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Digital marketing plan for Restaurant 64

Social media marketing and Content marketing

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Thesis abstract

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The objective of the thesis was to outline a comprehensive digital marketing plan for Restaurant 64 with the use of social media content to meet customer expectations and improve brand awareness. A quantitative research method was used to obtain the study result.

Containing five parts, the thesis starts with an introduction to display the topic and objectives. Subsequently, the theoretical framework provides an overview of digital marketing, focusing on social media and content marketing. Following this, an evaluation of the commissioner's current marketing phase was executed through a SWOT analysis, discovering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that they were facing. Next, the study was continued with an empirical study discovering customer preference in restaurant marketing.

The thesis concluded with a practical marketing development plan, integrating theoretical insights with actionable strategies. The study advises Restaurant 64 and small food and beverage businesses to prioritize frequent, visually appealing updates on Facebook and Instagram, starting with image-based content and, later, exploring short-form videos. Organic content should be focused rather than paid advertising to manage costs. Customer engagement on social media is crucial for building loyalty, with suggested actions including responding to comments, featuring customer feedback, and executing interactive campaigns. Moreover, a strong online presence on the website and Google Maps is recommended for future development plans.

At the end of the study, a four-step guide for strategy implementation is introduced with the aim of facilitating the content production process at the initial stage.

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Terms and Abbreviations

SMM	Social Media Marketing
F&B	Food and Beverage
E-CRM	Electronic Customer Relationship Management
E-WOM	Electronic Word of Mouth
ROI	Return in Investment
CTA	Call-to-action

1   INTRODUCTION

The main topic conducted in this study is "Digital marketing plan for Restaurant 64". Overall, digital marketing has been a crucial part of every business as it helps brands to reach out to targeted customers and achieve various tactics. Indeed, the digital world has been changing significantly with different online platforms which led to the diversity of how people market their products or services nowadays (Agrawal, 2016). Nevertheless, Restaurant 64, a local Asian restaurant located in Vaasa, has never had a concrete digital marketing plan since its establishment. Therefore, the study outcome to suggest an applicable and effective digital marketing strategy for this business.

The thesis contains a theoretical framework focusing on social media marketing (SMM) and content marketing, an evaluation study of Restaurant 64, a quantitative questionnaire survey on potential customer preference in restaurant marketing that is utilized to generate a development plan with several online marketing techniques. Not only the restaurant but also other small and medium-sized restaurant businesses can use the strategy to improve their brand awareness.

1.1   Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the thesis is to generate an effective digital marketing plan for Restaurant 64. The development plan is aimed to help the restaurant reach its targeted customers especially from Vaasa area. The plan can be utilized as an inspiration for either Restaurant 64 or other Food and Beverage (F&B) businesses struggling in branding via online platforms.

The study is conducted with two objectives. Firstly, it is to give an overview of the current digital marketing situation which involves researching on SMM, content marketing and customer preference on restaurant marketing in general. The second goal is to evaluate Restaurant 64's current marketing plan hence generate a consistent and effective digital marketing strategy to help them reach out to more customer in local area and tourists with the updated development plan.

Three main questions that will be solved in this study are "What is the overview of digital marketing methods in recent years?", "Which aspects do customers expect from restaurant marketing on online platforms?", and "How can Restaurant adapt 64 it?".

1.2   Structure of the thesis

The study starts off with a theoretical framework of Digital marketing focusing on SMM, content marketing, and models such as 7Ps and SWOT analysis. This initial stage aims to introduce the basic concept of methods that are widely used in industry. In terms of SMM, the study concentrates on three platforms, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. The algorithm, organic marketing, and paid advertisement are researched within each of these channels. Meanwhile, the content marketing section demonstrates different content types involving the definition and usage of authentic content with empowering, reframing, and entertaining factors in restaurant businesses. This section also mentions the overview of three content formats, video, image-based and text-based. After that, a situational analysis is conducted to research Restaurant 64 and its online presence. Subsequently, the research proceeds to the empirical research part, which explains the objectives and methodologies utilized within the study along with the demonstration of data analysis from targeted customer in a digital form. Finally, it is concluded with a digital marketing development strategy for Restaurant 64 with certain objectives.

2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Digital marketing overview

Digital marketing can be defined as the application of digital technology and media to achieve marketing objectives (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016, p. 11). In the early stage of digital technology, it used to be titled Internet marketing along with multiple confusing academic and professional terms. However, as the digital world has been growing with several types of online platforms, the term was changed to Digital marketing since Internet marketing no longer covers the whole marketing methods (Barone, 2023).

The above definition is a reminder that the outcome of using technology should be the main factor of investing in Internet marketing, not the application of technology which is desktop, mobile phone, tablet, or any other technical devices (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016, p. 11). The act of doing digital marketing is to monitor online company presence, which are different forms of online media controlled by a company. The media can be social media, websites, apps etc. The method for managing these online channels is by using online communication techniques such as search engine marketing, SMM, email marketing, online partnership, and others. In general, all these actions intend to reach the goal of attracting potential customers and enhancing electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) to supply services for the current ones. However, Chaffey also showed that it is crucial to use online communication techniques with traditional channels such as televisions, prints, and direct mail to generate an effective digital marketing strategy. This statement goes well with the one that was outlined by Barone (2023) on *Investopedia*, that is "digital marketing involves some of the same principles as traditional marketing". In fact, digital and traditional marketing head to the same goal, which is to approach targeted audience, and follow the seven Ps of marketing which will be mentioned later in this study.

2.2   7Ps model

According to Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2016, p. 250), 7Ps is one of the most popular marketing models. This marketing mix was originally introduced by E. Jerome McCarthy as 4Ps in 1960, standing for four factors that are Products, Price, Place and Promotion. The concept worked

well back then when most businesses sold products and customer service was not an important term.

However, when service delivery became well-known around 1980, 4Ps could not cover the area fully (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016, p. 250). In other words, 4Ps was designed for selling tangible products so an adjustment was needed for customer service delivery. Therefore, Boomers and Pitners decided to add three more elements which are People, Process, and Physical evidence, changing the concept from 4Ps to 7Ps. Regarding the benefits of using these key elements, the 7Ps marketing mix is considered a framework that helps businesses to construct strategy development. It can be utilized to execute an organization's evaluation and competitor analysis, hence creating innovative and applicable strategies for better growth (op. cit., p. 251).

Figure 1. Key elements of 7Ps marketing mix (Hanlon, 2023).

For better understanding, the seven components are simply explained by Hanlon (2023) from *Smart Insights*:

− Product: refers to the modification of products/services. How to make it meet the customer's expectations.

− Price: refers to the pricing model. How to make the customers see the value-for-money factor through the products/services.

- Place: refer to the distribution of products/services. How to make it easy for customers to reach out to the products/services. For instance: e-commerce, online stores, physical stores etc.

- Promotion: refer to the promotion techniques for products/services. How to utilize promotional methods to market the products or services to the target audience.

- People: refer to people working within the organization, those who are helping companies to reach certain objectives.

- Process: refer to the procedure of delivering products/service to the customers. How to make the process of delivering products/services most effective and efficient?

- Physical Evidence: refer to the tangible elements that can reassure customers.

Furthermore, in 2001, Chaffey and Smith brought up the eighth P, standing for "Partnership" since they realized relationship is also a crucial factor for doing digital marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016, p. 252). The eighth P is believed to widen the reach and affiliation for businesses. Nowadays, this terminology is known as "Co-marketing" or "contra-deals" in which two brands agree to work together to improve brand awareness for both sides (op. cit.).

Indeed, there are several types of digital marketing. By using the multichannel with a concrete and effective strategy might bring massive benefits for delivering brand awareness to wider customer segments as well as other positive outcomes. This section will represent fundamental information about two digital marketing types which are SMM, and content marketing.

2.3   Digital Marketing types

2.3.1 Social media marketing

Social media marketing is defined as to approach targeted customers and build brand awareness via using social media channels (Thakkar, 2023). Specifically, the process includes using social networks to create and share information to build company's image, generate sales, drive traffics to a website, interact with existing customers, and reach to the potential ones (Hayes, 2023). In fact, the significant rise of interactive digital has made social media easily surpass traditional media such as television and radio within a short time. An analysis from Data Reportal (2023) has shown that the number of social media users has reached over 4.8

billion worldwide, which is equal to 60.6% of global population and around 9 out of 10 internet users being active on social media every month.

With such ginormous user resource, social media became one of the most powerful marketing tools for businesses (Hayes, 2023). The factor that made it such important to any companies is that it provides three cores of marketing: connection, interaction, and customer data. In term of connection, SMM enables enterprises to connect to their existing and targeted customers with more of convenience and cost-efficient comparing to the traditional marketing methods. Secondly, the interaction aspect from SMM offers an opportunity to make the CRM better. Moreover, the electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is generated between current and potential customers by the nature of the interaction on social media platforms no matter it is direct or passive. These interactions are recorded by the social media platforms which eventually supply measurable data, return on investment (ROI) is an example. This can be seen as a part of the third core of SMM, customer data, which is delivered systematically by SMM tools. This valuable source can help analyse market better, develop marketing strategies or build new ones.

In Finland, 83.3% of the total population use social media (Kemp, 2023a). In which, 86.7% are young adults and adults ranging from 18 to above. Since this is a large customer segment of every business in Finland, doing SMM networks with the highest percentage of users in Finland are: WhatsApp (62%), Facebook (52%), YouTube (34%) and Instagram (34%), and followed by TikTok (16%) (Clausnitzer, 2023). However, this study will concentrate on three platforms Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, which are the main tools for the marketing development plan for the chosen commissioner later.

Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social media platform worldwide with 2,958 billion active users each month (Dixon, 2023). A report from Kemp (2023b) illustrated that 54.6% of Facebook users follow or research brands and products, making it an ideal platform for SMM for any business (Figure 2).

Facebook is also known as "the most used platform for customer service" (Zote, 2023). Indeed, it is used to get customer service by 60% of users based on *Sprout Social Index* (2022). Moreover, there are approximately 52% of social media users use Facebook in Finland (Kemp,

2023a). Hence, being present on Facebook can help to promote services, enhance customer support, organic visibility, and sales if brands can understand the algorithm of it.

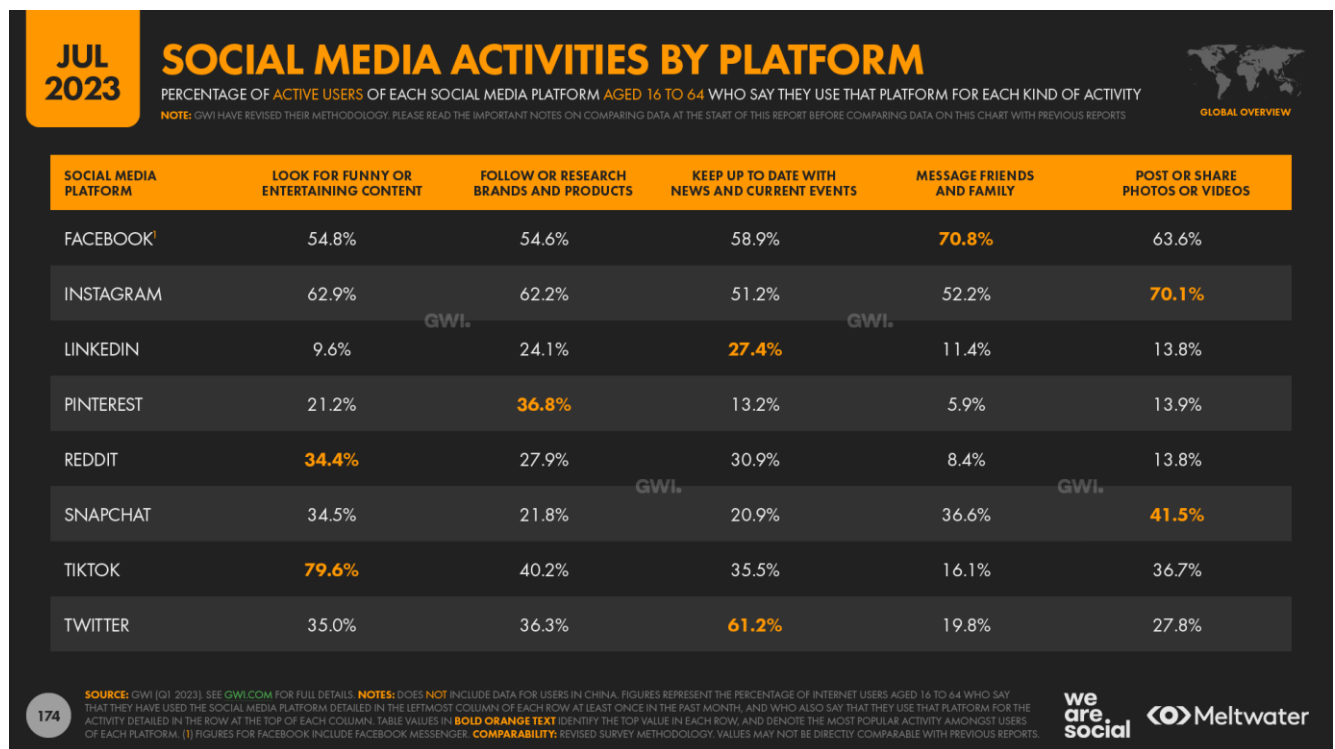| SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM	LOOK FOR FUNNY OR ENTERTAINING CONTENT	FOLLOW OR RESEARCH BRANDS AND PRODUCTS	KEEP UP TO DATE WITH NEWS AND CURRENT EVENTS	MESSAGE FRIENDS AND FAMILY	POST OR SHARE PHOTOS OR VIDEOS
FACEBOOK[1]	54.8%	54.6%	58.9%	70.8%	63.6%
INSTAGRAM	62.9%	62.2%	51.2%	52.2%	70.1%
LINKEDIN	9.6%	24.1%	27.4%	11.4%	13.8%
PINTEREST	21.2%	36.8%	13.2%	5.9%	13.9%
REDDIT	34.4%	27.9%	30.9%	8.4%	13.8%
SNAPCHAT	34.5%	21.8%	20.9%	36.6%	41.5%
TIKTOK	79.6%	40.2%	35.5%	16.1%	36.7%
TWITTER	35.0%	36.3%	61.2%	19.8%	27.8%

Figure 2. Social Media activities by platforms (Kemp, 2023c).

