![samk logo]

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Event marketing on social media

Case: Länsirannikon Konepäivät 2023

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM
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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis was to create a marketing plan for an event. The commissioner had no existing plan and had very minimal social media presence in general, which lead to the proposal of this thesis on their behalf.

The plan was visualized in a 7-week planner which detailed the necessary steps of a successful marketing campaign. The planning started with conversations with the commissioner where we talked about their budget, vision, and goals. After that the next step was to get more familiar with the commissioner as well as their existing marketing strategies, for example what colors they use, following with creating marketing material using free design programs.

An Instagram account was created, which turned out to be quite successful and received positive feedback. According to the 7-week plan, marketing started six weeks before the event and the posts included things like event information and promotion as well as introducing participating companies. A hashtag was created and actively used, later it was used by attendees and other participants as well.

The results were positive, though there were some points which could be improved in the future. Positive results could be seen in social media statistics, some good feedback was also received verbally from event attendees. The conclusion was that the main improvement points are that user engagement should be prioritized more and the 7-week plan was not enough and should in fact be much longer, which should be considered when planning future events and their marketing strategies.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this project-based thesis was creating a social media marketing plan for an event. The event in question was Länsirannikon konepäivät, and it was organized by Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät Ry. The event was held in Rauma, Finland on September 30th, 2023, and was expected to gather thousands of visitors. To meet this goal, the event needed to have a successful marketing strategy for social media, specifically Instagram, which was the main purpose of this thesis. I had previously worked with the association in a marketing-related project on one of our SAMK courses, which means I had some previous knowledge of the company. The company representative contacted me and requested this thesis.

After identifying the event's target groups, the next step was to study marketing theory and then create an Instagram account which proved to be quite successful, reaching nearly 700 individual users in the first two weeks. The account posted only about the event: event posters, event information, and information about attending companies. In addition to that, every time the account was tagged in a post or a story, it was shared and interacted with. During the event the account was very active and posted stories throughout the event with occasional posts on the feed as well. After the event the posts included professional-quality photos from the event, and a week after the event a short video was published.

A month after the event the account continued to grow and had reached a total of 1746 accounts with 1405 profile visits and had made nearly 35 000 impressions, despite not being active since the week after the event, which proves that the marketing campaign had indeed been successful.

2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this thesis was to study marketing techniques and to create a working and successful marketing plan for a one-day event organized by Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät, that they can utilize in future events and other projects as well. The plan was to study different marketing techniques and platforms and identify the most suitable ones for the commissioner.

This thesis is a project-based thesis, and the outcome will be a timeline or a schedule on event marketing based on creating one for this event. The process starts with theory and discussions with the commissioner, then proceeds with creating content together with the association and ends with active promotion of the event before, during and after it.

Different academical sources related to marketing were researched, such as books, articles, and other publications. Social media presence of Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät was analyzed, and potential new platforms were researched. Several marketing tools were used in designing the marketing campaign.

During the pandemic almost all events were cancelled and are now slowly coming back. Especially smaller, non-popular culture events like this one could really use a solid marketing plan to reach as much potential visitors as possible. The marketing plan will include at least social media and local newspapers. The association does not have a big social media presence which was something I want to study more and find out if it would be profitable to create a cohesive social media brand for the association in addition to just marketing the event.

The completed thesis will be very significant for the commissioner. Not only do they need a well-developed marketing strategy for this event, but they could also use one that can be applied to other events and projects as well. They need marketing in several different channels, and it needs to be appealing to different demographics and target groups.

3 COMMISSIONER

Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät ry is a regional branch of the nationwide Koney-rittäjät. It is a nationwide registered association that offers its members union benefits. The members include mainly entrepreneurs that use heavy machinery in, for example, earth, soil, construction, and forestry related businesses. Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät has approximately 150 active members. (Länsirannikon Konepäivät, 2023).

Länsirannikon Konepäivät 2023 was held in LM-Park, Rauma (Lakarinkatu 46) on Saturday, 30th of September from 9am to 4pm. It was a one-day event that allowed entrepreneurs and other professionals to showcase their businesses, and especially their heavy machines and other work equipment. Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät describe the event as an "excellent networking opportunity for professionals and students". They also point out that it is a family event, meaning that there will be things for children to do and engage with. The event will have a separate "market area" where local small businesses can sell their products. (Länsirannikon Konepäivät)

Länsirannikon Konepäivät already has a working website, so in this thesis the focus is on social media advertising, Instagram in particular, since that seems to be their biggest issue. Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät does not have a significant social media presence; they only have a Facebook page that is not very active. Länsirannikon Konepäivät has its own Facebook page as well, which seems to be only active during the event itself. In addition, Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät has a YouTube page, but it only contains one video, and an Instagram account which is not very active either.

4 MARKETING CAMPAIGN AND PLANNING

Marketing planning, according to Indeed (2022), is a process that contains following elements: situation, information, and marketing opportunities analysis, forecast and start planning, target market selection, defining objectives, developing a marketing strategy, and allocating resources so eventually you can achieve these objects. The importance of the objects may vary between different projects and should aways be assessed thoroughly. The marketing plan can be short-planned or long-planned depending on the needs of the project.

