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CREATIVE BUSINESS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF GOTH
SUBCULTURE

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TIIVISTELMÄ LUOVA TALOUS GOOTTI-ALAKULTTUURIN NÄKÖKULMASTA

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Luova talous on moderni viitekehys tutkia liikeyrityksien, toimialojen ja talousalueiden kehittymistä maailmassa. Tässä työssä tutkittiin liikeyrityksiä gootti-alakulttuurin kannalta. Yksi tapa tutkia näitä liikeyrityksiä on katsoa niitä niiden omasta näkökulmasta ja tutkia kuinka yrittäjät itse näkevät oman yrityksensä. Luovuus voi tukea näitä liikeyrityksiä, kun niitä verrataan toisiin liikeyrityksiin ja koska luovan luokan näkökulma on uusi tapa nähdä työ, voi se auttaa tuomaan uutta ymmärrystä heidän tapaansa johtaa yritystään. Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia goottialakulttuuria ja mitä se merkitsee yrittämisen mahdollisuutena, mutta myös millaisia liikeyrityksiä ja kuinka vakavasti gootti-yrittäjät johtavat yrityksensä. Luovan luokan ja liikeyrityksien käsitteitä tutkittiin, jotta nähtiin ovatko nämä yrittäjät osa luovaa luokkaa tai voisivatko olla. Tutkittiin myös kuinka paljon nämä yrittäjät keskittyvät liikevoittoon ja kuinka paljon omaan haluunsa tehdä työtään.

Tämä opinnäytetyö tehtiin kirjoituspöytätyönä, jota tuki sähköpostitse tehdyt kyselyt. Teoreettisen osuuden pohjaksi tutkittiin eri teorioita luovuudesta, liikeyrityksistä ja yrittäjäydestä. Kirjallisuus- ja Internet-lähteitä käytettiin tasavertaisesti ja verrattiin toisiinsa aina kun mahdollista. Richard Floridan töitä käytettiin puitteina luovan luokan tutkimuksessa. Goottialakulttuuria selvitettiin pääasiassa Internetlähteisiin nojaten, koska alakulttuuria ei ole analysoitu vielä paljoa. Tämä opinnäytetyö oli laadullinen tutkimus, jossa eri goottiyrittäjiä haastateltiin käytännön näkökulmaa varten. Kyselyitä lähetettiin yrittäjille Iso-Britanniaan ja Suomeen. Nämä kyselyt toivat näkemystä yrittäjien kantoihin ja ajatuksiin ja heidän työnsä todenperäisyyteen.

Todettiin, että johtuen gootti-yrittäjien haluamattomuudesta nähdä itsensä liikemiesmäisenä ja luovan luokan tutkimuksien uutuuden takia, on liian aikaista olettaa näiden kahden asian välille yhteyttä. Goottiyrittäjät voivat johtaa vakavasti otettavia liikeyrityksiä omissa puitteissaan, mutta heitä ei voida ottaa huomioon luovan luokan näkökulmasta, koska luova luokka yhdistää työn ja elämäntavan. Tämä tutkimus on hyvä alku jatkotutkimuksille gootti-alakulttuurista mutta on myös peruskatsaus luovaan luokkaan uudesta näkökulmasta.

ABSTRACT

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Creative class is a modern frame of reference when looking at the development of businesses, fields of activity and economies in the world. Businesses were looked into in this thesis from the point of view of subculture. One way to look at these businesses is to view them from their way of life and study how they see their business. Creativity can support these businesses when they are compared to other businesses and creative class being a new way of looking at work, it can help bring new insight to their way of running a business. The aim of this thesis was to look at Goth subculture and what it represents but also, what kind of business and how seriously Goth entrepreneurs run their companies. Creative class and business were studied to see if these entrepreneurs are part of creative class or could be part of it. It was also studied how much these entrepreneurs focus on profit and how much on their own devotion to their work.

This thesis was carried out as a desk research, supported by questionnaires carried out by e-mail. For the theoretical base different theories were studied on creativity, business and entrepreneurship. Literature and Internet sources were used equally throughout the thesis and compared with each other when possible. The works of Richard Florida were used as a framework for the study on creative class. Goth subculture was studied mainly based on Internet sources, since the subculture has not been analysed so much yet. This thesis was a qualitative research, where different Goth entrepreneurs were interviewed for the practise point of view. Questionnaires were sent to Goth entrepreneurs in Britain and Finland. These questionnaires brought insight on the views and ideas of the entrepreneurs and on the reality of their work.

It was established that due to the unwillingness of the Goth entrepreneurs to be considered business-minded and the novelty of the studies on creative class, it is too early to assume a connection between these two issues. Goth entrepreneurs can run a serious business within their own framework but cannot be seen as part of creative class because creative class combines work and a way of life. This study is a good start for further studies on Goth subculture but it is also a basic look into the creative business from a fresh point of view.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

It can easily be thought that members of Goth subcultures are not able to run serious business and only run their business for fun and maybe to gain some profit or just as a past-time activity. Referring to the amount of shops, clubs, bands, events etc, Goth as a subculture is organised and thus can be questioned whether it is the same with Goth as a business idea. Goth started in the late 70s from a musical movement and together with the frustration of the early 80s youth, was formed into a subculture. As a subculture it is very open-minded within itself but from the outside it is often seen as suspicious and its morals are questioned. This thesis looks into the history and development of the subculture and how this is reflected currently to the work the members of the subculture do and how they run their business.

Businesses have a set of standards to go by and often enough, entrepreneurs who go by their own rules are thought not to be capable of running a serious business. Creative class is a new way of looking at businesses, their employees and even fields of activity and economies. The members of creative class work in a field where they utilise creativity on a daily basis and get paid for their creative work. In the concept of creative class and creative economy, the works of Richard Florida are studied. Richard Florida is one of the current leaders of the study on creative economies and is the founder of the concept of creative class. Creative class is a term representing a certain group of people employed in a field of business which can be seen as a creative business as well as takes into consideration the creativity of people. In short, creativity is not just a term related to forms of art or culture but to people who use creativity in their work and get paid for it, thus enhancing economies throughout the world.

