video on @ksupermarketmuurame TikTok account.

6.3 K-Citymarket Kupittaa

K-Citymarket Kupittaa is also part of Kesko Corporation. K-Citymarket is a hypermarket store located in Kupittaa, Turku. The hypermarkets has a selection of food, beverages, clothing, home décor, electronics, building equipment, and sports goods. (K-Ruoka, n.d.)

The account was chosen for the benchmarking analysis as it is part of S-groups biggest competitor Kesko. K-Citymarket is also a hypermarket so they provide the same scale of products in their store as the case company. This is a great opportunity to gather insights into how a Kesko hypermarket utilizes TikTok in their marketing efforts.

K-Citymarket Kupittaa started using TikTok in February 2022. The account currently has 14,8 thousand followers and 613,6 thousand likes all together. Videos are posted on the account about twice a week, but sometimes they have longer breaks between posting. The profile has a short bio description explaining who they are and inviting viewers to follow their content. Below this are their most popular videos pinned to the top of the page. (Figure 16)

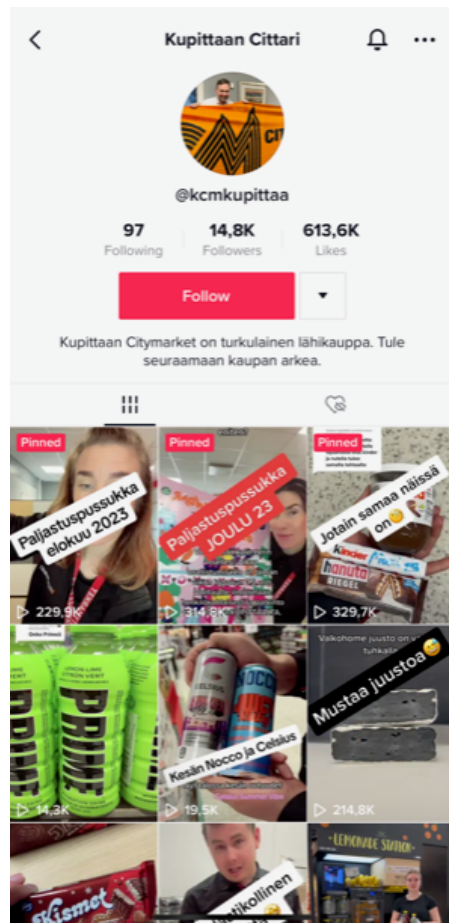


Figure 19: Screenshot of @kcmkupittaa profile page.

The account uses titles on the thumbnail's of their videos. This makes it easy to navigate when viewing the profile and gives the profile a professional look. (Figure 16)

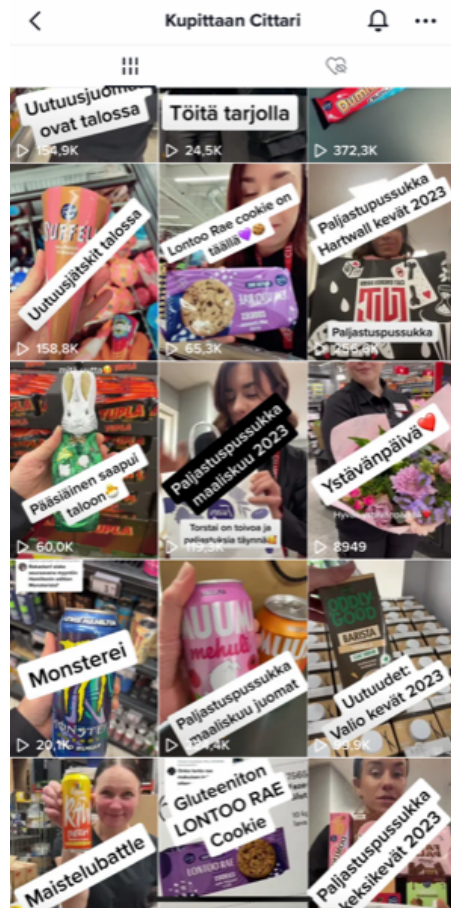


Figure 20: Screenshot of @kcmkupittaa profile page.

K-Citymarket Kupittaa has three content categories on their TikTok account. These are **informative videos**, a “**paljastuspussukka**” series, and informing potential customers about special **offers**. The style of content throughout all of their videos is very genuine and simple. Cool effects and filters have been left out and the video format kept simple.

Most of the accounts videos are **informative videos** about new products that have arrived at the store. These are very popular amongst viewers. This is a way customers can keep up to date with new products and encourage them to stay as active followers. This also emphasizes the importance of the product and encourages customers to act fast with their purchase. Figure 21 shows an example of how this content is done on the account. The store received the newest flavour on the drink Nocco and informed viewers about this exciting product.