The plan in the case of this event will be short-planned due to it being a one-day event that does not happen every year, making it unnecessary to have a long-planned marketing plan. Even though the plan created for this event can be used in the future as it is or with minor modifications, it is always useful to review it and adjust accordingly, since a lot can change between events, especially in this case when the event is not held annually.

Jackson (2013) defines events as "happenings constructed to bring together people for a defined period of time to achieve an identified purpose". Jackson further defines event marketing as something that is about making your event attractive to different groups of people, for example media, sponsors, and attendees.

4.1 Five W's

Hoyle (2002) states that any marketing campaign must be preceded by a continuous analysis of fact-finding. This analysis includes the so-called five W's: why, who, when, what and where. These questions are used to determine if the marketing plan is feasible. These five factors combined will form the basis of the market research and development.

The first W, "why", is the main message of your marketing campaign: it tells people why they should attend the event and what it has to offer. It should

actively encourage attendance. Reasons for the event should be determined and presented in second-person terms (you, your, yours) – meaning that instead of passive language you should use active language that convinces people they should attend the event. Hoyle also states that any marketing approach determination starts with "an analysis of the audience, the product, and the intrinsic assets of the event or the product".

"Who" refers to your target audience: who are you marketing the event for. There may be a set target group, for example people from a certain age demographic, or in the case of Länsirannikon Konepäivät you may have multiple target groups. "When" is about timing. Your marketing plan's timing needs to be right to reach the most amount of people. "What" tells your audience about what makes your event unique and stand out from other events. What motivates the "who", what catches their eye, what are they interested in?

According to Hoyle, the fifth and final W, "where", contains information about location. Where do you advertise, where do you promote? This W can be fulfilled in multiple ways, for example digital or physical advertising. There are fourteen ways of advertising (Indeed, 2023), and the ones most relevant for this research are print advertising, mobile advertising, social media advertising and outdoor advertising, of which social media advertising is addressed in this thesis.

4.2 Marketing planning model AIDA

The Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action model (AIDA) is a classic marketing planning model that identifies one's cognitive stages during the buying process of a product or service. It is used to identify how and when to communicate certain things on different marketing stages to customers. (Hanlon, 2023).

As illustrated below in figure 1, the AIDA model has four stages with each stage having a smaller amount of consumer as the previous one. This is because while you can initially attract lots of people, not all of them are going to be

interested, and those who are will not all develop desire for the product and so on.
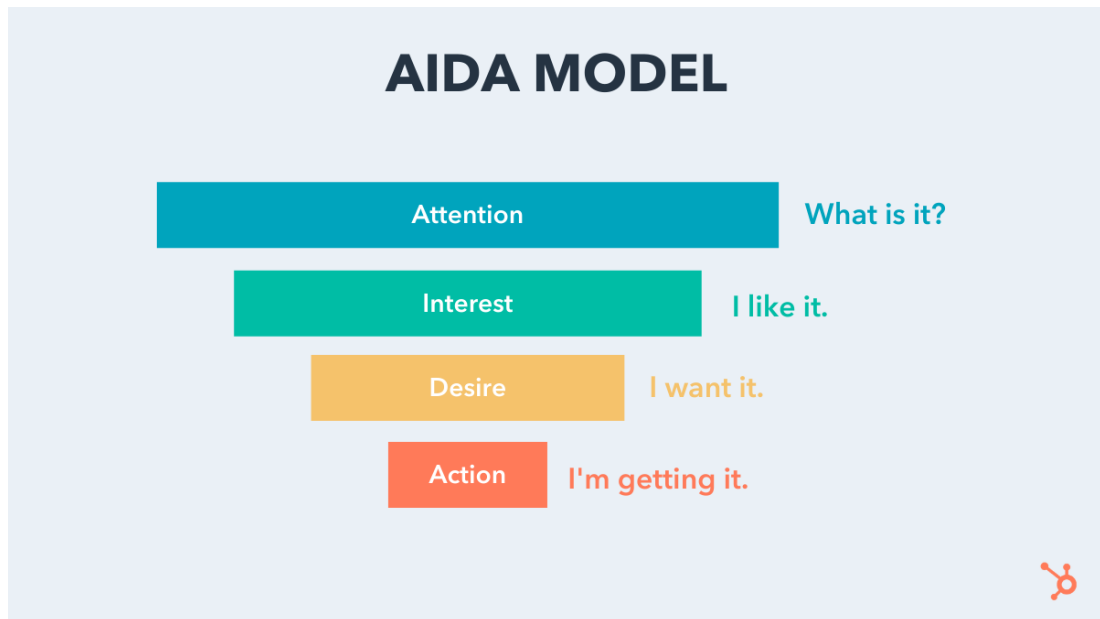

Figure 1. The AIDA model. (Hanlon, 2023).

The key objective in Attention is to attract attention from consumers. Your goal is to make consumers curious about your product, and that is achieved by marketing with increased brand awareness (Sellers, 2022), which in this case is the promise to see big engines and machines, networking opportunities and other related activities.