Facebook offers many tools to help businesses manage and grow their presence not only on the platform but also on Instagram. Here are some important sites that have been mostly used by companies to promote brand visibility on this platform.

Facebook Business page

It is defined as a public profile for business on Facebook (Freedman, 2023b). Compared to Personal profile, Facebook Business Page has some matching functions such as receiving and sending messages, posting news, getting notifications, and communicating with other users via interactive activities (Figure 3). From this site, companies can present relevant things such as who they are, what value they deliver, their basic contact information etc. As it provides relevant demographic metrics, creators can better understand their audience and learn to engage with new and existing audiences.

One of the most outstanding factors of Facebook Business Page is advertising, which is perceived as a cost-effective option for online marketing compared to other online platforms (Freedman, 2023b). The platform assists advertisers with diverse marketing tools to reach a

large audience with affordable prices, enabling not only big but medium and small-sized businesses to leverage their brand recognition. To create a Facebook Business page, a personal profile is required, followed by on-screen instructions where the users can fill in their business information. Here is an example of a Facebook Business Page from Starbucks, a F&B business that uses this site to update news or share content to the customers.
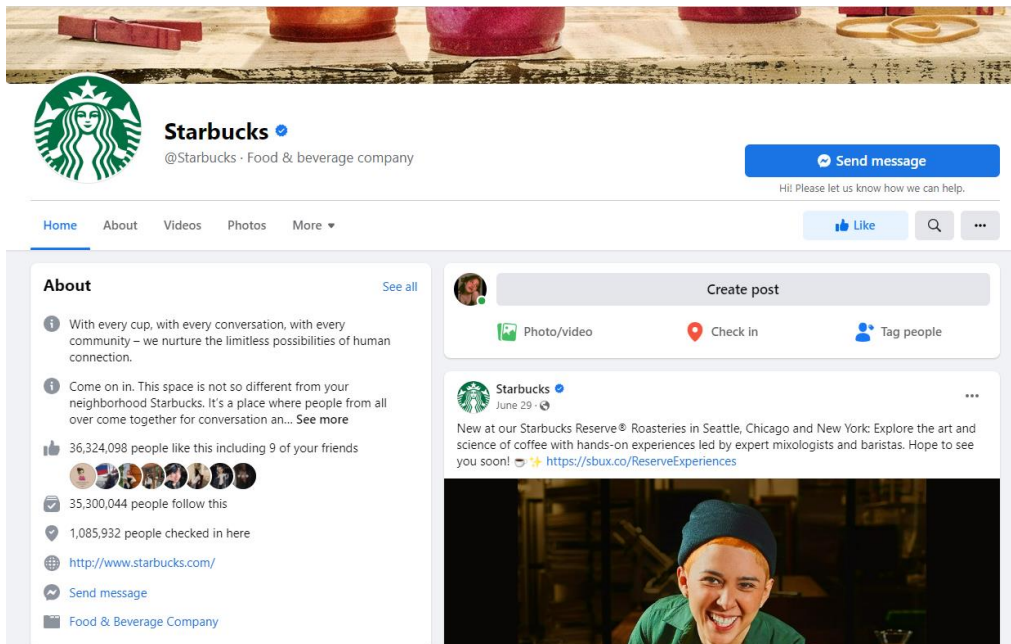

Figure 3. Facebook Business Page of Starbucks.

Meta Business Suite

This is a site that helps businesses and creators manage their presence on either Facebook or Instagram (Meta, 2023b). Via this page, users can have an overview of their business, create, schedule, optimize content with provided metrics, and interact with the audience. In addition, users can build and manage advertising programs via boosted posts, partnership campaigns and more.

Some of the advice recommended by Meta to get the most out of Meta Business Suite are:
- Build content with consistency and frequency.
- Interact with the audience.
- Use ads to reach potential followers.

Meta Business Manager

This tool is designed for users to manage the security and privacy of their Meta Business accounts (Meta, 2023a). In overall, brands can take control of their Facebook pages, Instagram profiles, Ads account, and other assets in the Meta ecosystem.

Two tips suggested by Meta to optimize Meta business account are:
- Adding all assets to Meta Business account for better management
- Stay up to date with security center suggestions.

Meta Ads Manager

This tool is built for creating, executing, and managing advertisements on Meta ecosystem (Meta, 2023a).

Here are some suggestions from Meta for businesses to optimize the use of Meta Ads Manager:
- Prepare ads ahead few days before launching as it might take Meta sometimes to review the ads.
- Set the right objectives that suit the best business goal.
- Utilize measurement tools to better understand the audience.
- While running ads, utilize test-and-learn method to improve the existing ads.
- Exit learning phase before editing the ads.

Ad Library

This page displays current ads executing on Meta technologies. According to Andrew (2023), Ad Library is an effective tool to do competitor research as users can find their competitor's ads information by sorting location, categories, keywords, or names of certain advertisers. He also stated that normally if one ad has been active for a lengthy period of time, it is possibly because it has been working well for them. Hence, marketers can learn from their competitor's ads.

Ads on Meta: Boosted post vs Facebook ads

Boosted post and Facebook ads are two valuable factors for online marketing strategy (Freedman, 2023b). The core similarity is that both ads require expense to approach wider audiences.

Then, advertisers are given some similar options such as choosing targeted audience, budget, and duration to place the ads to the right customers. In detail, boosted post is a post on page timeline, known as the most basic advertising method on the platform. Meanwhile, Facebook ads are un umbrella of advanced ads with more complex objectives and functions. The below board visualizes comparison between these two types.

Table 1. Boosted post versus Facebook ads (Freedman, 2023b).

	Boosted post	Facebook ads
Objectives	Audience engagement / Brand awareness	App installations, Website conversions, Store visit, Sales, etc.
Created in	The post's function	Meta Ads Manager
Ads Placements	Instagram, Facebook Feed (mobile, desktop)	Facebook, Instagram Feed, Stories, Side ads, Messenger ads, Instant articles, Audience Network.
Functions	Basic options in choosing targeted audience, budget, duration.	Advanced Targeted audience options: Demographic, Interest, Behavior, Location, Lookalike Budget, bidding, duration control: daily/ lifetime, Cost-per-click (CPC), Cost-per-mile (CPM) etc.
Ads formats	Post's original format (image, video, or text)	Original formats, carousel ads, slideshow ads etc.
Performance measurement	Page engagement metrics	Metric in engagement, conversions, web traffics etc.

To summarize, the concept of boosted post is simpler than Facebook ads as it offers basic tactics and functions (Meta, 2023c). Meanwhile, Facebook ads offer customized solutions with more complex objectives and tools. However, each has its own identities which requires advertisers to consciously find out the one that goes best with their business's objective. For example, if the business is aiming at increasing engagement rate or brand awareness, boosted post is suggested to help brands grow their online visibility and customer approach. In case brands look for more advanced advertising types, Facebook ads on Meta ads manager is a considerable choice (op. cit.).

Facebook algorithm

It is defined as a set of rules distributing content across Facebook. It decides what people see on their Facebook feed, search, marketplace, groups, and watch by evaluating every post, ad, story, reel via signals. The content will be ranked with the aim of showing users things that they are most interested in.

Feed algorithm is done by 4 main steps (Meta, 2023a):

1. Inventory: Gather new content and activity from people, page, group that users connected (except those violate Facebook community guideline)
2. Signals: Evaluate content based on signals such as who posted it, type of content and interaction in post etc.
3. Prediction: Use signal to predict how likely users will interact with such content
4. Scoring: Calculate "relevance score" and arrange posts based on the rank. The higher the score is, the more likely it will be posted on the top of user's feed.

Some advice from Hootsuite to master Facebook algorithm in 2023 are to:

- Create meaningful and informative content. To do so, advertisers need to understand the targeted audience.
- Create accurate and authentic content, for example writing clear headlines and not sharing misleading information or content that violates community guide.
- Engage with the audience, for example replying to comments.
- Get people engaged with each other.
- Post on the right time
- Use basic status posts (only-text post) as they have the second highest engagement rate with 0.11%, after 0.12% of Photo posts (Hootsuite, 2023).

Instagram

Instagram is a photo-centric social networking site with 2 billion active monthly users, positioning it as one of the top four most popular social media platforms globally in early 2023 (Dixon, 2023). As indicated by Kemp from *Data Reportal* (2023a), there are 2.3 million people in Finland, constituting 50% of social media users, use Instagram. In the given statistical report, 70.1% of Instagram users engage with the platform to share and post photos or videos and 62.2% for brand or product research, surpassing the corresponding figure of Facebook's (Figure 2). Therefore, it can be seen clearly that Instagram has the potential to be used as a marketing tool for any brand particularly for targeting audience aged between 25 to 34, which is the main demographic on Instagram.

Like many other social media platforms, Instagram provides several components that creators or brands should learn about (Butow, 2020). Starting with the first feature that audience would

see when they click on an Instagram profile, Instagram Bio, the section stays under the profile picture (Gagliardi, 2023). It is often used by the creators or brands to show who they are and what they do concisely. A good bio can be defined as concrete and informative, meaning that from which the audience can get an overview of what value they would find from the channel. To do this, the users can utilize relevant keywords, links, or hashtags that represent themselves in the most authentic and precise way.

Besides, Instagram Story allows users to post images, videos, music, or texts that would last for maximum 24 hours after posting (Freedman, 2023a). Here the audience engages with the user via different ways such as replying, sending reactions, answering questions or polls that are created by the creator. Moreover, after 24 hours, Stories can be added to Instagram Highlight, from which people can rewatch on purpose. To make the best out of this feature, many creators have been sharing and categorizing important news that they want their audience to know about them, which makes their profile more organized and informative.

Since Instagram is a photo-centric social platform, it concentrates on photo and video contents (Butow, 2020). This means sharing engaging visual contents with good quality in either color, alignment or key points is an essential factor on this social platform. Indeed, posts with loads of texts are likely to have deficient performance as it discourages people from learning more about the brand, Butow mentioned.

Instagram reels are short-form videos that can range from 15 to 90 seconds long (Demeku, 2023). This feature is significantly helpful for brands to highlight their creativity and extend reach to potential audience on the platform. According to Christine Colling, social media manager of Later, their engagement rate has increased by 280% since they started sharing reels on Instagram. To do so, it is suggested to focus on the content quality and follow a consistent posting schedule. Additionally, the platform offers data analysis tools which enable creators to evaluate the audience engagement and learn to adjust their content strategy.

As Instagram owned by Meta, the platform provides paid advertising feature which help creators broaden their reach with customized objectives (Butow, 2020). Either Business or Creator Account can run Advertising on Instagram and the user can create and manage the project on Facebook Ads Manager site. Several types of Instagram ads can be listed as Image, Story, Video, Carousel, Collection, Explore, Shopping and Reels (Table 2).

Table 2. Types of Instagram ads (Macready, 2023).

Ad types	Feature
Image ads	Promoting business's products or services by single images
Story ads	Promoting business's products or services by images or videos published on users' stories
Video ads	Promoting brands, products, or services by compelling videos (preferably short videos)
Carousel ads	Promoting brands, products, or services by a series of images or videos. It can be seen in-feed or on story section and users and swipe through to view.
Collection ads	Promoting products from user's product catalog. Users can purchase products directly from the ad or lead user to Instagram Instant Experience Storefront. Hence, it is highly recommended for e-commerce brands.
Explore ads	Promoting brands, products, or services on the Explore tab by images or videos. It appears once users click on a content from this site.
Shopping ads	Promoting products in Shopping catalog, where users can buy it without having to leave Instagram app.
Reels ads	Promoting brands, products, or services on Reel tab, in between other reels. It loops until the user stops the video or swipes away.

Overall, Instagram ads have some common components such as the Sponsored label, links, Call-To-Action (CTA) buttons and product tags (Macready, 2023). The cost for running Instagram ads varies based on creator's budget, preferred duration, customized objectives, or external factors such as holiday, competitiveness of the industry. The average cost for running ads on either Instagram or Facebook, cannot be measured. However, Meta has recommended to start Instagram ads with low bid, 5 dollars per day, for experimenting. As the social network offers six types of ads, creators are free to pick the ones that matches their products or services and objectives the best.