Creativity will become a battle field for economies because in the future the wealth of an economy will not be measured in terms of liquidity or equivalent but in terms of the creative input of its people. Additionally the creative class brings added value to societies as the members organise themselves into social groups, thus influencing all

aspects of life, even outside of work. In today's business world, creativity in general is considered one great method for businesses to improve their work and services. Still, many see it as something abstract and not part of business life at all. Business is studied in this thesis to see how the Goth entrepreneurs conduct their work and what are the standards set by the business world for different organisations and entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship itself is seen as one way of conducting business and in this thesis it is looked at from the view point of the Goth entrepreneurs to study how these particular entrepreneurs work within the pre-set frame of the concept, use creativity and their own way of life with their business. Ultimately, it studied how serious these entrepreneurs are about their business and how much they focus on profit and how much on their own pleasure.

This thesis is purely based on own interest in the subculture Goth and being a member in it. As a member it is interesting to research what entrepreneurs themselves think about their business and subculture and how serious they are about issues that are of interest to the researcher. It should be proven that even though a person maybe dresses out of the norm and looks different, that person can still be a successful business owner.

1.2 Research Problem

The aim of the research is to study how serious founders of Gothic companies are when it comes down to their business and subculture. As Goth is a subculture and businesses in a subculture should not be directly compared with mainstream businesses, it is studied how creative Gothic entrepreneurs are and do their companies fit into the concept of creative business by Richard Florida. First it is enquired how the interviewed entrepreneurs see themselves – Goth or alternative. This must be established at the beginning so that the true value of Goth can be studied throughout the thesis. The orientation of the entrepreneurs is determined by studying the history and development of the subculture Goth and interviewing the entrepreneurs with few straight forward questions about their own believes. Many companies may promote themselves as Goth for example on Internet and turn out to be an alternative life-style company with only a few Goth customers. The first problem is faced here because Goth subculture and lifestyle must be known to be able to determine the orientation of others.

Then creativity and the concept of creative class and creative economy are researched. The creativity of the entrepreneurs is studied according to the stage of each entrepreneur's company. It is most important to study whether the companies and entrepreneurs fit into the concept of the creative class, as it is the aim of the thesis.

Finally, it is studied what kind of business these entrepreneurs carry out by exploring business, innovation and entrepreneurship. This proves the level of commitment of the entrepreneurs and possible future plans and the level of seriousness of their business. Here a problem is that a number of the entrepreneurs are Goth but wish to stay separated from the concept of business as opposed to a few claiming not to be Goth but alternative instead, at the same time hooting their business-minded orientation. If it is the aim of the thesis to prove that Goth entrepreneurs can be serious about their business and want to treat their customers as well as anyone else, if not better, the companies must be studied from business and customer point of views. The meaning of profit and money as well as the own need of the entrepreneurs to achieve and be artistic, are looked into also. At the end it can be noted that there are some differences between British and Finnish entrepreneurs and these differences are taken into account where it is thought to be of some meaning.

1.3 Research Methods

This research is qualitative and five entrepreneurs, thought to be owners of Gothic companies, were interviewed for this thesis. They were sent a questionnaire by email because the interviewed entrepreneurs were located in Finland and Britain. Face-to-face interviews could not be carried out due to location issues. The questionnaires are attached to this thesis as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and are referred throughout the thesis. This thesis relies mainly on the answers of the interviewed entrepreneurs to hear their views on the business they conduct and to see the similarities and differences between theory and practise.

This thesis was carried out as a desk research, where the research and works of Richard Florida on creative class are the basis for the theoretical framework. Creativity and en-

preneurship are studied based on literature and Internet sources that are found. Goth is studied mainly based on Internet sources as the subculture has not been studied much.

2 SUBCULTURE: GOTH

Starting from an underground subculture that survived when punk faded and changing to a fashion statement intrigued even by Hollywood, Goth has always had a dark mystique about it. The origin of the word Goth has less to do with the subculture today than it has ever done. With its dark clothes, heavy reading and slow songs, dark art and deep thoughts, Goth has become a statement for young people to rebel against society as punk once did but also for the media to have another source for entertainment.

2.1 The Origin and Development of the Subculture

The origin of the word Goth is connected to the Roman Empire but has little or nothing to do with the subculture. Goths were a Germanic tribe who helped in the defeat of the Roman Empire. In contrast, the gothic novel of the eighteenth century is a pioneer of the modern understanding of the term gothic by being a genre related to the mood of horror, morbidity and darkness. It has also established a lot of the iconography of horror literature and cinema, such as graveyards, vampires and melodramatic plots. Goth subculture itself started as a less aggressive but more extravagant offshoot of post punk music genre in the late 1970s in the United Kingdom. (Telegraph.co.uk, Thompson, D. 2002, 48-50.)

The term Gothic, in relation to music, was first used by the band manager of Joy Division, Anthony H. Wilson when he described the band as 'Gothic compared with the pop mainstream' in 1979. Joy Division was one of the pioneers of Gothic music alongside such names as Bauhaus, Siouxsie and The Banshees and The Cure. Joy Division were short lived because their vocalist Ian Curtis soon committed suicide, but left a perma-

ment mark and their name as the founders of gothic music. As the scene started out as a music genre, it still remains the core and true essence of the subculture, as opposed to many people using the term in relation to the way they dress or the parties they attend, the true spirit of the subculture lies in its music. (Goth.Net, Thompson, D. 2002, 48-50.)