Figure 21: Screenshot of informative content on @kcmkupittaa TikTok account.

“**Paljastuspussukka**” is a series K-Citymarket Kupittaa have made about the Fazer bags that they receive, that have all of the up-coming new products from Fazer (Figure 22). In the videos the manager of the store goes through the new products and taste tests a few of them on camera.

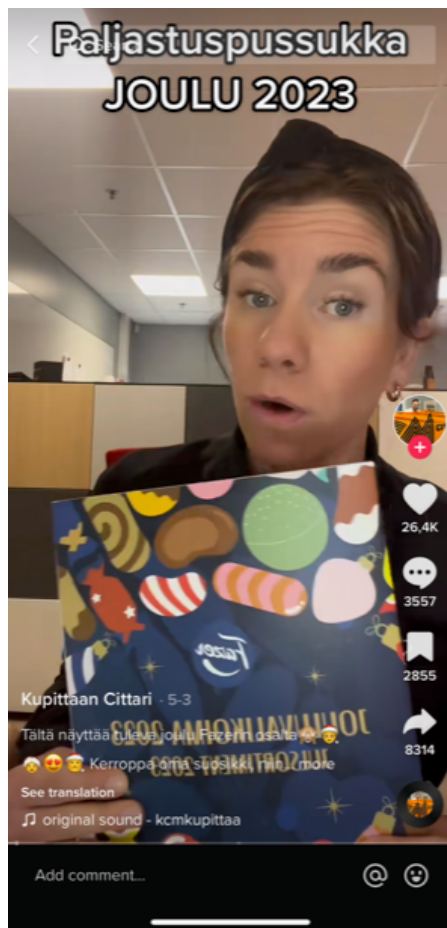


Figure 22: Screenshot of "paljastuspussukka" video on @kcmkupittaa TikTok account.

Lastly, videos about informing customers about special **offers** is part of the account's content. This keeps viewers active in following the accounts content and engaging with the videos. This also a great way to encourage potential customers to visit the store and increase awareness of the store itself. An example of this content is informing viewers that they have a exclusive offer on Bang drinks and emphasizing that potential customers should act fast (Figure 23).



Figure 23: Screenshot of offer content on @kcmkupittaa TikTok account.

7 TikTok Marketing Recommendations for Prisma Kaleva

This chapter includes the final product of this thesis, which is the TikTok marketing recommendations for Prisma Kaleva. These recommendations have been conducted to support the development of the commissioning company's TikTok marketing plan. The guide includes practical approaches supported by theoretical data, on how the commissioning company can utilize TikTok to its best potential in their marketing strategy. The commissioning company should take into consideration that this guide is only for short-term use only, as TikTok as a platform is constantly evolving and social media trends changing. Taking into consideration that TikTok trends are constantly changing, these recommendations can be updated in the future to suite the current marketing goals of the commissioning company.

These recommendations were created by gathering theoretical data on social media marketing and using TikTok as a marketing tool. In addition to this, the empirical half of this research was conducted by a benchmarking study on three competitors' TikTok accounts. The final result of this research is a combination of theory and practical implementation on how the commissioning company can use TikTok as a marketing tool.

7.1 Commissioning Company

Prisma Kaleva is a part of the Finnish hypermarket chain that belongs to the retailing cooperative organisation S-Group. It is the largest hypermarket in the region of Pirkanmaa and the largest grocery store in the city of Tampere (Kaleva, n.d.). Prisma selection includes, electronics, home décor products, clothing, sports goods, groceries, and building equipment (Prisma, n.d.). S-group has four main values that they develop their business operations around. There are, constantly developing their operations, taking responsibility of the people and environment, the purpose of their operations is for the customers and operating profitably (S-group, n.d.)

7.2 Current Situation Analysis

Prisma Kaleva currently has three social media channels, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. Instagram and Facebook are the main marketing channels at the moment, but the commissioning company wishes to put more effort into marketing through TikTok too. Instagram and Facebook organic content is made by a social media marketing team within the store. TikTok content is currently made by two people within the social media marketing team, and the manager of the account is the author of this thesis. Prisma Kaleva focuses on organic marketing content throughout their social media marketing because they currently do not have a budget to spend on paid advertisement or influencer marketing.

7.2.1 Marketing Goals

The purpose and goals that Prisma Kaleva want to achieve with their social media marketing is awareness of the store and what it offers, and bring out the authenticity and personality of the store in the content posted. As Prisma the hypermarket chain has official social media channels, S-group encourage individual stores to stay active on their independent social media channels in their own personal way, and to highlight with their content what makes their store special.