After attracting attention, the next step is to generate Interest in your product. It means that after being made aware of the product, the consumer is interested to learn more about it. This is the stage to be engaging and convince the consumer to keep holding the attention on the product (Sellers, 2022). Länsirannikon Konepäivät can work towards this by increasing the amount of marketing and targeting specific groups, such as families with small children who might be excited to see big engines, or students who are excited about networking possibilities.

Desire, according to Sellers, refers to the act of getting the consumer from "like" to "want". To achieve this, you need to keep them engaged and build

trust. The more the consumer interacts with you, the more they start to trust you and desire your product.

Action is the final step, and achieving it means all the previous steps have been successful. At this stage the consumer makes the decision to purchase your product. Sellers writes that the final offer you make should be of high value, or something they cannot refuse. They should be convinced that they need this product and that it will benefit them in some way, and it should be presented to them clearly. In the case of Länsirannikon Konepäivät 2023, the offer would be a free entry to the largest heavy equipment showcase in the area with activities for all ages.

4.3 Segmentation

Market segmentation refers to the process of dividing your target market into different approachable groups (Qualtrics, n.d.). The main types are geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral segmentation (Kotler et al., 2009). Different segments could be effectively reached on social media by using different types of targeting. Meta (2023) gives six different segments that can be used in its platforms, most relevant to this case the demographic segments age and location, along with several psychographic segments.

Geographic segmentation means categorizing people based on their location, or as Kotler et al. call them, "geographical units". These units include things like nations, states, cities, regions, and neighborhoods, in other words geographically distinguishable locations. Experian (2023) lists the main things geographic segmentation reveals, which are location, local climate, culture, language, and population density. For Länsirannikon Konepäivät 2023, the geographical segmentation will mostly target people who live in western Finland, specifically in Satakunta region. The emphasis is on Rauma, which is where the event is held, and its immediate neighbors such as Eura and Eurajoki.

Demographic segmentation means dividing the market into groups based on, to name a few, age, gender, income, religion, generation, or occupation. Kotler et al claim that the reason why demographic segmentation is popular is that it is often associated with the customers' needs and wants, as well as being easy to measure. Länsirannikon Konepäivät could use this type of segmentation as well and target different types or styles of marketing to people based on, for example, age, occupation, and family status. This would mean that an advertisement targeted for families with young children would be shown more "family-friendly" adverts whereas students would see more about networking opportunities.

Psychographic segmentation is the type of segmentation that is based on people's personality traits and lifestyle. According to Kotler et al, people within the same demographic group can have different psychographic profiles which includes personality traits and lifestyles. Kotler et al, as well as Userpilot (2023) identify three variables of psychographic profiles: activities, interests, and opinions, also known as the AIO factors. Generally, it means that every individual has their own activities, interests, and opinions and those can affect how they respond to marketing. Fleetwood (n.d.) states on a QuestionPro article that the main advantages of psychographic segmentation are having deeper understanding of customer needs, more targeted marketing, improved customer loyalty, competitive advantage, and better resource allocation.

For example, two sixteen-year-old students study in the same program. One regularly goes to the gym, the other likes playing video games. One loves cats, the other loves dogs. They have completely different interests. There are countless possibilities, and no two people necessarily have the same AIO factors. This leads to the conclusion that a successful marketing strategy should be diverse enough to reach and appeal to people within the same demographic but different psychographic groups.

Kotler et al define behavioral segments as placing buyers into groups based on their knowledge, attitude, use, or response of a product. Pipedrive (n.d.) lists six main types of behavioral segmentation: purchasing behavior, occasion

or timing, customer usage, benefits sought, customer loyalty, and buying stage. Since the product here is an event and not something you can purchase, this type of segmentation is not very useful. The main variable we can work with is the use of the product. One of the main selling points we have is the networking opportunities the event offers, making the event very useful for certain demographic and psychographic groups.

4.4 Digital advertising

Digital advertising is marketing that happens digitally, for example on social media, whereas physical marketing is tangible and often seen on magazines or billboards, for example. Digital, or online marketing has features that strongly influence marketing activity, such as unlimited communication space, high degree of market transparency, and high efficiency for clients (Veleva & Tsvetanova 2020). Some of the basic digital marketing tools relevant to this case, as listed by Veleva & Tsvetanova, are website, search engine optimization (SEO), e-mail, social media, blogs, mobile, and visual marketing can be seen below on Table 1.

Table 1. Digital marketing tools. Adapted from Veleva & Tsvetanova (2020).

Tool	Description
website	*Online platform with up-to date information*
SEO	*Website optimization, helps website to be higher in search engines and makes it easier to discover*
e-mail	*Effective way to reach target audience, personal communication*
social media	*Directing people from social media platforms to your website, opportunity to advertise, customer assistance*
blogs	*Online platform where people can discuss various things*

mobile	*Mobile applications, QR-codes*
visual	*YouTube*

Digital marketing strategies should have a similar structure to traditional marketing planning processes and should include elements such as goal setting, situation reviewing, strategy formulation, and resource monitoring. Goal setting and situation reviewing involve practices like setting objectives and assessing the situation and its possible benefits, whereas strategy formulation refers to defining commitments, identifying roles, and setting values (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

5 SOCIAL MEDIA

Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät has minimal social media presence. Since one of the target groups for the event is students, one of the best ways to reach them would be social media. Social media marketing strategies (SMMS) is a term that captures two fundamental elements: social media and marketing strategies (Li et al., 2020).