Gothic rock evolved out of post punk during the late 1970s. In beginning of the 80s, one band jokingly labelled the new emerging movement “gothic” and so it changed from a label for a few bands to a label for a movement. In general, punk was aggressive rock when gothic bands were more introverted and personal, with elements that refer to gothic novel. The opening of the legendary Batcave, a venue for rockers with a darker twist in London, helped the Gothic rock scene finally turn into a subculture. A variety of music used to be played and there were no classifications in the patrons. As most of the bands were part of a greater new wave/post punk generation, it was common for many of them to deny their connection to the term Goth. Only in recent years has it become a fashion for bands to actually brand themselves Goth before anyone else does. (Starvox Music Zine, Thompson, D. 2002, 48-50.)

The subculture began out of the dissatisfied youth hailing from the middle class as a way for them to create their own culture dissimilar from the society that was ruled by materialism and elitism. Goth, as a subculture, is not prejudice against different sexualities, races, religion or age and for this reason can easily be compared to the likes of hippy movements. It is commonly known that Goths stand out from the street scene in their dark attire but a study by Sussex University states that parents should not be worried if their teenage children suddenly start dressing accordingly. On the contrary, they should rejoice since according to the study, which examined the Goth scene across Europe, “bourgeois” Goths are middle class to the core - a very refined, sensitive group, keen on old literature and not big on anti-social behaviour. (Telegraph.co.uk, Thompson, D. 2002, 50-51.)

In mid 80’s most post punk bands faded and punk had disappeared, so during this time most gothic bands either broke up or came to the resolution of changing their style. The punk clothing and hairstyles mellowed, and the original idea of society’s rejects stayed as the corner stone of the subculture. As happens with each subculture, Goth has expanded too but sometimes change results in rebellion. Today Goth style is in many ways

an anti-fashion statement but that has not stopped it becoming trendy among popular culture and mainstream, even in Hollywood. On the contrary, Goth can be easily used as a statement against society or its values by taking some of the concepts of gothic novel and using them as props. As different is always considered dangerous and media has such a big effect on the decisions of society, things like Satanism and ungodly activities may be associated with the term Goth. One genre of music often associated with the Goth subculture is Gothic metal, which combines medieval Gothic music with heavy metal. In the UK, of equal importance has been the gradual rise of cyber Goth which combines electronic sounds and beats with concepts related to gothic novel. (Telegraph.co.uk, Thompson, D. 2002, 50-51.)

Slowly but surely there has seemed to be an influx of electronic music that came in under the guise of industrial. These bands have grown in popularity - especially among the youngsters with energy to expend, with the aid of ever increasing technology, it is easy for anyone to be a one man "band" with pre-programmed sounds. Because the concept of Goth and especially Gothic music has broadened during the years, much of what is associated with the term has changed too making some aspects of the subculture too close to mainstream for some. A lot of the dress codes within the culture are determined by the type of gothic music listened to, when aesthetics guide the culture. Many clubs have changed their form completely by leaving the word "Goth" out of their flyers. This is a result of two subcultures becoming too different to co-exist in the same environment. Being a Goth today is widely considered a phase which many will grow out of but controversially has proven to be one of the long running subcultures still existing. In this thesis it is found that even though Goths may have different perceptions of the term and what involves around it, or different ideas on entrepreneurship and different views on business life, the versatility of Goth has to be taken into consideration. (Starvox Music Zine, Telegraph.co.uk.)

2.2 Subculture versus Business Concept

On one hand, to be able to sell products to a certain subculture or to even attract customers from that subculture, the entrepreneur has to know what the culture is about and follow it on some level. Goth in particular has its roots in gothic novel, had its peek and

its mellow years but has kept its strength, consistency and style. It started from music and still sticks to it but soon turned into a movement which now involves changes due to environment, media and modernisation of society. It was found through the interviews that most of the founders of Gothic stores in Finland do not consider themselves as Goths where as most of the British entrepreneurs absolutely do. This, itself, proves that the Finnish entrepreneurs do not run Gothic businesses and are not focused on selling to Goths but rather to everyone who on some level is alternative or follows underground fashion. The Brits on the other hand run Gothic businesses, see themselves as Goth and focus on their Gothic customers but always remember their alternative customer also, who make up a considerable amount of their clientele.

On the other hand, if the company is more focused on alternative lifestyle rather than just one subculture, then the understanding of alternative lifestyle needs to be on a wider scale. Additionally, several subcultures and underground fashions fall into the category of alternative and therefore a wider range of customers can be reached with the similar style of products. The entrepreneurs, who said in the questionnaires that they are not Goth themselves, consider their company an alternative style company and most of their clientele is seen as alternative, only some could point out a Goth here or there. The rest saw themselves as Goth and selling products to members of that subculture, hardly recognising one or two customers from mainstream in their clientele. Companies and their customers can easily be named generally alternative but if this is done then the true essence of Goth should be remembered. The meaning of Goth is not so big to alternative companies when Gothic style of clothing applies to all kinds of different alternative lifestyles also besides Goth, hence the focus of alternative clothing stores is not solely on customers of the Goth subculture. The main focus of the interviewed Gothic entrepreneurs is mostly on the idea of alternative clothing rather than simply Goth. When using the term alternative lifestyle, it is easy to get a wider audience and know just a little about everything, when one is actually in the scene itself, like the British entrepreneurs tend to be, the companies can actually target their customers better and focus on them hundred percent.

Underground fashion, rather than popular culture or mainstream, is often favoured by the representatives of a subculture. Mainstream is even considered negative by some since the concept of Goth subculture has started to incline more toward it in the recent

years and popular culture and media are showing more interest towards the subculture. When the clientele of a company is generally alternative but leaning more towards mainstream rather than underground, many of the customers still may very well be Goth. This is because some Goths today are not against the fact that the subculture inclines towards mainstream and some Goths are teenagers, likely to be Goth for a while and then change their mind and style to something else. On top of this, Gothic subculture itself can easily be blended into the general notion of alternative lifestyle - when one is Goth they are automatically alternative at least from the point of view of popular culture. Thus, some of the interviewed entrepreneurs commented that they wish to keep their store underground enough to stay away from mainstream but alternative enough to attract customers of all subcultures. Although, this is inevitable when alternative life style consists of so many different concepts that even the representatives from popular culture fit into it. Additionally, this can apply to many different types of companies, but it is important to note that when a specific subculture is the target group of a company, hardly anyone from the popular culture will mix in with the clientele. The main reason for this is the diverse of products, it is easier to please customers of alternative lifestyle when something here or there is bound to catch one's eye but when selling to a subculture the products are almost always very specific to that one scene. In general, underground fashion is more accessible to the mainstream as the style of any specific subculture often tends to be a distant concept to the popular culture.