7.2.2 Target Audience

As Prisma is a hypermarket store that caters for a large target audience it is difficult to specify one particular target audience. In this case the user demographics of the marketing channels should indicate what target audience each channel caters for. The most popular user demographic in Finland on TikTok is 18-24 year old (Yliluoma, 2021). Looking at the analytics of the commissioner's TikTok account, 65% of the account's followers are female (Figure 24). Currently, the content posted on the commissioner's TikTok account has been aimed towards 18-24 year old women.

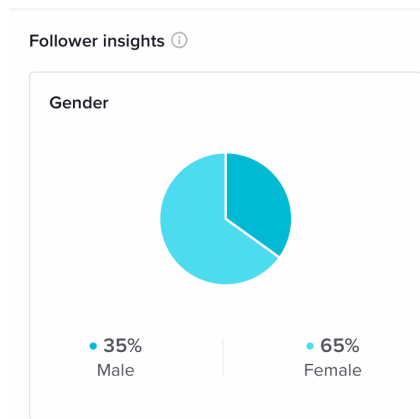


Figure 24: Screenshot of follower insights from @prismakaleva account.

7.2.3 Current Content

Currently Prisma Kaleva's TikTok content has been created around national holidays, special offers or trends. There has been no particular strategy on how the commissioner has used the platform, besides from the same goal which applies to all social media marketing channels, which is to gain awareness and show viewers what makes Prisma Kaleva unique. As the account is fairly new most videos have been posted to test what works best on the platform. The account currently has 988 followers and 16 videos. In figure 25, the top three most popular videos on Prisma Kaleva's TikTok account are displayed. The first video is a Christmas gift idea video which gained a lot of attention, this video was a great way to display unique fun products that customers previously might not of known about. One of S-groups values is to take responsibility for people and the environment, the second video shows what Prisma Kaleva is doing towards these values in a light hearted way to achieve the target audiences attention. The last video uses captions and jokes to promote a up coming campaign.

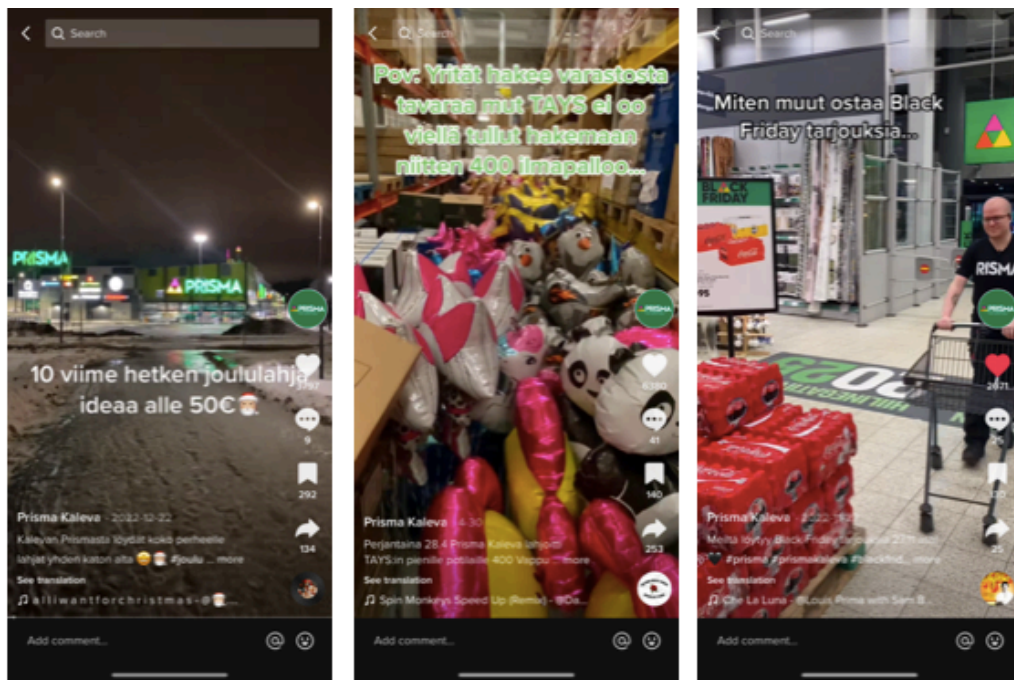


Figure 25: Screenshot of top 3 videos from @prismakaleva account.

7.3 Recommended TikTok Marketing Approach

As the commissioning company's does not have a marketing budget or extra resources to apply to their social media marketing, these recommendations focus on organic marketing. Focusing on localised approach to organic marketing is key in this case. Not only does keeping content local align with the commissioning companies marketing goals, local content catches users attention far more than general content.