According to Iskiev (2023), the fastest globally growing social media platforms in 2023 are BeReal, Twitch, LinkedIn, TikTok, Twitter and Instagram while YouTube seems to be declining. Regarding Länsirannikon Konepäivät, the most relevant platform is Facebook, with Instagram having potential as well, with the possibility to add a completely new platform, like TikTok, to the mix to reach all target groups more effectively. As of July 2023, there has been some controversy regarding Twitter rebranding to "X" (Duffy, 2023), which together with the launch of Meta's "Threads" has caused its popularity to decline (Capoot, 2023), making it an easy decision to make to exclude it from the marketing mix of this event.

According to the Digital 2023: Finland report (Kemp, 2023), there were 4,62 million internet users in Finland at the start of the year, which makes up about 83,3% of the population. The split between male and female users is almost equal, with 49,4% and 50,6% respectively. The report states that Facebook reach has decreased by 4% between October 2022 and January 2023, whereas the Instagram equivalent is 2.1%. TikTok reach, however, increased by 4.4% and X, formerly known as Twitter, increased by 20%.

Based on this information we can make the conclusion that Facebook and Instagram may not be the most viable options for marketing anymore, and to reach the most people the social media marketing should be focused on other, more popular platforms. Despite that, the marketing campaign included only those two since they were the platforms the association was most familiar with, and we were optimistic that we could reach a satisfying amount of people on those platforms despite the decline in users.

5.1 Hashtags

Hashtags are keywords or phrases commonly used on social media that are prefaced by the hash symbol, "#". X Help Center (formerly Twitter) claims the function was created on their platform and is described as a function that "allows people to easily follow topics they are interested in". The hashtag becomes a clickable link which shows you other posts with the same tag. On some platforms there may be a list of trending topics – hashtags that are currently used the most. (X Help Center, 2023).

A hashtag needs to be a single word, or if it contains multiple words, you must write them without spaces, or it will break the link apart. X Help Center also states that punctuation is not to be used since that could cause the tag to not work properly. Letters such as å, ä, and ö found in the Finnish alphabet, along with other special characters used in other languages, can be used.

5.2 Social media platforms

Facebook is, as of June 2023, the only form of active social media the associ-
ation has for the event specifically. The event has its own page for updates
and a separate event page where people can "attend" or be "interested" in the
event. This page can be used for promoting the event on other pages or groups
on Facebook, and the event page can be shared on those pages as well. Fa-
cebook has countless groups, and since the target market is clearly defined it
would be smart to look for groups related to those markets or topics and share
the content there, for example Rauma groups, family groups, or Finland-based
heavy machinery related groups.

Instagram, though slightly decreasing, is probably the platform with most of the
event's target audience. Younger people (under the age of 25) do not tend to
have Facebook profiles anymore, instead preferring more picture and video-
based platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which can be seen in the research
conducted by DNA in 2023. People over the age of 45 clearly prefer Facebook
to other platforms, and elderly people's TikTok -usage is virtually non-existent,
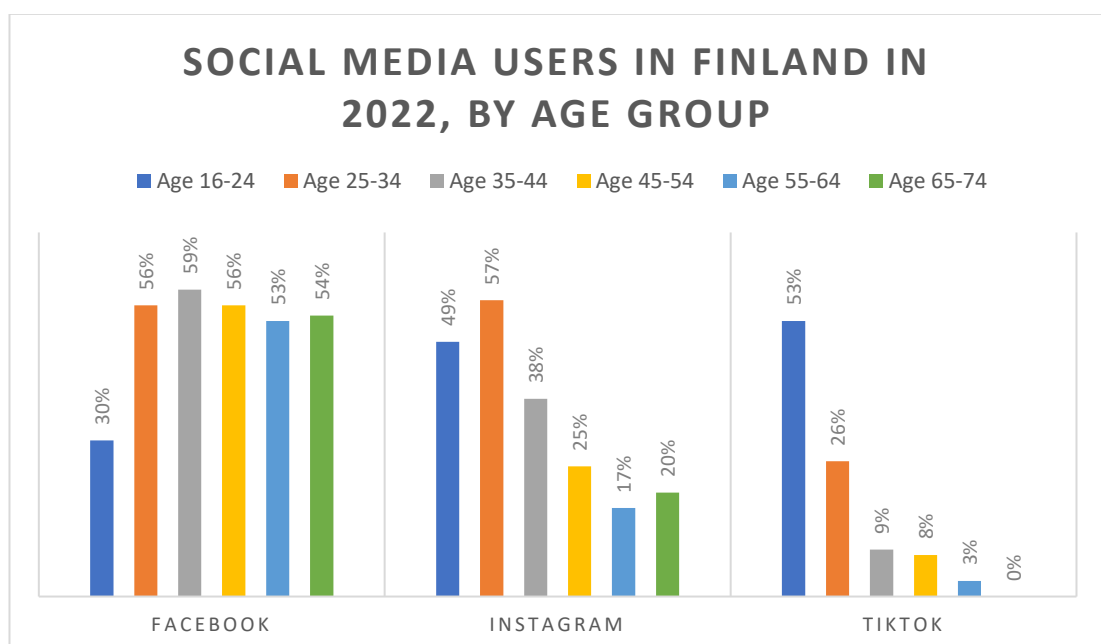as illustrated on Figure 2.