With the idea of Goth becoming more popular among the general population and the media starting to make an increasing amount of analysis and own assumptions on the scene, the culture is easily emerged into one simple idea or concept. Goths are depressed and wear black, talk about death and listen to bleak music. For a person who is not a Goth, media and prejudices of society can form a picture of Goth which can be hard to erase and this one concept created by the media is how they see Goth without trying to learn about it themselves. Entrepreneurs in general can easily see that many Goths have an alternative lifestyle of their own and follow a certain underground fashion style and therefore start promoting products which necessarily do not have anything to do with the actual idea of Goth based on the concept created by the media. The different terms and images which sprung from gothic novel are applicable to Gothic clothing, decorating, fashion and entertainment but these are just the surface of the whole scene. As for example with the electronic music scene evolving and then being sepa-

rated into its own subculture, cyber, it is easy for the media and popular culture to dismiss because the general picture of Goths wearing black has already been drawn. When in mid 80s Goth was not so popular anymore, it changed face and shape and has been doing so ever since, even if there have only been slight changes. (Telegraph.co.uk Thompson, D. 2002, 50-51, Starvox Music Zine.)

The changing concept of Goth was very vague to most of the entrepreneurs; at least the interviewed Finnish entrepreneurs are not aware of any changes. The entrepreneurs that did not consider themselves as Goth in the questionnaires, did not know about changes in the Gothic scene which of course happens when one is unfamiliar with the subculture. Some of the entrepreneurs have also noticed the growing interest among teenagers in Goth style of clothing and of course cater to their needs but still recognise the real difference between someone who lives the Goth lifestyle and someone who just likes to dress in black. In modern society the influence of media is huge on children and teenagers who are still finding themselves and trying new things each day. It can be easy for a teenager to see their favourite singer dressed in black and decide that they want to look like that too without actually learning anything more about what might be behind that idea. Other entrepreneurs said that they would adapt as necessary and some commented that they have noticed that they change with the Goths, not even always realising it themselves. This shows some consistency among the entrepreneurs and their appetite to stay in appreciation of their customers who represent the subculture. Although, in this case many mentioned the change in fashion and how they enjoy sometimes being the leaders of underground fashion, giving it another direction. All changes cannot be followed if the entrepreneurs wish to keep their format as it is – it is important to remember that the kind of Goth music that is listened to often is the main reason for the style chosen for clothes also. Some entrepreneurs have not seen many major effects of changes in the Goth scene but follow the slight changes that are at the end, inevitable with every subculture.

3 CREATIVE CLASS

3.1 Concept of Creativity

Through out centuries an assumption has always persisted that creativity belongs to the art world. It is most important today to encourage creative people to do creative things. For example in Finland the long distances require creative thought to make life easier, the invention of the Communicator for example assists in this. Through the use of the Communicator people kind of synchronise their lives and this way help themselves by staying in touch and arranging their schedules. Some people believe that creative thinking skills can be improved through direct effort, thus inhibitions are one way to prevent creativity but wrongly some people think that just by eliminating inhibitions creative ideas follow. As a result, brainstorming has just become synonymous with direct effort. The basic idea is that where there is no standard way or solution or it is not available – creativity is the right option. (De Bono, E. 1992, 23-24.)

Doing things better is not always good enough because things need to be done differently in order to succeed in business. New ideas open opportunities and it is established that there is not always a problem to be solved. Focusing on the problem is always the main point but there are different areas that can be looked into and changed. Serious creativity has simple factors that separate it from our conventional idea of creativity. A person with motivation will pause and look for alternatives - even beyond the obvious ones in front of their face. The motivations of the person, money, success, the need to achieve, are so strong that the person wants to use his creativity as resourcefully as possible. The attitude of the person concerning challenges, possibilities, provocation, when looking for different solutions, determines how seriously the creative person wants to achieve his/her goals and how motivated he/she really is. The main idea is to put in some effort and try different ways. (De Bono, E. 1992, 24-25.)

The biology of creativity is not just about left or right side of the brain because both sides are used in creative thinking, just in different ways. In reality, sometimes art and artists are not as flexible as they should be, and tend to be more analytical than most people. But the one thing they do have which creativity requires is that they look for something new as opposed to repetition. Intuition is a good extra to creativity but it can be seen that it should not be entirely relied upon. For example, one source of creativity

is the innocence of children - when the usual approaches are unknown, a fresh one is implemented. On the one hand this can also be questioned because the influences of home and school on children are strong, when parents and teachers implement their own models in children. On the other hand experience is based on the fact that an idea that worked before works better when it is enhanced. In addition, it can be seen that by experimenting and learning for oneself, a better solution may be found. Also, taking time and effort to think and changing perspectives help with creativity. Another source of creativity, besides intuition and experience, is looking for further alternatives when others are satisfied with the standard or original solution. This implies motivation on the creative person's behalf, since it can only be learned through experience and takes time. Additionally, the creative person is ready to make the effort to change the standard and make it better where as others are satisfied with watching the progress as outsiders. (De Bono, E. 1992, 25.)