The TikTok marketing efforts should continue to aim at the same target audience, which is 18-24 year old women mainly as this is the largest demographic within the commissioners current followers. This means the marketing team should take this into consideration when planning TikTok content as this will be different to the content on other social media channels. As the current marketing team has limited resources and two people assigned to create TikTok content posting frequency should not be expected to be as frequent compared to other marketing channels. Posting frequency should be on average twice a week. In addition to this, creating content is not enough to utilize the platform to its full potential, the commissioner should actively engage with users by responding to comments, feedback and questions. This requires actively observing the account at least

once a day. By this approach engagement on the account and specific content will increase, and help with crating algorithm friendly content. Resulting in content landing on more users For You pages. This is also incredibly important for building a meaningful relationship with viewers and followers. This engagement should be conducted through a humorous tone of voice which was highlighted in the theoretical research section. This leaves a relatable and down to earth impression to the audience.

Creating algorithm friendly content was mentioned in the theoretical framework section of the research. This should be always considered in all activity on the account, meaning content creation, and engagement with viewers. When the commissioner creates content, trending music, hashtags, and captions should be optimized to their best potential. Keeping up with trends is important to create awareness of the account on the platform as trending content is algorithm friendly. The commissioner should also consider dueting popular videos of other creators and making sure other are able to duet the accounts videos. (Tran, 2021)

Throughout the empirical section of this research, the benchmark competitors all had a similar visual look that the competitor should also implement into their overall brand look on the platform. This is a clear structure to the videos. Deciding on a font, colours and title format that will be used in all videos. This will help with keeping up a professional look and make it easier for viewers to navigate on the account page. Resulting in more engagement. I great example of this is Prisma Seppälä's visual look throughout their account (Figure 26).



Figure 26: Screenshot of @prismaseppala visual look.

7.3.1 Content Suggestions

The theoretical and empirical sections both highlighted the importance of producing educational and entertaining organic marketing content. This is a great way to express their personality and unique qualities of the store which is an important part of the commissioners marketing goals.

Informative videos was one of the main content types in all of the benchmarking competitors. These videos usually included information about new products, offers, and national holidays. The videos where always made to me entertaining to watch or have a humorous theme to them. The importance of informative videos where also highlighted in the theoretical framework when using TikTok as a marketing tool. This method enhances the companies values and is a great way to clear misinformation if this is necessary. A practical example of how this could be done could be how Prisma Seppälä showed viewers how marketing banners where put up in the store (Figure 27).



Figure 27: Screenshot of practical example of an informative video @prismaseppala.

Engagement is an important element the commissioner should always include in their TikTok content. Building a connection with viewers has a positive effect of the brand image and customer loyalty. Creating engaging content can be done in numerous different ways on TikTok. Replying to comments, requests or questions through a TikTok video is a great way to connect with potential customers and an affective way to create content on the account, as the content creator does not need to think of a video to make. In the empirical section of this thesis giveaway's proved to be an affective way of gaining more followers and awareness of the account, especially in early stages of the activity on the TikTok account. This is a great way for users to engage with your content and give back to the community. A practical example of implementing this method is how K-Supermarket Muurame answered to a viewer's question about whether employees can eat groceries at work (Figure 28).



Figure 28: Screenshot of practical example of engaging content by @ksupermarketmuurame.

Trends play a big role in the account gaining awareness on the platform. TikTok is hugely saturated with content, so it is important to stand out and increase the chances of landing on as many users For You pages as possible. The commissioner should keep up with trending videos and music on the platform and incorporate these into videos often. This will push awareness of the account on the platform and support algorithm friendly content.

Creating a brand hashtag was mentioned in the theoretical section. Creating a unique brand hashtag, theme or series is a way to stand out on the platform. Two of the competitors in the benchmarking analysis K-supermarket Muurame and K-Citymarket Kupittaa had created a video series unique to them. Prisma Seppälä also paid close attention to using hashtags relevant to their market.

7.3.2 Content Creation Suggestions

The commissioner should create videos that are short and catch the viewers' attention in the beginning. The ideal length for videos could be 20-30 seconds. Captions on the video and under the video should be interesting and eye-catching. Understanding the viewing audience and what captures their attention is important in this stage. Hashtags should be used relevant to the content and trends. Using same employees in videos showed to be an effective way for viewers to build a connection to the company's professional account in the benchmarking analysis. This should be practiced by the commissioning company, to build more of a warm impression of the company and face to the brand.

8 Conclusion

To conclude, the objective of this thesis was to gather the most effective TikTok marketing practices for the commissioner to utilize. These recommendations were gathered based on theoretical data which provided insights into the rising popularity of the platform and the potential companies have when investing time and marketing efforts into utilizing the channel. This section also highlighted the power of TikTok algorithm and trends. Through the benchmarking analysis, the theoretical data gathered in the previous chapters was put into practice by competitors in the same industry. This gave practical examples on how to use the platform in the hypermarket industry most effectively on what viewers enjoy watching the most. Based on the research Prisma Kaleva should keep up to date with the latest trends and always engage with viewers. Understanding your audience is key to pushing your chances of awareness on the platform.

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