Figure 2, social media users in Finland by age group, adapted from DNA
(2023).

6 CREATING A MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Länsirannikon Konepäivät has three main target groups: Professionals, students, and families. Since these groups are not closely related (though it can be argued that there is some overlap), the marketing campaign needed to be diverse enough that it appeals to all of them. The most relevant segments are demographic and psychographic, and using one or both as a base for the marketing would be ideal.

The core timetable was seven weeks long as seen on Figure 3, starting six weeks prior the event and ending one week after. The first weeks were dedicated to introducing the event to the target groups, while the last 2-3 weeks were more based on convincing people to attend the event. Since this event is not held every year, it was important to make a lasting impression so that people may remember it the next time the event is held.

Figure 3. Weekly Planner.

6.1 Budgeting and decision making

After multiple discussions with the commissioner, we agreed to focus the marketing on Instagram and to keep the budget to a minimum, meaning that the marketing campaign was going to be self-made rather than professionally made. Free programs were be used in the design process, such as Canva, and advertisements posted on social media will remain unsponsored, which will likely affect the visibility in a negative way. Commissioner was aware of this but was not able to spend money on social media marketing, due to being a non-profit organization. We however encouraged people and companies involved in the event to promote the event on their respective social media pages as well, using provided materials or sharing posts from the event page to compensate for the lack of sponsored, or paid for, social media posts. Any post that the account gets tagged in got shared to our story as well if the post was available for sharing.

6.2 Creating visual marketing material

According to Georgiadis (2022), visuals in marketing have been increasing in recent years due to visuals being an essential part of branding and storytelling. There is a saying "one picture is worth a thousand words", which means that with visuals you can tell a much longer and better story than with just words. The Forbes article also emphasizes that when used correctly, visual marketing can help creating an emotional connection with your customers. The article continues with defining key elements of visual marketing, which are high quality images, storytelling, consistency with branding, use of different platforms, paid advertisements, and utilizing new features on platforms (for example reels on Instagram).

Color palette was chosen according to the association's branding and consists mainly of black, grey, and yellow. These same colors were used on the marketing of this event to match their pre-existing logos and marketing, thus creating a visual link between the brand and the event.

The key elements that need to be clear on the advertisement are part of the 5 W's: what, when and where. The audience needs to see what is happening, when it is happening and where it is happening. Picture 1 below is an example of an advertisement created for the event, where you can see all the three W's in focus. It is a high-quality picture, has some storytelling, is very consistent with branding, and it is ready to use on different platforms, even as paid advertisement.

Picture 1. Example of event advertisement.

6.3 Marketing on Instagram

Since Länsirannikon Konepäivät did not yet have an Instagram account, one of my tasks was to create and maintain one. The overall image needs to be on-brand and cohesive with other platforms and websites, meaning that the styling and colors will generally be similar. Since Instagram lacks groups, the most important tool is hashtags. In addition to #länsirannikonkonepäivät2023 the plan is to use hashtags that are related to the location, companies and businesses involved in the event as well as following and interacting with those companies should they have an Instagram account.

The account handle is "lansirannikonkonepaivat". It was decided that the account would be created without the year 2023 in the name so that the same account can be used in the future as well – the year is written on the hashtags. Leading to the event the account should be consistently active, and after discussing with the commissioner a checklist of posts and stories was created and then turned into a timetable of when to publish those posts.

The account started being active in week 35, and at the end of week one the account had reached nearly 300 individual Instagram users, seen on Picture 2, though the follower count was much lower at this time.
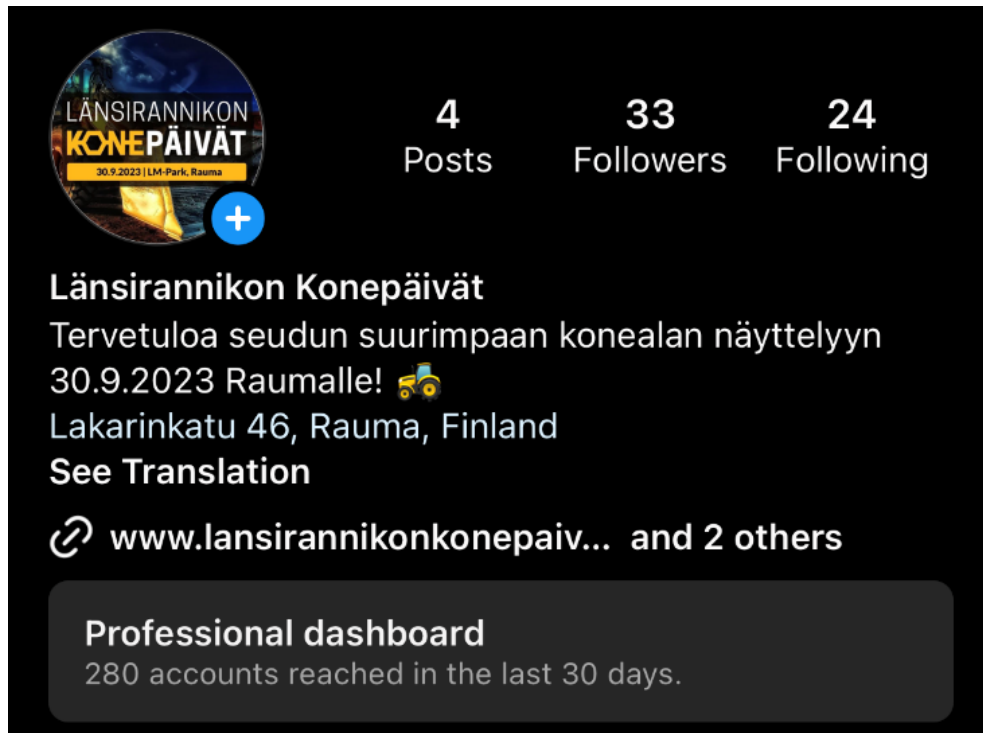
Picture 2. Screenshot of Instagram profile taken on the evening of September 3, 2023.