Different uses of creative thinking are improvements and problem solving. Especially in today's world where people are too used to living the way they do, they seek improvements on a daily basis. Someone may see a potential use for a solution but do not think any more of it because people are just generally too satisfied with the way things are. When looking into improvements, the term "better" has to be taken in to account, because in the future "better" will most often inevitably just mean "simpler". Already Internet helps us to get what we need with a press of a button, mobile phones entitle us to a simple way of getting in touch. Creativity strives from the fact that a creative person can look at any method and suppose there is a better way of doing it. Removal of faults is only a small part of the process. In this sense, it is up to the creative person in question to decide what to do with the improvement - whether or not to take it to the direction of the current understanding of "better" or just to make it simpler. Problem solving is another use for creative thinking and is used instead of or to aid with standard approaches. In this case firstly the problem definition is important, and a new approach might be to consider the problems you set yourself. For example, when thinking about what new products to provide or what to do with core assets, we are looking at value and opportunities. Competition has always been of use for creativity throughout centuries because it is always possible to just copy others. Although, from the view point of problem solving, the main idea is not to wait that others come up with these ideas. Looking for opportunities is the core of entrepreneurial spirit. Looking at the future may

be hard but creativity can help foresee consequences and make a scenario of the possible future in which we have to work. (De Bono, E. 1992, 26-27.)

3.2 Creativity of Entrepreneurs

As a default in a life-style or underground business, inhibitions are minimal in comparison to popular culture and the standards in the business are fairly different, more flexible and adjustable. Already by selling garments for Goths or the alternative, the standard mainstream boundaries are played with and the whole business concept is different from mainstream. Since the interviewed entrepreneurs wish to avoid mainstream customers and focus on alternative life-style or Goth members, then it is obvious that they wish to avoid mainstream business ideas and norms and set their own. By then lowering inhibitions and trying new things within the Goth scene itself, one can stand out from other businesses alike. For example, instead of selling all kinds of garments, an entrepreneur may choose to focus on only footwear, or instead of selling garments from retailers, one may choose to make them. This is an important point because sometimes the entrepreneurs of a certain subculture compete against the entrepreneurs of mainstream as well as other entrepreneurs within the same subculture or alternative life-style. Since there does not tend to be a standard way for Goth companies to handle business, it should be easy for the entrepreneurs to play with boundaries and implement creativity in their daily business.

Talent of course is important when thinking of how to stand out in business and establish a trusting customer base but also in terms of creativity it is equally important to have motivation and attitude for creativity in work and business. As most of the interviewed entrepreneurs have not worked in the field of popular culture before, about 90% of interviewed entrepreneurs, the motivation for alternative or Goth life-style has already been established a long while back. Many entrepreneurs who consider themselves as Goth, see themselves more as artists rather than businessmen but enjoy for example experiencing the joy of the customer when they receive a new product or enjoy setting some of the fashion styles for the scene themselves. In this point of view, creativity could be used to achieve a broader customer base or satisfy the needs of customers more efficiently, or then create new ideas or products for the representatives of Goth

subculture and thus set a new direction for a fashion trend in the scene. Whereas the entrepreneurs who do not consider themselves as Goth, focus more on the future, trying to please the customer and consider themselves more as businessmen who focus on the work itself. From this angle, it would be helpful to use creativity to ensure that the customers are provided a constantly satisfying service or that the work itself is satisfying to the entrepreneur. This is all dependent on the entrepreneur's attitude towards challenges since it's the attitude that determines how the pre-set goals are achieved.

It was shown that many of the founders of Gothic stores have started out by making clothes first themselves either for themselves or together with friends. Others have always had an idea about establishing their own company in the back of their head. After Internet became a new sensation, many saw an opportunity they did not want to go past them. Following a friend succeeding with their own Internet store or just trying their luck at it proved to be a good idea for them as well. Experience in the field contributes to the entrepreneur's motivation to use creativity and look for different solutions and opportunities. Since experience is one source of creativity, many of the interviewed entrepreneurs have a while to go as most of the businesses were only recently established. On the one hand, some of the companies have only recently been established so some of the biggest changes are still under process. On the other hand, others already have gone through some big changes and the ones that are now in progress are a little unexpected. Even though some of the entrepreneurs do not wish to look too far ahead into the future and mainly want to focus on the current situation, there are still many things that they could find that can be improved at the moment. Most common changes in business operations for the interviewed entrepreneurs are the broadening of clientele or growth – meaning more employees and other resources like a warehouse. For example, the entrepreneurs may want to improve their every day business and are tired of things the way they are. Some changes with the newly established companies, which they have already experienced, are a move to a new location or renewing the online store, changes with the longer running companies are such as increase in customer service workload. These could be tackled with problem solving, for example instead of the standard approach toward customer service, change it with a totally new approach. Planning ahead as well as looking into the things that can be improved currently shows the entrepreneurs are focused on development and wanting to make things better.

The education of the interviewed entrepreneurs varies as much as their consideration of themselves as Goths. Some have studied fashion and clothes design, others Master or Honours degrees in Chemical or System Engineering. It seems that studies can be something of an interest to the entrepreneurs but for most of them, there lies hardly any connection between the education and the selected field. Others obviously studied something they cared about at the time but chose their field according to lifestyle. In doing so, they proved creativity in their way of thinking, showing that they are able to do many different things, try new views and see how they do. Some studied subjects closely relating to their chosen field and it shows determination and motivation in the field. As creativity can be used for improving the company in several ways, the future goals of the entrepreneur need to be looked into. Some entrepreneurs wish to grow and others want to focus on their current situation before planning too far ahead. One example of using creativity within the current situation would be improving customer services. This is the current focus for only one interviewed entrepreneur but is a good example, customer services can be focused on from the Goth point of view, when the companies could expand the knowledge of Goth or from quality point of view, when the companies could make sure that the value is delivered to the customer, the customer is satisfied and has gotten all answers needed. Also, this is a good way of standing out from rivals, which includes other similar businesses but also copycats, cheaper versions of alternative stores, who sell products on auction sites on Internet with no customer service.