Instagram's algorithm

There is no singular algorithm to decide what contents are shown to the users (Mosseri, 2023). Instead, Instagram classifies contents by using multiple different algorithms for different content categories such as Story, Feed, Explore, Reels etc. The general ranking rule is that Instagram would arrange, prioritize, and promote content based on how likely the user would interact with it. To do so, the likelihood is measured by signals collected from the user activity on the platform.

TikTok

TikTok, a popular short-form video platform, has a massive user base with over 1 billion active monthly users (Dixon, 2023). According to Kemp (2023a), there are approximately 1.42 million users aged 18 and above in Finland. The platform has young demographics with 70% of users under 40 (Schooley, 2023a). Even though most users utilize the platform for consuming entertaining content, 40.2% of people are there for following or researching brands/products (Figure 2). In fact, this leads to a new branding method that is approaching potential customers by creating fun yet informative content. Moreover, it is stated that TikTok is growing rapidly so it is a highly recommended platform for businesses to promote themselves nowadays.

TikTok provides several brand promoting methods including creating organic contents, collaborating with influencers, and running advertisements (Schooley, 2023a). However, the key to achieving success on TikTok is authenticity therefore it is crucial for businesses to prioritize their core values and objectives to define an appropriate marketing strategy for their TikTok presence. Moreover, TikTok has two types of accounts, which are Creator and Business and each of them has their own strength. Hence, depending on the business's demand and goals, marketers need to choose the one that can potentially work the best for the company.

In terms of advertising, TikTok offers a range of advertising options (Table 3) exclusively for business accounts and advertisers can create and manage ads on TikTok Ads Manager site (Hirose, 2023).

Table 3. Types of ads on TikTok (TikTok Business, 2023).

Ad types	Features
Video ads	Directing the audience to a third-party site when they click on the ad. This ad only displays if the payment is maintained.
Spark ads	Promoting users' organic posts or other people's if permission is given by the creator. Unlike video ads, this ad stays visible even when the payment is canceled. It can improve brand awareness and engagement rate.
Image ads	Promoting brand name and relevant text. It is available on both Global App Bundel and Pangle Placement
Playable ads	Promoting interactive activities such as mini games with the audience. It is available for some countries only.
Shopping ads	A combination of Dynamic showcase ads and collection ads. It is in the testing phase.
Carousel ads	Promoting a maximum of 10 images in one ad. It is shown on TikTok's new feed app series

TikTok offers more cost-effective ads launching compared to other social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube (Schooley, 2023a), making it an attractive option on social

media advertising marketplace. Moreover, despite having a massive user base, TikTok is still considered a newbie in the business field, especially the small-to-medium sized ones. Therefore, TikTok could be a potential marketing tool for enterprises to grow brand awareness as the market is not as competitive as other platforms. However, with such a fast-growing pace, TikTok is soon going to be used by the rising number of businesses. To optimize the impact of using TikTok as a marketing tool, businesses could utilize various strategies.

Two tips that brands can considered are:

– Understand the audience trend: Staying aware of the current trends that the targeted audience tend to engage with is a crucial factor for branding on TikTok. This is because TikTok leans towards topics that are entertaining and educating. Hence, businesses are suggested to research on the potential customer to generate strategies that can match the customer's expectation and share the brand's core messages.

– Embrace authenticity and casualness: TikTok is more casual than other social media platforms thus it prioritizes genuineness. Hence, brands are encouraged to be laid-back and joyful to better approach the TikTok audience.

2.3.2 Content marketing

Content marketing is defined as a marketing method that uses different formats such as written articles, videos, audio, and other media to approach, engage, and retain the targeted customers (MailChimp, n.d.). This strategy helps to keep the audience's attention, enhance customer loyalty and sales while consuming less expense from the business compared to traditional marketing methods (Demand Metric, n.d.). Statistically, 78% of customers stated that they felt close to the brand by consuming custom contents. Hence, content marketing is a must-try option to promote brand reputation and grow sales.

Like other strategies, content marketing begins with understanding the preferences of the targeted customers to select the appropriate content formats and platforms that they like to engage with. Subsequently, businesses plan out a consistent content schedule to deliver the values (MailChimp, 2023). Indeed, the audience is likely to engage with content that can empower, reframe, and entertain (Basilier, 2023). Therefore, concrete, actionable, and enjoyable contents are highly recommended for brands.

Content formats

There is a range of content formats that businesses can choose to improve brand visibility. Some common options include text-based content, images, videos, emails, podcasts, or e-books (Baker, 2023). This study aims to explore the roles of text-based content, images, and videos on TikTok, Facebook and Instagram. Both content formats will be applied later in the chosen case study.

Video

88% of customers were convinced to purchase products or services by video content from the business and 91% of people expect more videos from brands in 2023 (Wyzowl, 2023). Specifically, short-form video has become the most popular content type offering the highest ROI rate on social media (Needle, 2023). Moreover, many social media platforms have integrated new features that can facilitate creation of short-form video, such as TikTok shorts, Instagram reels, Facebook reels and YouTube shorts. Therefore, it is strongly advised for businesses to start creating short videos to leverage brand awareness.

Here is a short-form content example from JL Patisserie Bakery on Instagram. This store has been creating several fun videos about its owner's life as a baker, including funny moments with coworkers and customers. One of their videos reached a mind-blowing 40.2 million views, with 3.8 million likes and 2100 comments.
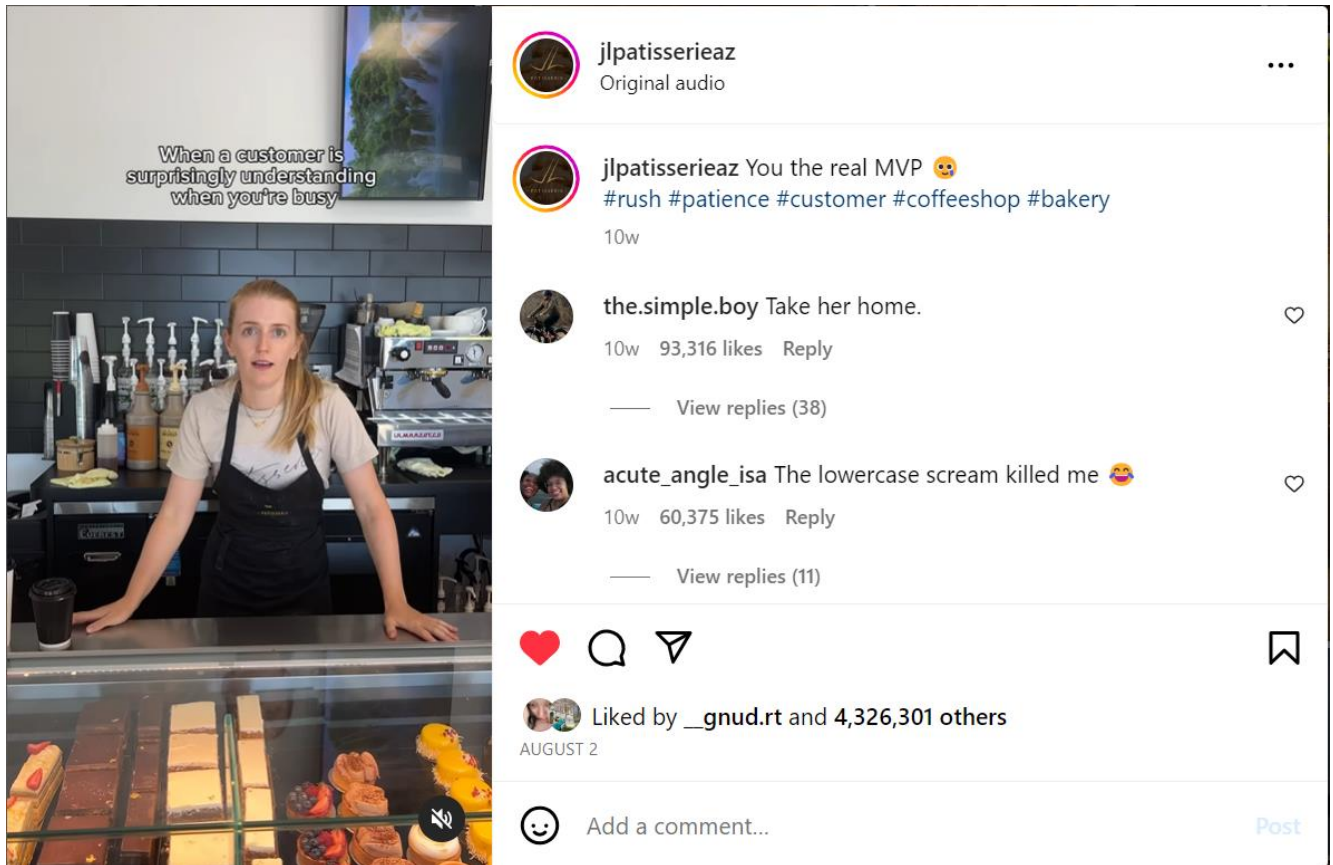
Figure 4. Fun video from JL Patisserie about their working life inside the bakery.

Text-based content

This is one of the most common types of content on social media (Needle, 2023). The main objective of this content type is to deliver messages by using texts. Sometimes, text-based content may come along with images or videos, but the core insight stays in the text.

Images

According to Needle (2023), 47% of marketers stated that they use images for brand promotion on social media, which results in a great engagement rate. Image-based content can be an infographic, product presentation, or entertaining posts. However, it is highly recommended to utilize high-quality images to improve content appeal to the audience.

2.3.3 Why and how should brands create authentic content?

Authentic Content is defined as content that shares genuine and trustworthy insights from a creator or organization which can empower, reframe, and entertain the audience (Basilier,

2023). In the context of business, the objective of creating authentic content is to show the brand authenticity including the face and voice of the individuals working inside the organization, and the values offered by it. This may effectively shorten the distance between customers and brands and significantly improve the relationship of two parties (Ferrai, 2023).

Basilier (2023, p.9) mentioned that there are only 1 to 2% of people who want to buy a product or service at a certain time. 98% rest needs motivation to have the "want-to-commit" to the brands. This is when authentic content comes in. Once the content can solve an audience's problem for free, they are more likely to desire to work with the brand. In another way, authentic content has the power to make business become known, liked, and trusted in the customer's perspective. Furthermore, unlike traditional marketing methods, the utilization of social media platforms can spread business's authentic content to unlimited numbers of people, helping to broaden customer segments (op. cit., p. 10).

According to Basilier (2013, p. 37), a piece of authentic content that contains at least one of these three factors which are empowering, reframing, and entertaining, will gain great engagement from the audience. People will not only consume the whole of the content, but also share it with other people, spreading the business reputation to a larger community.

Empowering

Empowering content helps people get the idea of a certain thing they did not know beforehand or did not think they can make it (Basilier, 2023, p. 37). This content type brings the insights to motivate people to accomplish something that is helpful for their life.

Reframing

Reframing content is defined as bringing new perspectives based on the company's expertise for a certain topic to encourage people's interaction (Basilier, 2023, p. 38). In particular, the audience can be either enlightened because they have adopted a new point of view, leading to positive comments or the desire to buy, or urge to discuss the topic with alternative opinions. Both lead to an increase in engagement rate. However, businesses should make sure that the content does not cross the line and become inappropriate, which could heavily damage brand reputation and create argument in the community.