Two weeks later the numbers had doubled, and the account was active daily (excluding Sundays). To increase user engagement, the stories especially had interactive elements such as polls and countdowns; for example, a poll was held where people could vote their favorite advertisement (that would then be used in physical advertising) and randomly chose one of the voters to win a small prize, which encouraged people to participate.

The budget for social media marketing was zero, so it was essential to be consistently active and accessible, meaning that it was important to engage with users and quickly react to any questions that may arise. Since content visibility could not be paid for, relying solely on hashtags, and interacting with other users was the only thing to do. When posting reels, using an audio that is currently popular may also increase visibility.

A loose schedule was created for posting content; from Monday to Friday about 3-4 posts a day and a countdown post on Saturday. Closer to the event, as well as immediately after, the account's tags and mentions were monitored more closely and everything that could be reposted to our Instagram story was reposted almost immediately following the initial tag.

Since tools which allowed scheduling posts for specific times could not be accessed, each one had to be posted manually. Due to that, the posts were not consistently made at the same time each day, but the timing remained generally similar.

Instagram was also used during the event itself, by posting real-time photos and videos. This was also used to engage with our followers, by posting interactive stories as well as encouraging the collaborating companies to promote the event of their own channels.

7 OUTCOME

The Instagram account had grown satisfactorily in the weeks leading up to the event. The posts that were made got little attention in the form of likes and comments, but analytics show that they were viewed by many people, most likely due to the hashtags used. The impression count was decent as well. When sharing posts about collaborating companies, some of them then shared those posts on their own stories and feeds, thus increasing the exposure even more. Participating companies and people started to use the hashtag as well, and some of them even adopted the same style of emoji-usage as we did on our account, for example using yellow hearts instead of the standard red.

Figure 4 shows an illustrated comparison of total Instagram accounts reached before and after the event, showing that during and after the event there were over 400 new accounts reached and the follower count increased by 15

accounts between September 30th and October 3rd. The impressions (how many times a post was shown to users) count more than doubled. This leads to the conclusion that during the event the visibility was much higher than before the event, even though most of the marketing during the event happened in the form of stories rather than actual posts.
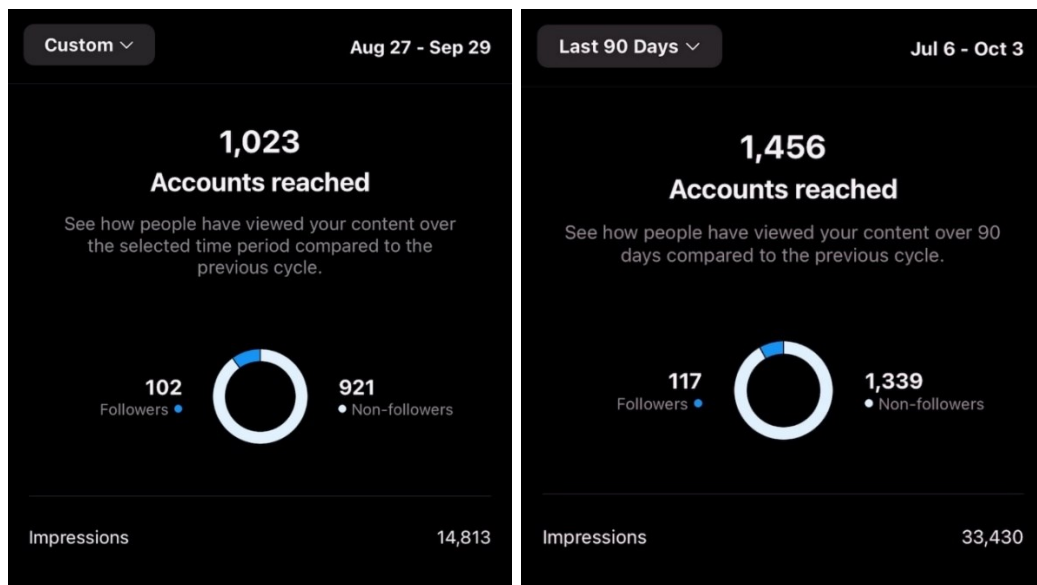

Figure 4. Instagram statistics before and after the event.