3.3 Creative Class by Richard Florida

Today, the need for creativity in economy is shown in the rise of a creative class. Creativity promises economical growth and according to studies, has created most of economical growth of 21st century. The heart of the class is formed by people working in science, technological programming, architecture, design, training, arts, music and entertainment. Their field of business is to create new ideas, new technologies and new creative content. Furthermore, each view point and manifestation of creativity whether technological, cultural or economical, is connected to each other. Besides, it gives the opportunity to use the talents of employees more. Because the creative class brings added value with their creative work by organising themselves into social groups, the

basis of creative class is economical. This is not an economical class that is based on owning assets or means of production because most of the members of creative class do not own a meaningful amount of assets in its actual meaning. Their assets are immaterial because they are in their heads. (Florida, R. 2002, 12-13, Florida, R. 2005, 34-35.)

Unlike the working class or service class, the creative class are paid for creative work which is considered to be more independent and flexible than the work of those classes mentioned above. The idea is to create justified new forms together with problem solving. Creativity and competition go hand in hand, these days the comparison is not always based on countries but also areas, for example London may be easily compared to Helsinki. People have a natural talent for creating new ideas, new technologies or new ways of working, and for the economy to prosper all kinds of organizations from companies to people need to invest in creativity. Cities have become more important social and economical units throughout the last century because they can bind creativity and accelerate innovation. In the future, economical wealth will not be divided between countries based on e.g. natural resources but the ability to utilise and attract people's creative talents and to hold on to them. Global competition is focused on talent because more countries are starting to realize the need to concentrate on the talents of people. Soon, this competition will not be just about products and services but also about attracting talented people and keeping them. Difference with the situation before is that now companies, as well as looking for the best employees, easily can establish premises where talent already is instead of having talent come to them. These days talent is seen as the magnet of global innovation. (Florida, R. 2002, 13, Florida, R. 2005, 35-36.)

Creative chastity means the essence of culture. Today, creativity is necessary at work, it demands certain kind of ways of thinking and customs that need to be developed on the level of the individual and society. This is how the creative chastity enters our values from the environment of our work place and modifies the way we see ourselves as economical people. This requires an environment that offers stimulation on the level of society as well as culture and economy. Eventful way of life is as important for creative people these days as work conditions. A way of life built around creative events gets people to adopt a hasty attitude towards strict boundaries which were once drawn between home, work and spare time. This new way of life favours individualism, self-expression, accepting difference and aspiring diverse experiences. Basically, work and

free time are seen as an entity, combining the ideas of an individual with the surrounding culture and environment, and not as two separate issues. Creative chastity generates from work and way of life and the more people are creative, the more they want to live in a society which offers stimulation, diversity and experiences. Characteristic of this society is temporary ties and loose relationships that let the people live an independent life as they wish. (Florida, R. 2002, 16-18, Florida, R. 2005, 37.)

The values of creative class are individualism, meritocracy and diversity and open-mindedness. In considering individualism, self-expression is the priority because the members of creative class do not wish to adapt to the rules of organizations but rather have their own say. Also, they are against traditional norms and rather set their own standards. Meritocracy favours earnestness, challenges and stimulation. There is a tendency to set goals that are achievable and often money can be considered as the evidence of achieving these goals – for many people in today's society, money is the only true evidence of achieving something in life. By contrast, the meritocratic values of the creative class are accepted and thus, wealth is not considered as a symbol of status anymore. Equality is the key in diversity and open-mindedness when people are not ranked or categorised anymore - the acknowledgement of different people is important in a working environment. Open-mindedness is the motor of economical growth and to accept this means that the affect of culture on economy has to be reconsidered. An active and equal culture is required to encourage the creativity in each individual. To understand the economy of creative times, we have to look at the roles of other incentives besides maximising our own usefulness. These days a growing number a businesses are just left at the planning stage, where one party wants just to get rich quickly and then retire and leave others in trouble. The doubt of the motives of others, whether they want to simply maximize their own productivity, slows down the economy as a whole. It is evident that inner prizes and values are the greatest motivators for creative people. (Florida, R. 2002, 17, Florida, R. 2005, 44-45.)

It has been shown that people are more liberal and open-minded than before because materialistic circumstances make it possible. People choose the kind of jobs that offer more stimulation, are more flexible and more interesting rather than steady wages and an assured future. Also, it should be noted that companies themselves have started to favour employees who have experience from different fields or have lived in different

countries, rather than someone who has been in the same job for a long period in the same position. There is a tension between organizations and creativity and the amount of new companies founded by entrepreneurs proves that there is a constant liberation from cramped organisational conformity. Today, the work the employees seek should give the opportunity to let the member of creative class add their own stir. People do not want to be given a set of rules and stick to them, they need space and to be able to use their whole potential. Most importantly, they need to feel that they have an impact and an influence in their work – that they are needed. This is a result of the changing wishes of the creative class combined with the changing character of work. People are unsatisfied if they feel that their pay is not the equivalent of their value, e.g. amount of hours they put in. (Florida, R. 2002, 22-23, Florida, R. 2005, 46.)

Some of the fundamental characteristics of work for the members of the creative class are for example challenges and flexibility. People do not necessarily want to climb ladders at work but collect different experiences by trying different things. It has been studied how a casual way of dressing seems less formal at work but replaces traditional supervision systems with new forms of self-government, peer acknowledgement and peer accentuation. In this kind of an environment employees strive to work more independently and somehow, the focus is more on the work of each individual. This is one method for shifting the focus away from the appearance and directed towards the effort and perseverance of the individual. Way of dressing has changed to less formal even in larger, respectable enterprises. Moreover, innovation, product development and answering the needs of customers demand better timetables that need to be arranged more efficiently. Furthermore, flexible schedules or even new facilities are needed in companies today, to prove to their customers that they are modern. Competent people, which are scarce and hard to find, are needed to achieve and manage this. (Florida, R. 2002, 16-17, Florida, R. 2005, 46-47.)