Enjoyable

Enjoyable content is those that can entertain the audience and make them feel positive after seeing it (Ramirez, 2023). Indeed, fun content can stay longer in people's memory, leveraging brand awareness and customer interaction. Taking Local Patriot Roasting Company on Instagram as an example of how fun content can significantly improve brand awareness, this store created a short reel to cherish their customers when they have won the Independent Tribune's best coffee award for the second year in a row, in an incredibly unique and fun way. The short video eventually gained over 44 million views with 3.7 million likes and thousands of positive comments from people showing how enjoyable they were watching the video and would be excited to visit the coffee store.
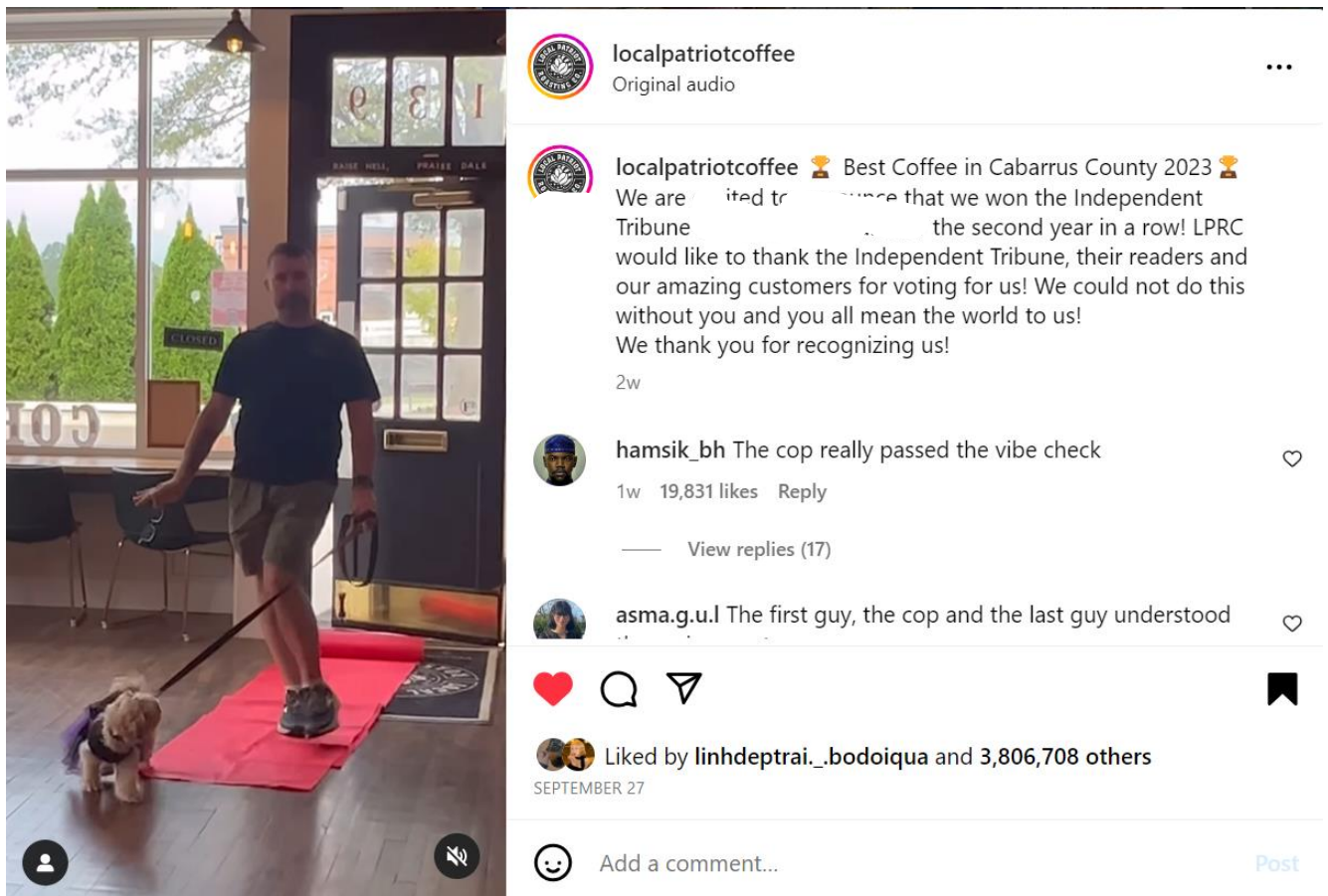
Figure 5. Local Patriot Coffee store's fun video to thank their customers for helping them achieve an award.

In fact, there is a content type named "Edutainment", which is the combination of Educating and Entertaining content. Research from Nielsen (2017) has shown that the attention span of social media users is decreasing to 2 seconds, meaning brands should create content that must be attractive enough to keep the audience staying and watching the full video. This is

when Edutainment content can save the situation. As the customer is educated and entertained at the same time, there is a high chance that they want to engage with the content itself and learn more about the brand backstage (Ramirez, 2023).

2.4   SWOT analysis

SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a model that is used to evaluate the competitiveness of a business hence generate proper growth strategies for the organization (Kenton, 2023). SWOT analysis is suggested to be used in every business context that requires implementation including checking and adjusting current stage of the company or exploring possible initiatives (Schooley, 2023b). Nevertheless, Kenton (2023) also stated that SWOT analysis cannot always solve the whole problem of an organization although it can facilitate the decision-making process at some points. This table below illustrates how a SWOT analysis would be described (Table 4).

Table 4. SWOT analysis template (Kenton, 2023).

Strengths	Weaknesses
Describe what the brand excels at and its uniqueness.	Describe what prevent the brand from being optimal, what can be adjusted or improved
Opportunities	**Threats**
Describe external factors that give the brand competitive advantage	Describe factors that can potentially affect the brand negatively.

3 Situational analysis

3.1 Restaurant 64 and its online presence

Restaurant 64 is an Asian restaurant located in Vaasa, Finland, is owned by Willain Chan and his wife Sundy Xiao. The restaurant serves versatile buffet food with a daily-changed menu. According to Willain (personal communication, 2023), it is revealed that Restaurant 64 lacks a concrete digital marketing strategy. Although the restaurant has presence on Facebook, Instagram, and the food delivery app Foodora, it does not have much content here. The latest post was from August 9, 2022 (Figure 6), on Facebook and December 10, 2019, on Instagram. The content is images with short captions sharing the food offered on a certain date. This might be because of the limitation of resources that no one has taken care of the restaurant's online presence frequently back then.
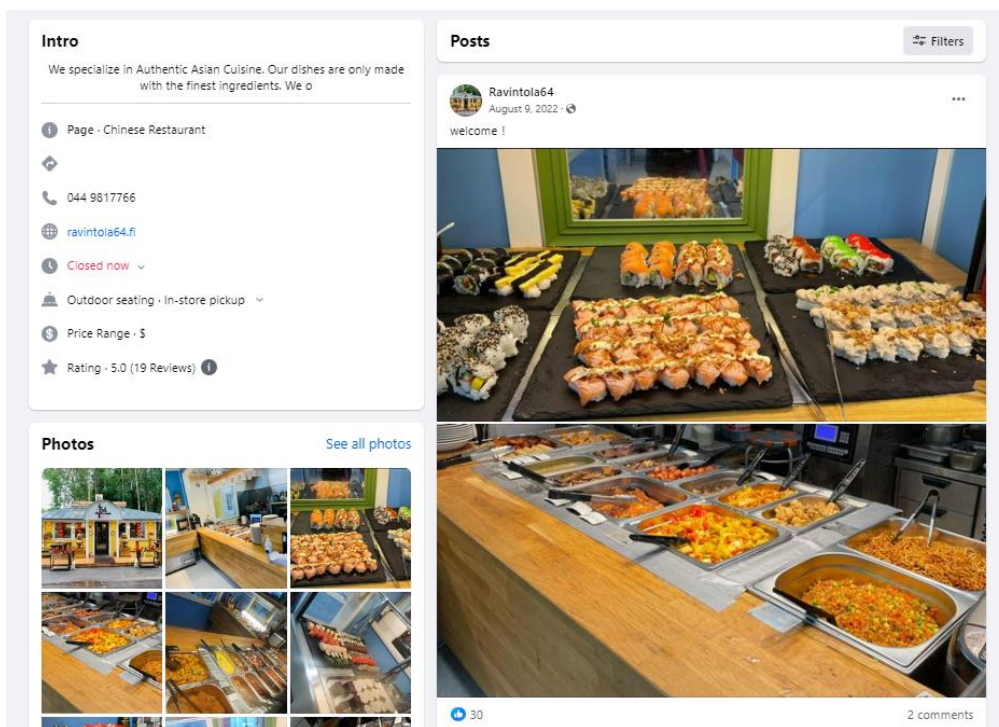
Figure 6. Restaurant 64's Facebook page.

3.2 SWOT analysis

As mentioned previously, SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a strategic format that helps to identify the current stage of a business. In Restaurant 64's case, the evaluation is expressed in the table below (Table 5).

Table 5. SWOT analysis of Restaurant 64.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Versatile food with fresh and domestic ingredients (Personal interview, 2020) Friendly customer service (Feedback from local customers) Affordable price (11 euros/person) Good review on Google review and Foodora Cozy and family-friendly physical store	Lack of a marketing plan with no social media, content, and website Distance from the city center while present on only one food delivery app that is Foodora Have many competitors in the area. Staffs do not speak Finnish
Opportunities	**Threats**
Some Finnish customers are interested in trying Asian food. Increasing numbers of international immigrant in Vaasa	Decreasing numbers of customers due to lack of information available online, leading to a decline in revenue. Increasing competitors (start-ups) Inflation leads to an increase in cost.

4   Empirical study

4.1   Methodology and Objectives

The main research method used in this study is quantitative because it aims at gaining generalized tendency of a large population in a certain field. In the case of Restaurant 64, the objective of using this method is to examine customer preferences when engaging with a restaurant business on online platforms, and subsequently generate proper solution for the restaurant to meet these expectations.

The targeted respondents are individuals who are residing in Finland and able to understand English regardless other factors such as ages, occupation, etc. This inclusivity is important as the study aims at inspecting digital, social media and marketing preferences of different segments of the population, to restaurant businesses. The survey was displayed at Appendix 1. It was implemented on Google Form and was accessible from October 29 to November 6, which was 10 days in total.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part one, comprising questions 1 to 3, where respondents were requested to provide essential information including gender, age groups and city of residence. This part aimed at understanding the foundation of the participants. Subsequently, part 2 with the remaining questions, focusing on tracking the eat-out habit of customers, helping to answer the research question about the preference of participants in restaurant marketing, in the aspect of content consumption and paid advertisements on social media platforms. This question arrangement was designed to explore the target group's dining behavior and receptiveness to digital marketing strategies via demographic and preferences analysis to provide valuable insights about the customer choices and engagement.

The last two questions were formulated to test the popularity of Restaurant 64 within the field and encourage feedback from the respondents. The output would be helpful to evaluate the current marketing phase of the restaurant, then combine it with the previous analysis to answer the last research question that was how to help Restaurant 64 meet its customer expectation in digital marketing aspect.

The survey was shared to many different Facebook residents' group in Finland, also on the author's personal LinkedIn page. The result turned out with 110 responses of individuals

living in different cities of Finland with diverse characteristics. Hence, the outcome was ex-
pected to reveal the patterns of customer preference and facilitate developing an applicable
and effective digital marketing strategy in the next chapter.

4.2 Data analysis

As mentioned earlier, the survey has gathered 110 answers with a demographic breakdown of
71.8% being females (79 respondents), 24.5% being male (27 respondents) and 4 participants
identified as "Other" or prefer not to tell. The biggest age group was individuals from 18 to 25
years old with 45.5%, followed by 38.2% from the 26 – 35-year-old segment, 12.7% of from 36
to 35, 2.7% were between ages 46-66 and 0.9% is under 18 (Figure 7).
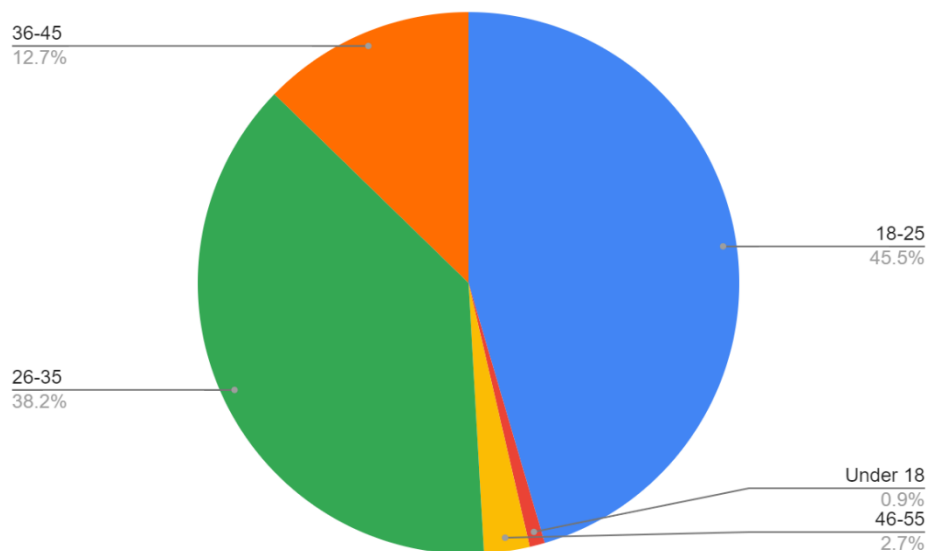
Figure 7. Respondents' age groups.

The number of respondents can be divided into two groups based on the geographical location.
Group one stands for local customers coming from Vaasa, Seinäjoki and Kokkola, owning
27.2%. Meanwhile, group two represents potential tourists coming from other cities including
49.1% was Helsinki residents and 24.6% was from other cities (Figure 8).
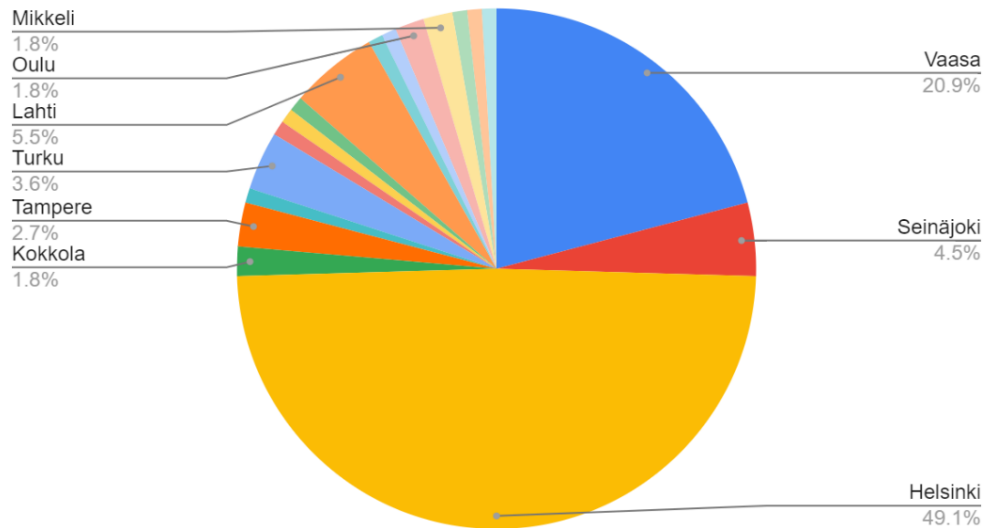
Figure 8. Respondents' city of residence.