7.1 Engagement and interaction rates

Even though the number of reached accounts was quite good, the overall engagement rate was only 9%. This means that 91% of all accounts that saw our content kept on scrolling and did not engage further. From that we can draw the conclusion that the marketing should be more effective in engaging people instead of mostly promotional content about the event.

In figure the difference between the engagement of followers and non-followers is almost evenly distributed, with follower engagement being slightly higher. Since the reached follower count was 117 on October 3rd, we can determine that the follower engagement rate is 68,35% which means more than half of our followers engaged with our content whereas with non-followers the rate is 3,81%.

When reviewing the interaction rates, we had 643 post interactions which includes likes, comments, and saves. Since the comment count is significantly lower compared to the like count, roughly 42 likes per comment, the earlier conclusion can be applied here as well: the posts were not engaging enough. Liking posts is easy to do and it can be assumed that many like posts without paying much attention to them, whereas a post needs to be really engaging to drive people to leave comments. This is something that can be improved the next time the event is held, and hopefully the results will be better.
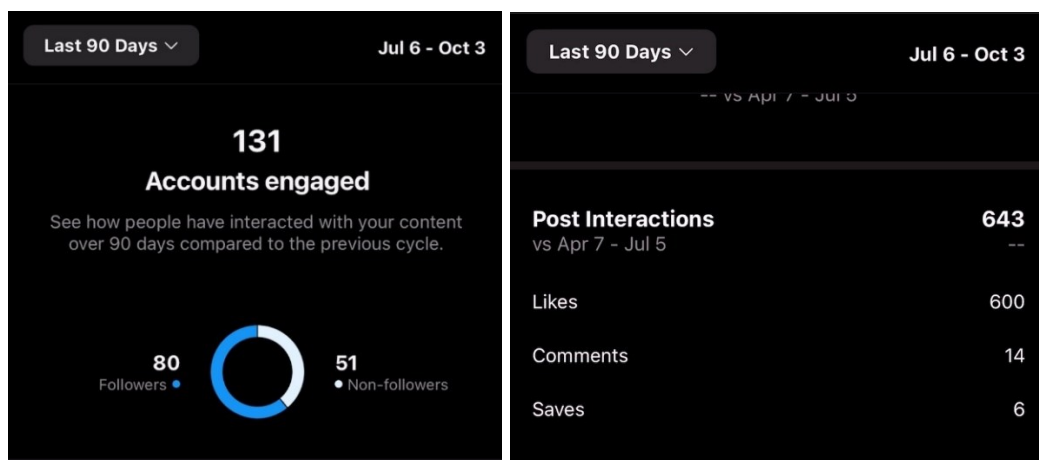

Figure 5. Accounts engaged and post interactions.

7.2 Growth

The account growth happened sporadically rather than consistently, with distinct peaks as seen in figure 6. The peaks happened roughly every two weeks, with the highest peaks being on the first days of the account being active as well as the days surrounding the event itself, those being the times the account was most active as well.

Overall, the account had 154 followers of which total of 7 ended up unfollowing the account at some point, making the unfollow percentage 4,55% meaning that 95,45% of the followers were interested enough to keep following the account. This can be tied to the AIDA model discussed in chapter 4.1, where we learned that out of all people expressing attention and interest, in this case in the form of following the account, some will eventually lose interest preventing

them from developing the desire and need for action towards the product which then leads to unfollowing. Considering that, the unfollowing rate is very good.
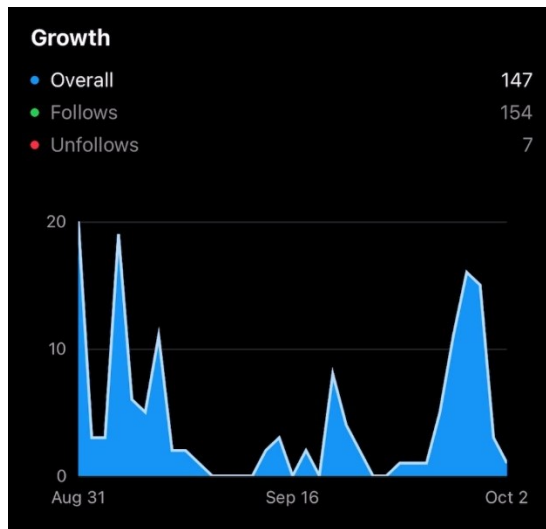

Figure 6. Account growth.

7.3 Segmentation analysis

As determined before in chapter 4.3, the main segments of Länsirannikon Konepäivät are demographic, psychographic, and geographic. Two of those can be reviewed using Instagram analytics: demographic (specifically the age demographic) and geographic. As illustrated in figure 7, we can see the percentage of every age group presented in the account's followers. As we learned from DNA's research, the biggest age groups to use Instagram are people under 45 years old. When looking at the analytics of this account, the biggest age groups are 25-34 and 35-44. Compared to the results of the DNA research, we can conclude that people under 25 years old did not find the account interesting enough to follow, even though they are among the biggest age groups of Instagram users in Finland.