3.4 Creative Class for the Entrepreneurs

Creative class, even business itself, were distant terms to the interviewed entrepreneurs out of which most considered creativity to be something associated with artists and not with their own field of business. Many could not think of anything to associate with

creative class – the term was completely unknown to them. Although the idea is fairly new and Richard Florida is still elaborating on the issue, it is most relevant in today's business to understand the connection between creativity and business. It is very old fashioned to think of creativity as a term relating to art for example but to see creative views and ideas in everyday life is very modern. Especially when the idea of creative class is not based on assets, money or material things, the concept should be somewhat accessible. In terms of business, the more modern your way of handling business is and the more up-to-date you are on new ways and ideas for expanding your business, the more customers you will reach. Of course, from the point of view of Goths, we can always say that handling business a certain way and having certain customers will ensure the company's customer base will stay Goth focused in addition to keeping the mainstream customers away. All interviewed entrepreneurs agreed that subculture and its representatives have what it takes to run a serious business but some pointed out that others are only in the business for the profits and are not in the culture itself, others commented that some people have more talent than others. It was found that even though the entrepreneurs agreed that representatives of a subculture have the means to establish a business, still many of them were not in a subculture themselves.

All interviewed entrepreneurs agreed that regardless of the country they would operate in, Finland or Britain, their company would still stay the same. They did not consider the fact that Goth and other subcultures differ according to culture also or the fact that their views and opinions varied in the interview notably already without even paying too much attention to the questions concentrating on national differences. Businesses themselves have different laws and methods according to region and there are also variations in the ways of promoting and selling your products. There are also differences in prejudice factors among buyers, culture and media. Only one entrepreneur stated in the questionnaire that her company would be completely different to what it is now in Finland if she would have it in Britain. One point that was mentioned is that the main focus would be on a store and location. This obviously being a completely different view from the current British entrepreneurs who focus on international sales, Internet and growth, shows how different views these two nationalities have of each others market.

For most of the interviewed entrepreneurs the location currently is not the main issue. For most, the reason for the location is where they live. In this sense, the entrepreneurs are not thinking about competition at all. Since they all consistently operate through Internet, they feel that competing on Internet is their main challenge and their location is simply where they have their operation. As the competition gets tougher, the entrepreneurs should look into the differences between certain areas. As many of the interviewed entrepreneurs are still not familiar with differences between countries, it may be very hard for them to compare different regions within these countries. Many Goths still see London as the ultimate Goth-central and this view could easily be changed by a Goth company in another country by utilising their business assets with their ability to influence the subculture.

Other interviewed entrepreneurs feel that the market in the current location is not big enough in terms of their future goals, whereas others see the market easily reachable considering the goals they want to reach themselves. Markets are reached by delivering products throughout the nation, online searches or help of magazines or word of mouth. In this sense Internet needs to be used to its whole potential to actually get all the advantages because it is easy to get carried away and for example make too complicated search options for users to understand the whole idea of the pages. To actually reach all customers world wide or even nation wide, Internet is needed. There are some people who travel to different cities to purchase products they need but rarely this is the main reason for travel. As Richard Florida says, it is the companies who establish premises around the customers. This is still at a learning stage with the Gothic entrepreneurs, who utilize Internet to a great extent and then describe how they still see a future for actual stores because customers still want to try clothes on or see the product for themselves.

There were only a few entrepreneurs that considered themselves more like business minded people rather than free souls. These entrepreneurs had a consistent pattern in their answers throughout the questionnaires that showed a true business character that wanted to explore alternative lifestyles and subculture fashion. Most see themselves fitting into the concept of creative class where creativity and business combine to fulfil the entrepreneur's need to do what they want but also profit from it. Each entrepreneur should identify their own talents and utilise them to their own advantage, this would show creativity but can also improve their business and broaden customer base. In a

way, since creative class is not based on assets, the entrepreneurs with a free soul should not find it too hard to relate to if they just see the connection between creativity and their own form of business. In terms of creative chastity, these entrepreneurs have more of a connection between their way of life and their business because they see them both as parts of themselves and do not strive at separating these two facts from each other. The largest part of the entrepreneurs did not show a connection to creative chastity. It is evident that Goth entrepreneurs strictly separate work from their way of life. This can be seen in the fact that creative chastity is not shown in their answers regarding their own business. As creative chastity enters the lives of creative class from work and affects the way economy is seen, Goth entrepreneurs still do not seem to let themselves adapt their work as part of themselves but rather separate themselves from it completely.

Individualism is very strong in Goths but as one value of creative class, it is not very strong in the entrepreneurs. Self-expression and individualism are seen as values but not as a part of work. In some ways Goth of course is not always a free concept or even too individualistic because of the concept of subculture. Gothic subculture in itself has certain values and norms which restrict the individual members to a certain extent but obviously at the same time set them apart from mainstream. Although Goth strives on individualism and encourages individualism for example in terms of age or race, the musical aspect, the history of the movement and associated ideas such as gothic novel tend to close the subculture into its own sect where only individuals of a certain kind are accepted. In other words, as members of a society Goths are very individualistic, standing out and having their own believes and ideas but at the same time the picture of Goth created by the media can vale on others that Goths are not individuals at all but a mass of black looking all alike. As members of their own subculture, Goths can be very individualistic with their taste in fashion for example but at the same time they can be very much bound together by the music. Taking self-expression into consideration, Goth subculture does not adapt to pre-set norms and standards but creates its own. It is evident that as a subculture, Goth has its own norms which make it a subculture but in comparing Goths to popular culture, they do not want to be restricted and bound into rules set by others.

Moreover, meritocracy for each interviewed entrepreneur is a value in terms of entrepreneurship but not in their free time. Each entrepreneur wants to have a job where they face challenges and overcome them. The feeling of achievement is one motivation for the entrepreneurs. Creative class do not consider money as a status symbol and neither do the entrepreneurs – they are doing business which they enjoy and rather get fulfilment from the reaction of the customers. Inner prizes are the greatest motivators for creative people and also to the entrepreneurs. For creative class diversity is one value, hence people are not categorised anymore. For Goths this is still the case as popular culture is separated from mainstream and people within the subculture are categorised based on the music they listen to or how truly interested they are about the subculture. As a subculture Goth encourages individualism but maybe not as actively and equally as the creative class would require. Open-mindedness for Goths in the subculture is a strong value because almost anyone is accepted as a Goth. But as a value in regarding outsiders, Goths tend to be very closed minded and avoid everything not related to Goth. As work itself from the point of view of creative class is needed to be more open in the sense that the worker can implement their own ideas and working methods, this should be applicable for Goths also who preferably work differently to pre-set norms and mainstream.