In terms of monthly dining habits, 38.2% often dine out 1 to 2 times, 36.4% doing so 3 to 4 times and 24.5% exceed 5 times (Figure 9). The report also revealed that both local and potential customers tend to have similar eating out habits with the highest choice falling by 1-2 times, followed by 3-4 times and lastly more than 5 times per month.

Group City	1-2 times	3-4 times	More than 5 times	Never	Grand Total
Local	43.33%	36.67%	20.00%		100.00%
Potential Tourist	36.25%	36.25%	26.25%	1.25%	100.00%
Grand Total	38.18%	36.36%	24.55%	0.91%	100.00%

Figure 9. Eat-out habit of the local vs tourists.

In addition, 59.1% of participants frequently plan their visit to a restaurant in advance while 40.9% do not. However, when it comes to the primary sources of information about a new restaurant, online sites including website and social media are most preferred with 56.4% votes, followed by 38.2% for recommendation from families and friends, 3.6% for outdoor activities and 1.8% for traditional media such as newspapers, brochures, or letters. This tendency also aligns with how both local and potential tourists approach information of new restaurant businesses, with the highest percentage standing for online sites and the lowest favoring traditional means (Figure 10).
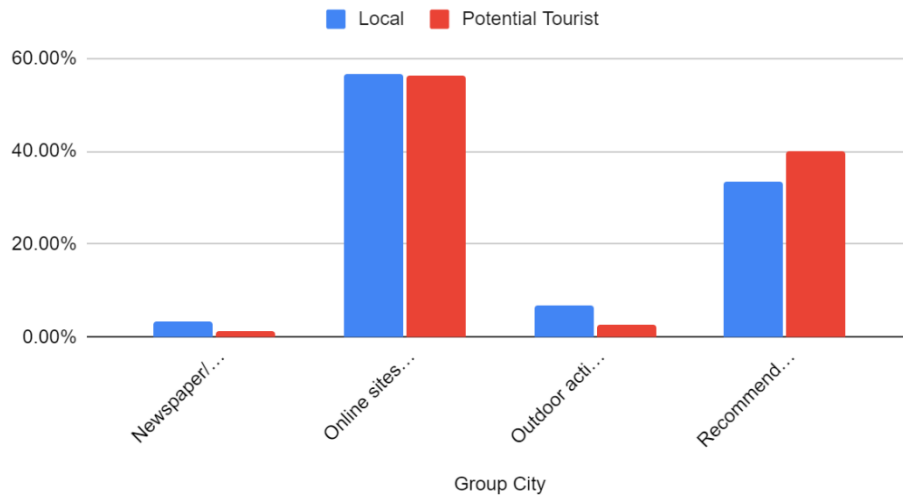
Figure 10. How locals and tourists receive information from a new restaurant.

When asked about whether customers would check restaurants social media channels before deciding to visit, 73.6% of respondents confirmed that they do, while 20% said they do not. 6.4% stated that they would look up restaurant information from other sites including websites, google maps and travel guide. However, in the next question where respondents were asked how significant they believe it is for a restaurant business to run social media channels, 85% of individuals selected options ranging from "Important" to "Extremely important", 11.8% opted for "Slightly important" and "Neutral", and only 2.7% chose "Not at all important" (Figure 11).
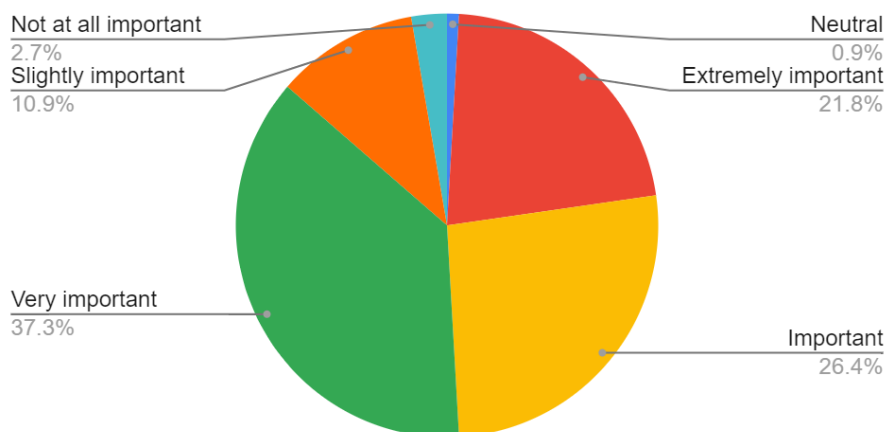
Figure 11. How important the customer believe restaurant business should have social media channels.

Most noticeably, 68.18% of participants, who previously stated that they do not tend to check social media before visiting a restaurant, still believe that it is important for the business to have presence on social platforms. Here is a comment from a respondent speaking about this statement:

> "I don't check social media before visiting a restaurant since I usually rely on friends' recommendation, but I agree that it's important nowadays for a restaurant/cafe to have active Instagram and Facebook."

Or this respondent mentioned that many local restaurants still can make a living without utilizing social media. However, unless the business already had a stable financial condition with good ratings from the customers, SMM is still worth a try.

> "I know how small restaurants in small cities restaurants still can cover the expenses without the help of marketing. But that is because they have not tried marketing yet, especially social media marketing. The integration of social media marketing might also affect other elements of the restaurant business (for example decoration, customer service training, events, and campaigns, etc.) but it is worth investing in. Unless the restaurant has the best rating and feedback and a stable revenue flow already."

In general, the survey showed that being present on social media platforms is highly recommended for restaurant brands as most potential customers would expect to seek information from these sources.

Next, the respondents were asked to pick social media channels that they believe restaurants should utilize (Figure 12). In the figure, it can be witnessed clearly that Facebook and Instagram are the top two most popular choices with 78.2% and 74%, respectively. Meanwhile, TikTok had only 53 votes, equally to 48.2%. Some respondents also mentioned that restaurants should frequently update their online presence on Google Maps, Websites, or Travel guide.
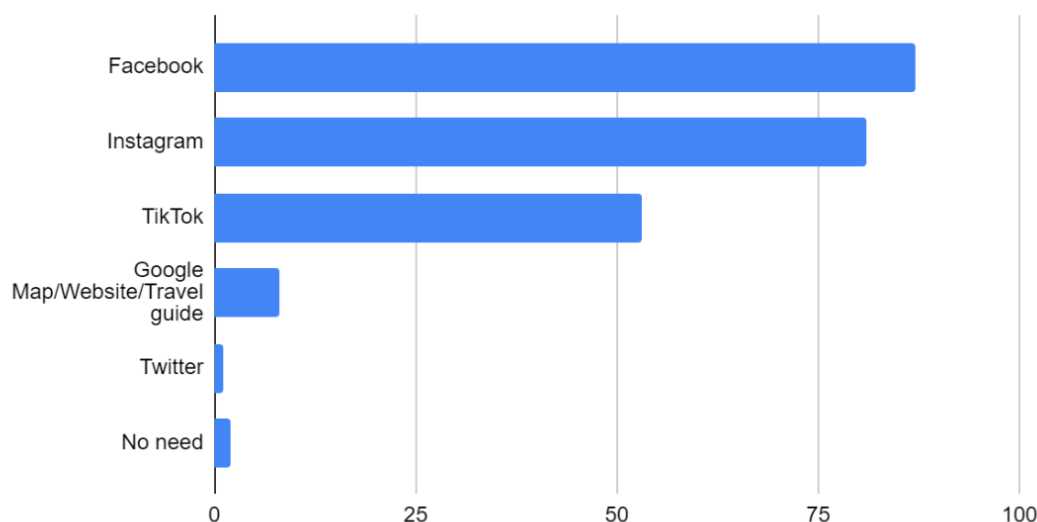

Figure 12. Social media channels that the respondents expect a restaurant should have.

Subsequently, participants' level of interest in several types of content on restaurant social media was examined (Figure 13). Five main content types with five levels of interest that have been listed out. The result turned out that customers tend to be "extremely interested" in content related to the food offered by the restaurant and updated news such as opening hours, prices, or discount campaigns. Meanwhile, entertainment and practical tips (empowering and reframing) content are stated as "rather interested". Surprisingly, staff-related (authenticity) seems to have the lowest point. Hypothetically, this is because authenticity may not be a familiar term for many respondents.
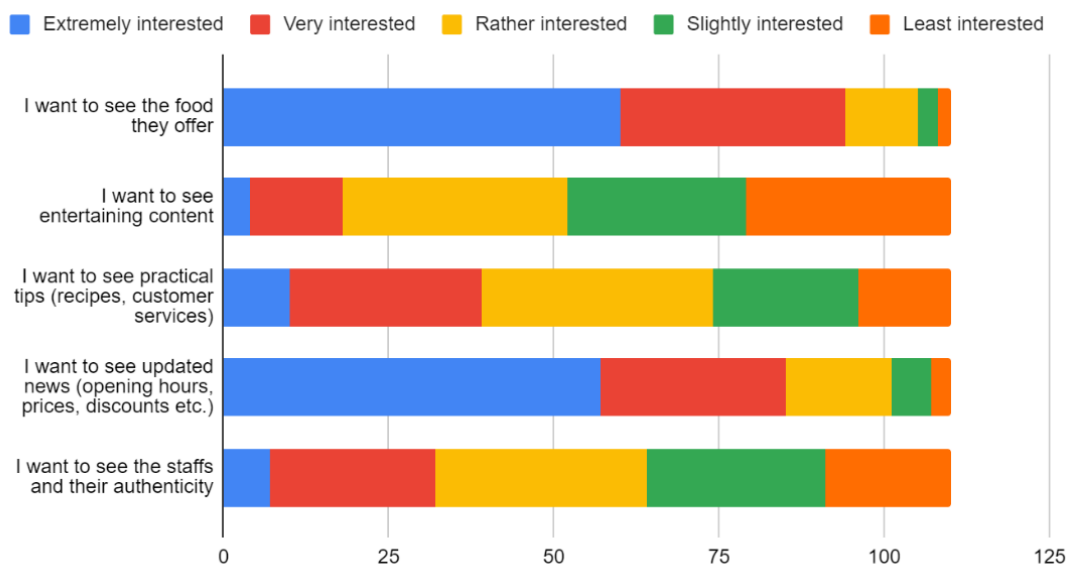
Figure 13. The respondents ranked their preferable content type.

Moreover, some respondents emphasized that restaurant businesses should have a consistent content schedule on online platforms. Plus, one comment suggested doing partner collaboration on special occasions, which could be a great idea for F&B businesses to consider.

> "Maybe have some specialty hand-made dessert that is on a change rotation every week? For example, the tea shop that I visit the most in Helsinki often has a collaboration with a bakery where there are special cakes on special occasions (Mid-autumn festival, Lunar New Year, Halloween etc.). They will make new cakes, and you can ask the staff for a good tea recommendation to go with."

Then, the participants were requested to rank the content formats that they would prefer to consume from restaurant social media. In the sequence from most interested to least interested, the formats were ranked as Image, Video and Text-based (Figure 14). One of the reasons why customers prefer image over other formats could be the quick consuming and on-

screen interaction. The audience may process information from image-based content faster as they do not have to watch the video or read the full article. Plus, when it comes to comparison between different restaurants, image-based content may make the process easier since the audience can save the photos to their devices or switch tabs seamlessly, which can be trickier to do with video or text-based content. One respondent who was a restaurant owner also shared that visual content is crucial for restaurant marketing while relevant texts should be a supportive source. They also stated that short video can work better than image although it might take more effort to execute.

> "Speaking from my experience of running a restaurant in Helsinki for 2.5 years, visual content matters a lot. Food images of course are critical for customers, yet other things like the atmosphere, the people, the process also bring benefits. Texts are mainly a supportive tool and work best when the message is relatable. Short video works even better than image but taking more effort as well."
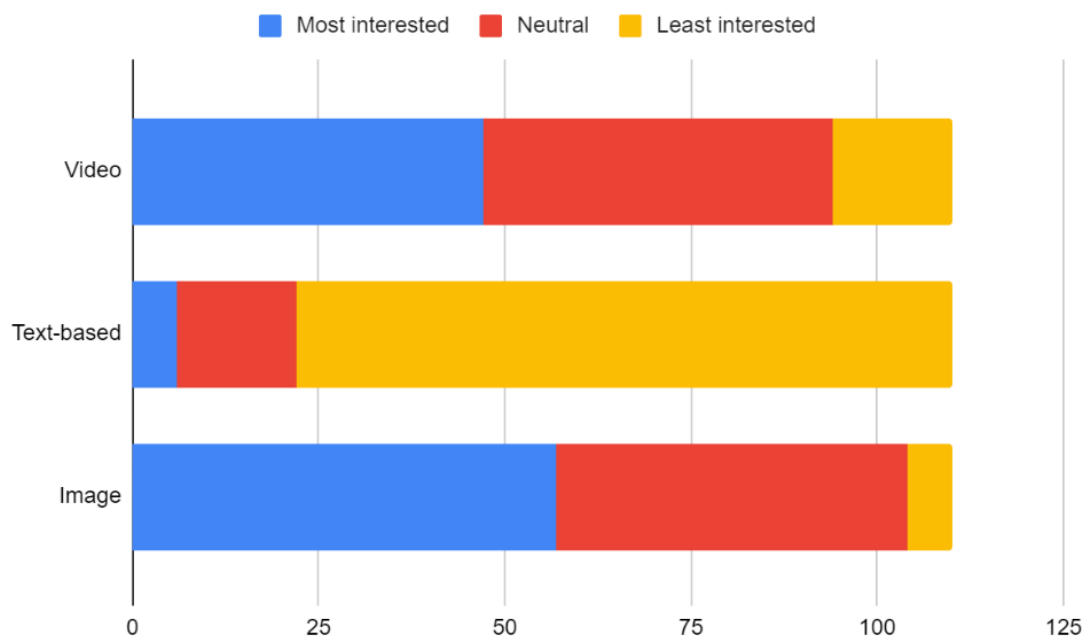
Figure 14. The respondents ranked their preferrable content formats.