However, the popularity of the account with people aged 25-44 goes along with the assumption that this age group contains most of the event's demographics.
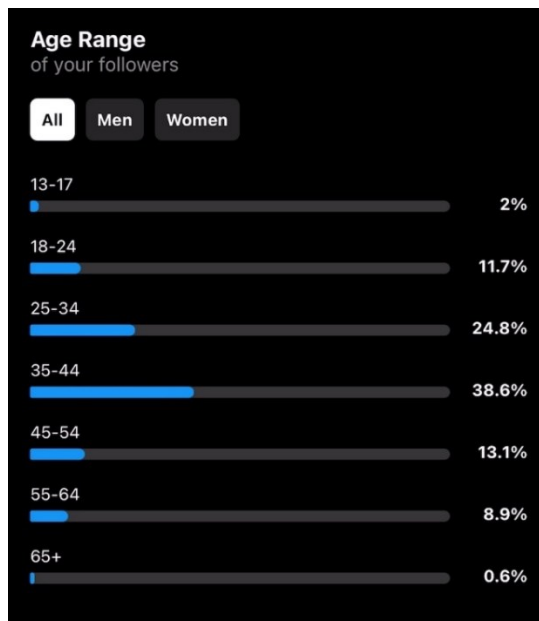
Figure 7. Age range.

Geographical analytics in figure 8 shows that four out of five top locations are in the Satakunta region, which was the goal since there are similar events in other areas and our main objective was to attract people from Satakunta region specifically. The use of certain hashtags relating to specific companies attracted some people from other countries as well, but that percentage was very low. Interestingly, Rauma is only on the 3rd place when it was expected to be on 1st place and is behind Helsinki which is outside the main target area.
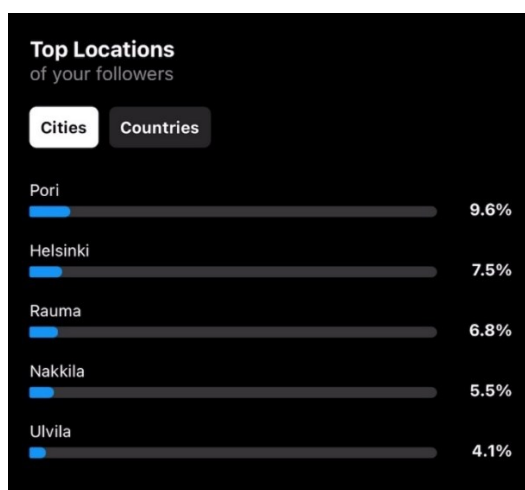

Figure 8. Top locations.

8 CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

This project-based thesis was about creating and implementing a marketing plan to promote an event on social media, specifically on Instagram. The project started with conversations with the commissioner and analysis of their current social media situation and identifying relevant target groups, and then continued with studying marketing theory and based on that creating a seven-week marketing plan which then was used before, during and after the event took place. A brand-new Instagram account was created for the purpose of promoting the event and analytics were monitored closely during the entire process.

The project was quite successful considering the starting point and what goals we had in mind. The Instagram account had a satisfactory amount of interaction and attention and proved to be a good way to reach and directly communicate with the event's target groups. Good verbal feedback was received from event attendees.

All things considered, the project was successful and a great learning experience for everyone involved, and the 7-week framework can easily be adapted to accommodate future events.

For the future, I would suggest that the association considers having a budget for social media marketing as that can easily increase visibility, though as seen through this thesis is not a necessity to gain some attention if the content is good and relevant to chosen segments. The marketing should have started earlier, meaning that in the future the 7-week plan could be, for example, a 12-week plan or even longer if needed. The posts could be more consistent as well and should prioritize user interaction since that was somewhat lacking, meaning that we did not receive many comments. Since most of the posts were basically advertisements for other companies, it might increase user engagement to have less of those and more of "personal" posts about the event itself.

8.1 Feedback from the event coordinator of Satakunnan Koneyrittäjät

The Instagram marketing test was an interesting student project and could have been developed further with a larger marketing potential on mind. The outcome was positive on this type of short period marketing and surprisingly effective considering the 7-week period. Instagram has given good results and will be hopefully used more in the future of the event marketing. Due to Jennas work, social media marketing will be definitely noted better in the association for the future happenings. In the event marketing the time period should be significantly longer and the account could be publishing relevant information, entrepreneurial stories or exhibitioners point of views. It should be considered as a way to communicate with the visitors and exhibitioners.

What I as a commissioner would have hoped more is initiative spontanious thinking for developing campaigns and/or to test out the limits and possibilities, to post very freely what ever could be suitable. News of the industry, advertisement, quotes, event exhibitioners sights. But also it is understandable since the industry itself was not familiar to Jenna and it was an unpaid student-project. Jenna has good ideas, very good eye for visual marketing but unfortunately the power machinery industry itself is rather challenging, masculine and totally different area from what she is used to, so it is understandable for not having an overflow of marketing ideas.

The marketing task was not that easy but we were pleased of the results and it got a lot of praise afterwards. Acknowledging all the issues, considering the limited time and my time saved, thank god, it was a huge success merely thanks to Jennas work.

Jennas report will be used in developing future marketing plans.

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