The following question aimed to explore how important customers think it is for a restaurant business to run paid advertisements on social media channels (Figure 15). In this section, the report revealed that the two biggest shares were "Important" and "Slightly important" with 37.3% and 26.4%, respectively. It is continued by "Very important" with 17.3%, "Not important" with 10% and "Extremely important" with 9.1%. This means paid advertisements seem to be an optional choice for most customers. Some participants said that running paid ads is a great option to grow brand awareness, but it can cause unnecessary expense increase. Instead,

content quality and word of mouth are the best marketing practice that can bring more sustainable results to the brands, especially small-to-medium restaurants.

> "Not familiar with the marketing, but first focusing on creating good content and then boosting it with paid ads would suit good. However, the restaurant needs to be cautious that they do not waste their ad euros on paid ads that are low quality. So, focus on creating compelling and clear content organically first."

> "Keep posting on Instagram about your products and services and do not forget to share good reviews on your social media page. Digital word of mouth plays a vital role to make a business successful and failure."

> "I do not think paid ads on social media are worthy for small restaurants. It increases the cost without valuable returns. Word-of-mouth is the most effective way, especially if the restaurant's neighbors have a social media group, a recommendation from a patron in that group would bring more customers than paid ads."
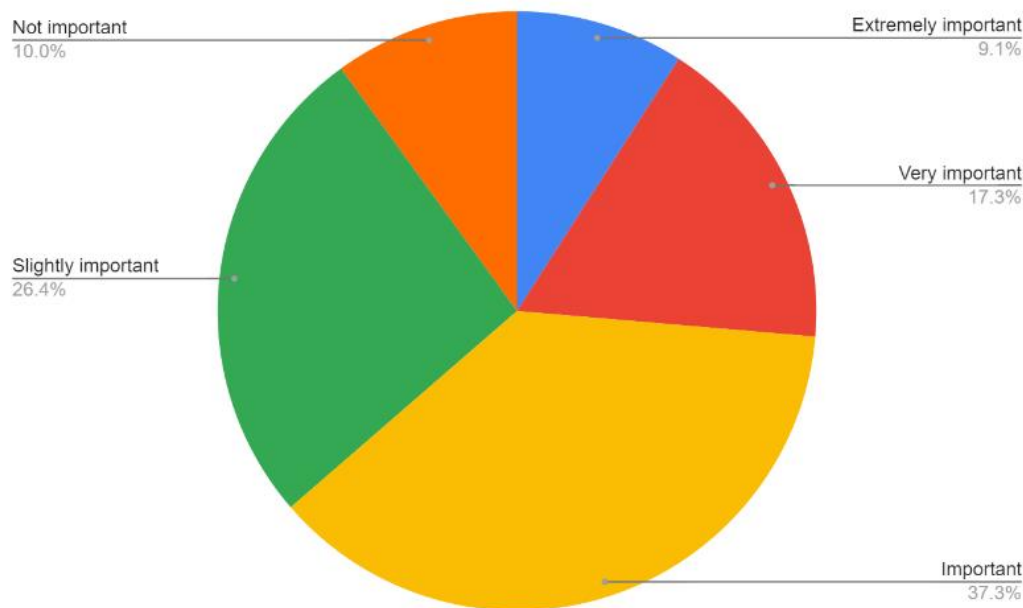
Figure 15. How important the respondents think that restaurant businesses should run paid advertisements.

Lastly, the participants were asked if they have heard about Restaurant 64 based in Vaasa. 81.8% said that they do not know while only 18.2% do. Commenting on this restaurant, some respondents stated that they heard about Restaurant 64 but the restaurant itself has a poor website with a lack of information and decent quality visual content and they had never seen paid ads from this business.

"Honestly, I have only heard about it through a friend of mine. I do not recall seeing any advertisements from them."

"I heard about this restaurant from my coworkers, so I don't know how digital marketing plays any roles here."

"Restaurant 64 has a poor website with lack of basic information and low-quality food images."

Thus, it is evident that customers expect an improved online representation of Restaurant 64. To achieve this anticipation, the restaurant could share informative, empowering, reframing, and entertaining content in diverse formats suggested previously in the theoretical framework and data analysis. In particular, the study would dive into the data result to propose potential solutions for the brand in the following section.

4.3   Data result

In line with the preceding statement, this section aims to reveal the survey outcomes with the objective of formulating an applicable and effective strategy for the commissioner in the next chapter. The development plan then intends to assist them to satisfy the customer's expectation in restaurant marketing.

It can be concluded that social media plays a vital role in restaurant marketing. In the case of Restaurant 64, it is evident that customers, including locals and tourists, anticipate frequent updates on the restaurant's social media, particularly on Facebook and Instagram. In order of highest to lowest interest, the audience prefers visually appealing content that showcases the food, updated news, practical tips, entertaining and individuals working at the restaurant, respectively. For content formats, it was ranging from image-based, video, to text-based. Therefore, focusing resources on creating image-based content with relatable texts on Facebook and Instagram can be a practical initial step as it requires less effort compared to producing videos. After that, the restaurant can extend the niche to short-form video and utilize TikTok to broaden the reach. This statement was also mentioned previously in the theoretical section that most customers tend to be convinced to use products or services through short videos from the brands (Wyzowl, 2023).

Moreover, being present on websites and Google Maps are also considerable. Lastly, while paid advertising is a powerful marketing technique, it might not be necessary for restaurant businesses, especially the small ones as it may lead to unwanted extra expense with limited positive results. Instead, it is advisable to focus on producing organic content and maintaining the quality of the values offered within the restaurant to generate WOM effect, which can leverage brand reputation more sustainably. In addition, customer interaction is an essential factor that restaurant businesses should consider when launching SMM strategy although this was not discussed in the survey. Indeed, it is reported that frequent customer engagement via social media can enhance customer loyalty (Baumöl et al., 2016, p. 200). In Restaurant 64's case, customer engagement on social media might encourage customers to feel satisfied hence they are more likely to visit the restaurant again. This interaction can be fostered through several actions involving responding to customer's comments and messages, creating, featuring customer feedback on the main page, and executing interactive campaigns such as mini games with discount offers, to encourage customer engagement.

5 Marketing development strategy

In this section, a digital marketing strategy is introduced based on previous research and analysis. The main objective of this new plan is to help Restaurant 64 improve brand awareness via content marketing on social media platforms. Thus, some content ideas would be displayed along with a suggested weekly content plan in the Appendix 2 section.

5.1 Scope of the strategy

The digital marketing plan targets two customer segments that are the locals residing in Vaasa, Seinäjoki, Kokkola and the potential tourists coming from other cities of Finland. Based on the empirical research result, the plan initially focusses on Facebook and Instagram and later expands to TikTok with reposting method.

5.2 Development strategy

Based on the outcome of empirical research, image-based might be a good initial step for Restaurant 64 at the beginning of the content marketing journey. With this content format, the restaurant can share pictures of the foods offered during the day. Taking Thai House, a buffet restaurant in Vaasa (Figure 16) as an example as they frequently share photos updating menu. The posts often gain positive customer engagement with numerous reactions and comments.
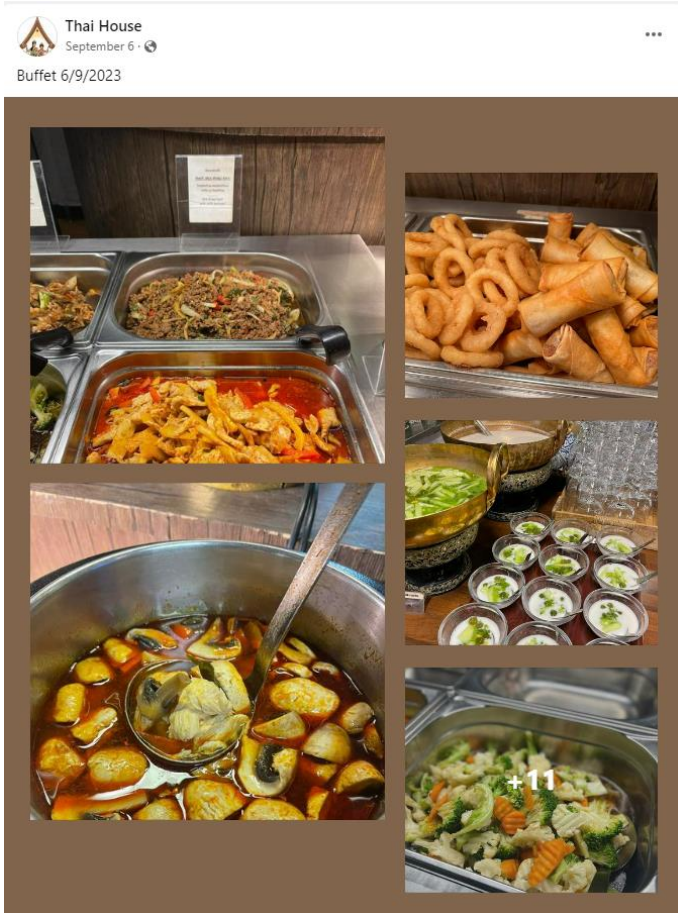
Figure 16. Thai House's image-based content showing their food.

Or Juku Sushi restaurant (Figure 17), posting a picture with supporting caption presenting a new campaign to celebrate brand's birthday by giving customers who have birthday in November free meal. This effectively encouraged the customer to visit the restaurant at the exact time. This content idea is a notable example of combining informative and interactive content, where customers can feel the connection with the brand, or they can share it with other people, resulting in an increase in brand awareness.
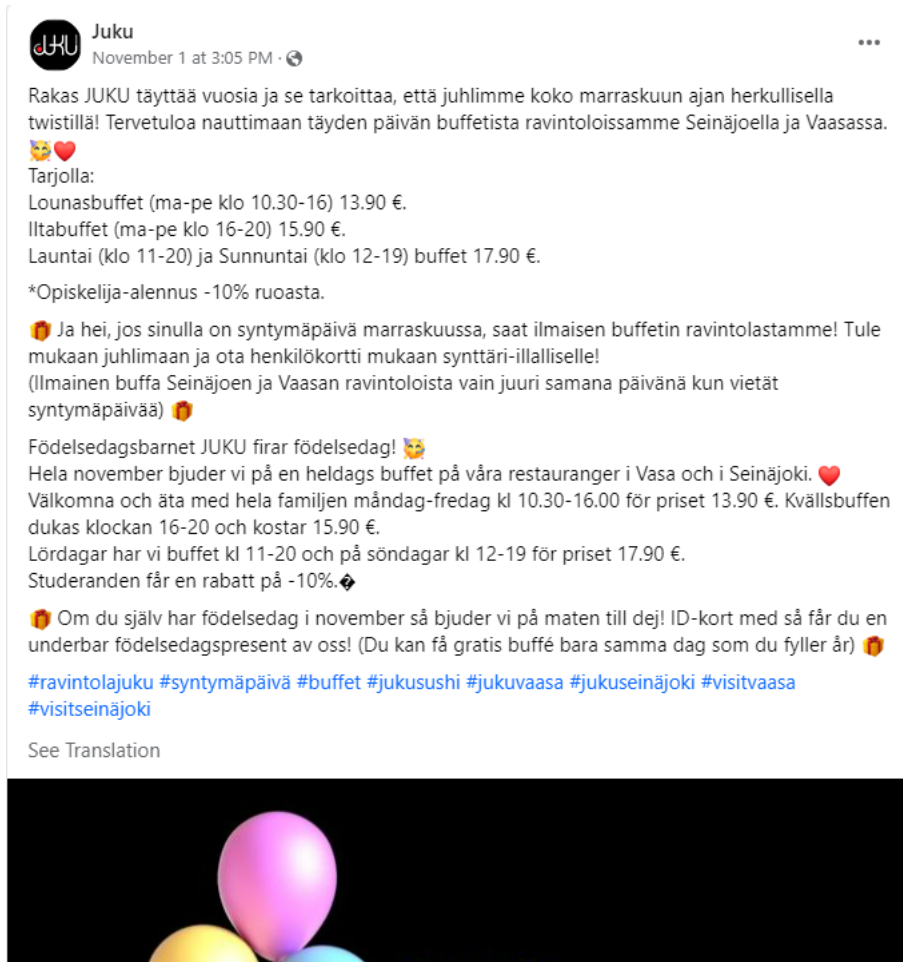
Figure 17. Free meal at Juku Sushi for customers having birthday in November.

Another content idea that can potentially gain customer engagement is sharing the face and voice of the individuals working inside the restaurant. This statement has been demonstrated in the theoretical section as authentic content. By sharing the faces and voices of the people working within an organization, it can build a sense of familiarity and strengthen the CRM that can encourage them to know, like and trust the brand. Thus, whether it is image-based or video content, it is highly recommended for Restaurant 64 to share the presence of the staff and what they do to run the restaurant to create a good impression from the customer's perspective. Moreover, this can be a game changer since very few competitors have been trying this content method. Hence, Restaurant 64 can build its uniqueness and differentiate itself from other competitors in the local area. An example for this content idea is from Restaurant HEJM (Figure 18), a restaurant located in Vaasa, making videos sharing an employee preparing meals for customers on Instagram, receiving 6000 views and 190 likes in total.
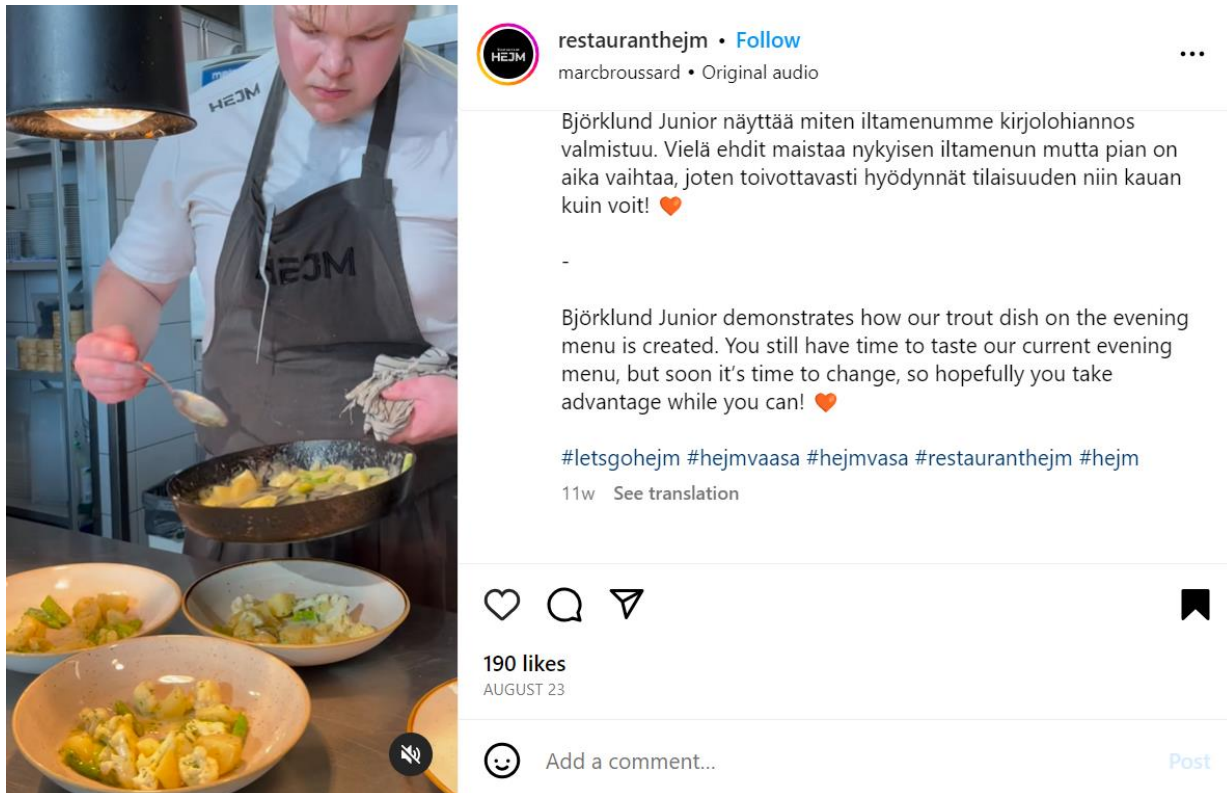
Figure 18. Restaurant Hejm's short video showing an employee preparing a dish.

In addition, Restaurant 64 can also make videos sharing practical tips related to the restaurant field. For example, it can be sharing recipes or tips to handle customer satisfaction. This content type is named as empowering content in the theoretical section as it aims to show people how to accomplish things that are helpful for their life. Restaurant Nolla (Figure 19) can be a great example with this video sharing a recipe of "Boquerones" which ended up gaining 44,300 views, 586 likes and several positive comments.
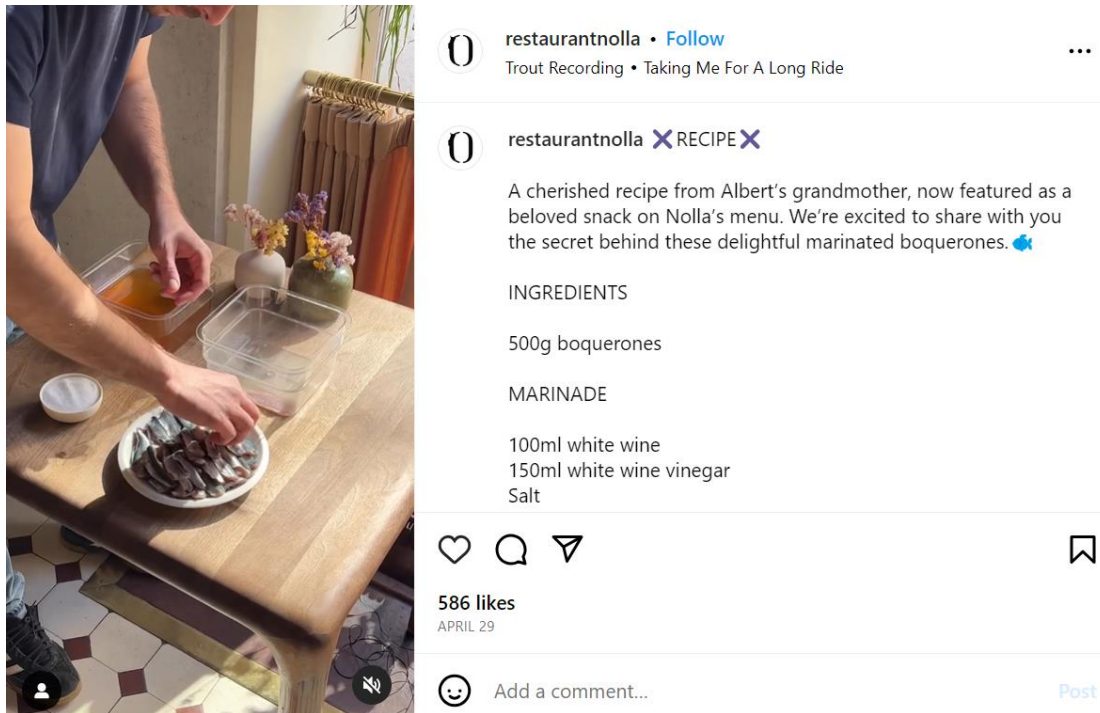
Figure 19. Restaurant Nolla's short video showing a recipe of a dish.
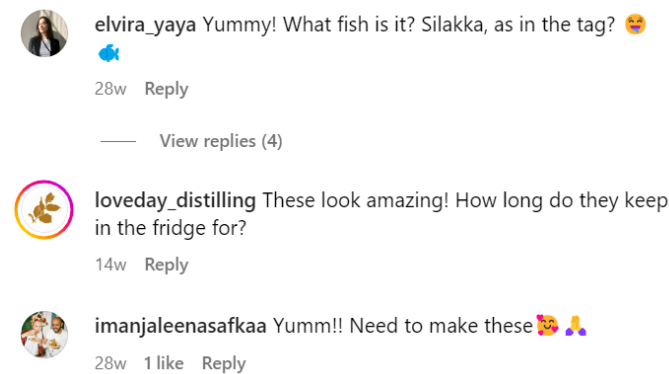
Along with generating content, Restaurant 64 can create their own hashtag **#Restaurant64** and add relatable ones such as **#Asianfood** and **#Vaasa** to highlight the specialty of the restaurant, enable the algorithm to detect the content type and deliver it to the right customer segments.

5.3   Content management

To make the content producing process seamless across social platforms, a content calendar is suggested to formalize the workflow of creating and publishing content by giving a structured schedule to follow (Oladipo, 2023). The simplest way for small restaurants like Restaurant 64

is to use the scheduling function inside the platforms (Figure 20). For example, the creators can use Meta Business Suite to easily plan and manage any content types on both Facebook and Instagram. When posting content on social media platforms, the creators may want to consider the posting time to get the best engagement from the potential audience. According to a study by Anoob (2023) described in Social Pilot, the best time to post content on Facebook is on weekdays, especially Wednesday and Thursday, from 7 a.m to 9 a.m, 1 p.m to 3 p.m, and 7 p.m to 9 p.m. For Instagram, it is weekdays from 6 a.m to 9 a.m, 12 p.m to 2 p.m and 5 p.m to 6 p.m whereas it is between Tuesday and Thursday, from 0 a.m to 11 a.m, 2 p.m to 4 p.m, and 6 p.m to 9 pm for TikTok.
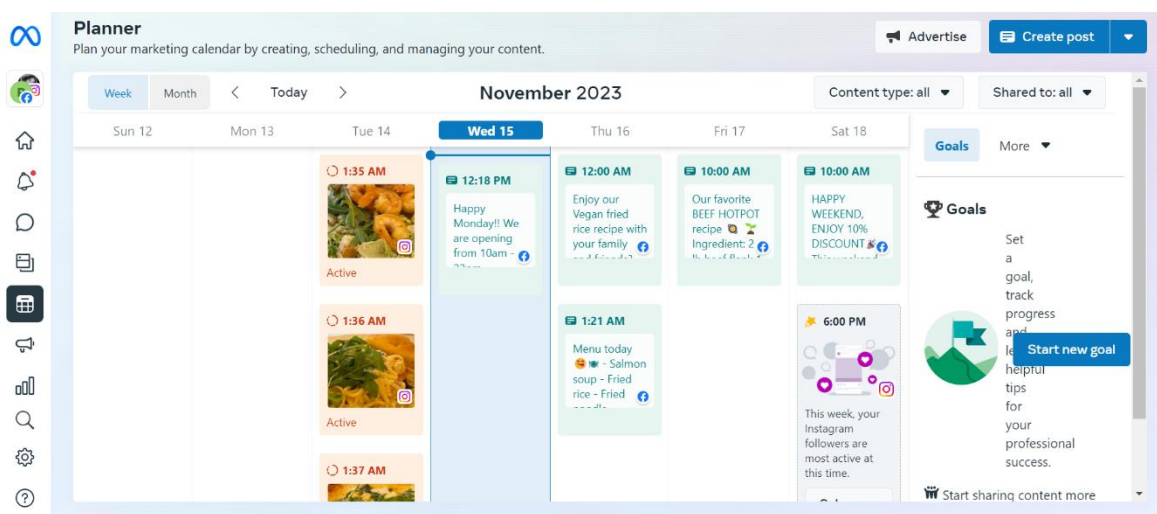
Figure 20. Content scheduling on Meta Business Suite.

Another advanced option to facilitate content management is to use third-party tools such as Buffer, MetriCool, or Later. In Restaurant 64's case, Buffer and MetriCool can be a great option to go with since the brand would be present on only three platforms, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, making it perfect to utilize the free plan. Within these tools, the restaurant can easily plan, schedule, and distribute content automatically across platforms (Figure 21), extract data reports to learn the customer preferences and adjust the strategy accordingly (Figure 22). These tools would not only save time and effort in making content but also keep the work organized and systematic.
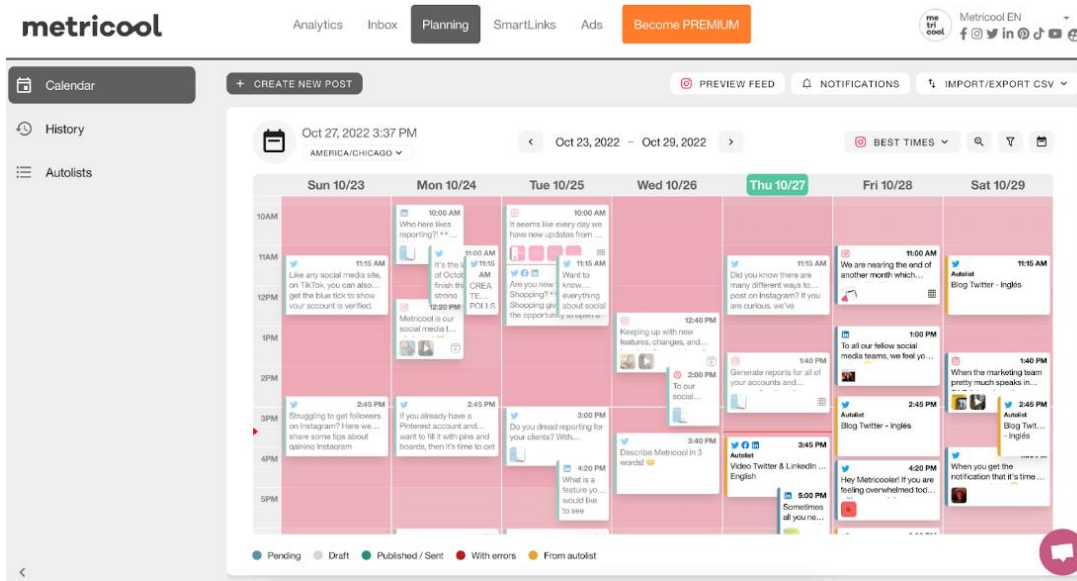
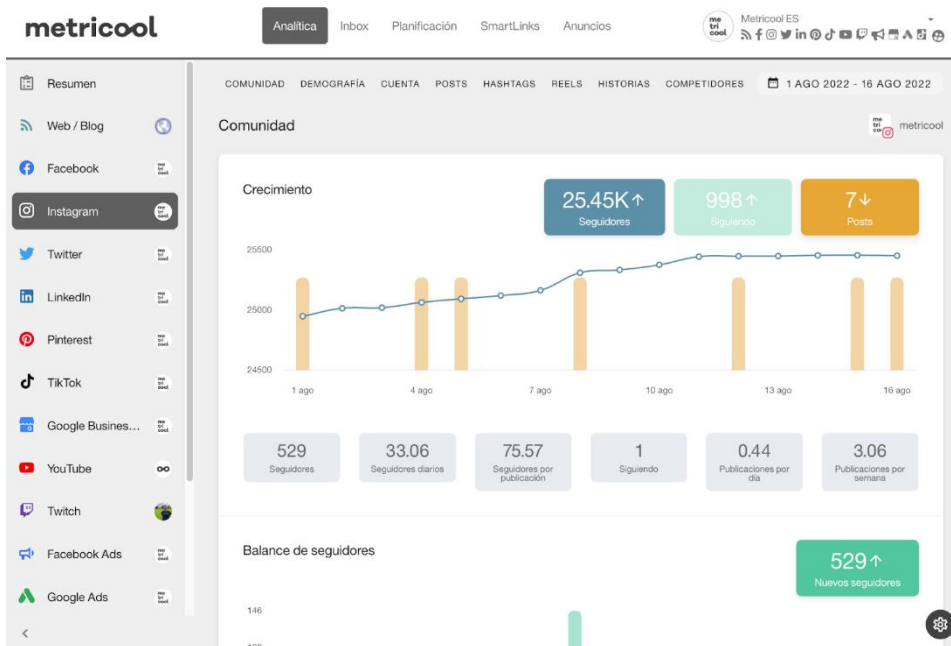Figure 21. Content distributing format on MetriCool (Ward, 2023)

Figure 22. Data report section on MetriCool (Bravo, 2023).

One of the most essential factors that make a successful content marketing for businesses is being consistent in posting content (Adobe Express, 2023). The optimum volume is estimated to be 1 to 2 posts per day for Facebook, 1 to 2 reels and 1 image post per day for Instagram and 1 to 3 videos per day for TikTok. Nevertheless, since Restaurant 64 has just started content production, it is advisable to begin with a small volume such as 1 to 2 image posts and 1 to 2 videos per week and reshare content across channels. Later, the business can increase the posting frequency based on custom objectives.

5.4 Paid advertisements

Paid advertisement was mentioned as a powerful tool in SMM in the empirical research. Nevertheless, the data result also discovered that it might be better for Restaurant 64 to focus on generating organic content and maintaining service quality initially before taking the next step that is purchasing for advertisements. This may help the business to avoid unnecessary extra cost. However, in case it is possible to run paid advertisements, boosted ads on Facebook and Instagram can be a safe and user-friendly choice which will help to increase brand awareness effectively. Taking ELO Restaurant (Figure 23) as an example of a boosted advertisement, where they shared the food images or videos with relatable texts describing the discount campaign.
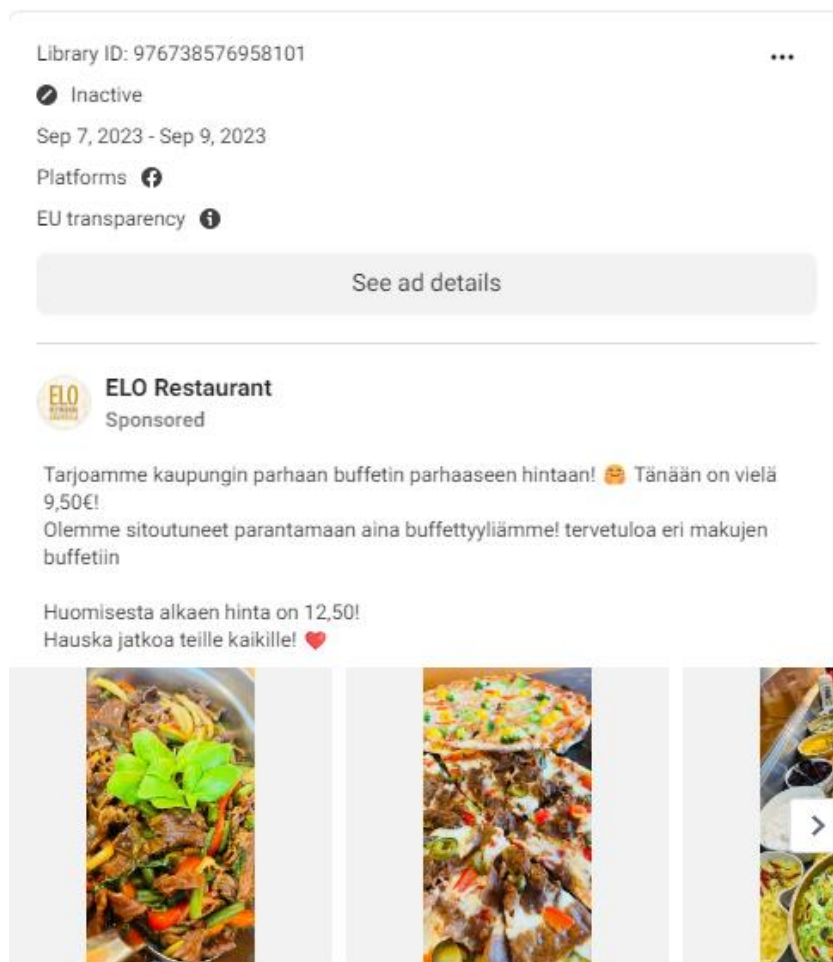
Figure 23. ELO Restaurant's paid advertisement on Facebook (ELO Restaurant, 2023).

With all the aforementioned points, this is a 4-steps guide for Restaurant 64 to get start with creating content on social media.

Step 1: Start with image-based content.

According to empirical research, the content type that was chosen the most was image-based. This type also requires minimal effort with only photos and supporting text hence it might be an easy yet efficient start for Restaurant 64. In specific, the commissioner can begin with sharing pictures of the food, service offered within the restaurant, related information such as daily menu, opening hour, or new campaigns. Supporting text is recommended to make the content more comprehensive for the audience. Starting with scheduling posts inside the platform is the fastest way to organize and manage content workflow.

Step 2: Try different content types and formats.

The following step is to diversify content types and formats. For example, Restaurant 64 may continue with educational content where they would film the chefs and staff working in the kitchen or share simple recipes to provide the audience with values that may help to solve a certain problem. Plus, they can test entertaining content such as sharing a fun fact picture that can be relatable to either the F&B field or customer side.

Step 3: Post consistently.

Consistency is a crucial factor that can determine whether a strategy is effective or not. A tip for staying consistent in content creation is to plan at least one week ahead. By doing so, the brand has enough time to ideate and prepare the content without being under pressure.

Step 4: Interact with customers.

As was discussed above, an authentic interaction would help in building a connection between the brand and the potential customer. Having a close relationship with the clients would increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. This can be done by answering customer's comment or message, creating user-generated content, or interactive campaigns.

An outline of a weekly content plan for Restaurant 64 is illustrated in Appendix 2, where it encompasses several content types in different formats which can be distributed Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

6   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the theoretical framework, along with an evaluation of Restaurant 64's current marketing phase and a quantitative survey has resulted in valuable insights relating to the eat-out habits and preferences of customers in restaurant marketing. Thus, it supports formulating a practical and concrete digital marketing strategy for the restaurant at the end.

The study emphasizes that both locals and tourists share a similar expectation that restaurant businesses should have social media channels. The audience's hierarchy of interest gravitates towards visually compelling content featuring the cuisine, current update, practical advice, entertainment, and insights into the restaurant staff, respectively. Facebook and Instagram with image-based content and supporting text, is stated as the great start for small businesses. However, it is advisable that the restaurant business should explore and diversify their content types with different formats especially short-form video on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, to extend its audience reach. Interaction with customers is also a key factor that can maintain a close relationship with them, leading to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty. In the first phase of running digital marketing strategy, the commissioner should focus on creating valuable content and ensure its products and services can match the customer's expectation. After that, paid advertising could become the next step of improving brand reputation.

For future development, the restaurant is encouraged to explore methods of measuring marketing performance to generate optimum strategies. Additionally, venturing into new domains such as website marketing and exploring Google Maps implementation could offer avenues to enhance brand visibility and overall engagement with its audience. Once these next steps could be executed well, it may improve the overall efficacy and success of the restaurant's digital marketing initiatives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Appendix 2. Weekly Content Calendar.

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

1. Respondent's gender
o Female
o Male
o Other / Prefer not to say.

2. Respondent's age
o 18-25
o 26-35
o 36-45
o 46-55
o 56-65
o over 65

3. Respondent's place of residence

4. How often do you eat outside per month in average?
o Never
o 1-2 times
o 3-4 times
o More than 5 times

5. Do you often make plan in advance to visit a restaurant?
o Yes
o No

6. In which way do you most often receive information about a new restaurant?
o Online sites (website, social media)
o Newspaper/Brochure/Letter
o Recommendation from families or friends
o Outdoor activity
o Other

7. Do you often check the restaurant's social media before deciding to visit?
o Yes
o No

8. How important do you believe it is for a restaurant to have social media channels?
o Not at all important
o Slightly important
o Important
o Very important
o Extremely important

9. If you believe social media is important for restaurants, which channels do you think they should use? (Multiple choices)

o Facebook
o Instagram
o TikTok
o Other

10. Rank your level of interest in the following types of content on restaurant social media channels.
    Scale: Most interested – Least interested
o I want to see the food they offer.
o I want to see entertaining content.
o I want to see practical tips (recipes, customer services).
o I want to see updated news (opening hours, prices, discounts etc.).
o I want to see the staff and their authenticity.

11. Rank your level of interest in content formats that you want to consume on restaurant social media channels?
    Scale: Most interested – Least interested
o Video
o Image
o Text-based

12. How do you rate the need for restaurants to run paid advertisements on social media platforms?
o Not important
o Slightly important
o Important
o Very important
o Extremely important
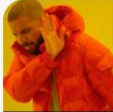
13. Have you heard about Restaurant 64 in Vaasa, Finland?
o Yes
o No

14. Here you may leave your opinion regarding digital marketing for restaurant businesses or Restaurant 64. (Optional)

Appendix 2. Weekly Content Calendar for Restaurant 64.

Weekly Content Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Post, Story	Post, Story	Post	Video	Post, Story	Post, Story	Video

Monday — Post, Story

🍲 **Menu of the day!** 🍴
Enjoy at Restaurant 64 with us today with:

- Sushi
- Tso's Chicken
- Pad Thai Party
- Dim Sum
- Miso Soup
- Beef & Broccoli
- Curry Chicken
- Hibachi fried vegie
- Matcha Ice Cream

Price: 12.5 euros/person ✨
Opening from: 10a.m - 20p.m

#restaurant64 #vaasa #buffetmenu

Tuesday — Post, Story

FROZEN FOOD

FRESH FROM GARDEN

Us

🌟 **Did you know?** At Res.64, Our chefs love shortcuts, but not in flavor!

We prep fresh ingredients daily from early morning market, so you get tasty, top-notch dishes every time you dine with us. 🍴

Join us today at any time from 10a.m- 20p.m for fresh delicious meals!

#FunTuesday
#Restaurant64

Wednesday — Post

🔥 **Easy-Peasy Fried Rice !** 🍴
Hey, foodie friends! Here's our Fried Rice recipe

Ingredients:
- Leftover rice
- Veggies
- Eggs
- Soy sauce & Sesame oil
- Garlic & Green onions

Steps:
1. Heat oil, toss in garlic & ginger.
2. Scramble the eggs.
3. Stir-fry veggies.
4. Mix in rice & soy sauce.
5. Garnish with green onions. Voilà!

Share your creations with #QuickFriedRice! 🍚

Thursday — Video

Description:

Behind-the-scene video filming the chefs cooking in the kitchen.

Friday — Post, Story

TODAY'S MENU

🍽️ **Today's Specials** 🍴

1. 🍣 Sushi
2. 🍜 Wok-tossed
3. 🍜 Fried Noodle
4. 🥗 Fresh Fusion Salad

Capture your feast using #MenuOfTheDay and dive into today's flavors at #Restaurant64! 🍜

Saturday — Post, Story

MINIGAME with Res64!

😎 **Let's play a Minigame!** ✨

Chopsticks are iconic, but do you know where they were born? 🍴

A) China
B) Japan
C) Korea
D) Thailand

Drop your answer below and let's see who the real Asian culture aficionados are! 🌏🏆

🎁 The first 3 correct answers will win a coupon from us! 🎉

Stay tuned every Saturday for more fun minigame to win! 🎮🍴

#Minigame #Restaurant64

Sunday — Video

Description:

Sharing Vietnamese Noodle Soup recipe.