It is easy to see how members of Goth subculture may find it hard to work in a mainstream, multinational enterprise hence the amount of new Goth companies being founded throughout Internet. Similarly to the creative class, the interviewed entrepreneurs do not necessarily want to climb ladders in their work. Climbing ladders in this case could mean for example reaching the maximum amount of customers and becoming one of the most popular online stores. Each of the entrepreneurs has already set goals which are relevant to their current situation and most mentioned that there remains no special reason to think too far ahead into the future. The future for the companies involves widening the range of products or broadening customer base. It also consists of expanding the company and products so that the company is known world wide or nation wide. Some are considering expanding into new areas such as footwear and others some general diversification and additions in their current range.

There are some defaults in the way people dress whether the norm comes from outside or from within the person. For example in Britain children most often wear school uni-

form when going to school. On one hand a person can for example rebel by getting a tattoo done and thus standing out from the others or this can be seen as a form of self-expression when a tattoo is considered as personal jewellery which is worn like any other piece of jewellery. Casual way of dressing is a part of each interviewed entrepreneur's work as Goths tend to have their own way of dressing and it is obvious that each entrepreneur would dress according to what they sell themselves. An eventful life is a part of Goth subculture as there are events, gigs and clubs hosted every so often for representatives of the subculture to attend. In one way since the creative class are paid for creative work and that work is considered more flexible than other fields, Goth entrepreneurs do creative work and as entrepreneurs they have more flexible schedules but in general, their work is more like sales and many fields of business today have flexible schedules.

4 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

With every underground business, whether large or small, careful consideration has to be done in accordance to entrepreneur's own skills and abilities but also the aim of the company itself and the actual customer. Entrepreneur's characteristics, such as independence, innovation and the need to work hard, often tell about self-governing businessmen who have their own plan for creating a prosperous business and a vision on how to proceed with it. Founding a life-style firm is encouraged by the motivation of the entrepreneur and succeeding often requires removing location limits and turning to the Internet for assistance to trade nationally or even internationally. When running a serious business, whether the traded end result is considered work of art or a product simply for sale, the customer is the one who makes the final decision to buy.

4.1 Deciding on the Business and the Product

Entrepreneurs within subcultures often start their own business in a small scale, tend to stay that way, and run the company as a life-style business which provides comfortable standard of living. This is the case with most subculture businesses which tend to be more micro- or small enterprises out of which many are sole traders. Realizing this, it may be easier to understand for example why the members of the creative class today do not consider money as a status symbol. Small enterprises give entrepreneurs enough freedom to make own decisions but also enough support around the business. Generally, many entrepreneurs work in a niche area which limits their local business area and they trade ideas that are developed into products or individual works of art. Goth subculture is an excellent example of a niche area. Here, the idea of art overthrows money or profit as a motivational factor and the focus is on the needs of the entrepreneur to produce something meaningful for themselves as well as the customer. On one hand, for example in Tampere region, the field of subculture business is very small and the business is limited by the size and population of the city. Due to changes in the environment, one help for the entrepreneurs is Internet which allows companies in the Tampere region to promote their products nationwide thus satisfying the needs of numerous Finnish customers who represent a specific subculture. On the other hand, in comparison to many other cities in Finland or Europe, the underground scene in Tampere is of the more popular end and closely competes with the likes of Helsinki - sometimes leaving Helsinki in its shade. As alternative and subculture related business is often considered unusual, creativity and innovation can help the entrepreneurs to reach their customers regardless of location or size. (Sutherland, R. 2001, 11.)

In places that are desolate or small, alternative or more unique stores may have a good chance to raise some eyebrows but do not have an actual foothold in the field for too long. Since most of the answers given by the interviewed entrepreneurs varied significantly between the British and the Finnish, it is obvious that location factors do have a say in the way these entrepreneurs conduct their work. Many interviewed entrepreneurs see that an online store gives them the opportunity to reach for example the whole of Finland or at least a wider audience than with physical stores. Especially in the case of Goth entrepreneurs, their niche area definitely restricts their business but many pointed out that the idea is a life-style business and there is nothing else they would consider doing as a job. Alternative companies selling underground fashion obviously have a chance to attract a wider audience of customers and even recently have inclined more

towards selling products straight of retailers being identical on the racks. The more towards mainstream these companies incline, the more their products become just products and the idea of work of art is forgotten, as well as the specific needs of customers. Some entrepreneurs saw that online shopping helped their business because they are still in another fulltime job and run their company part time. This of course is true and will result in the general notion that creative businesses tend to stay small and proves also, that since the company is run part time, it is merely in own interest and profit is most probably gained from the other fulltime job.

As the end result is often considered by the entrepreneurs of niche business areas as a work of art rather than a product for sale, the motivation of the entrepreneurs often generates from taking pleasure in their work and having customers who enjoy their art. Already in the planning phase of the business, it must be decided what the product is and who are the customers – this shows the faithfulness of the entrepreneur towards the customer. The clearer the picture is for the entrepreneur, the better they can concentrate on actually delivering what is needed by the customer. As the product of life-style businesses is often seen as a work of art, the customer has to be clearly defined in accordance so that the unique piece finds its buyer. The methods for delivering the product are also decided in the plan, with the mode of the business, e.g.: a sole proprietor, partnership or a limited company. The ability to be your own boss when choosing a mode of business is something that entrepreneurs take into consideration. As a sole proprietor the entrepreneur takes care of all the debt, works in their own name and pays own income taxes, thus business administration is much simpler and decisions made by oneself. The most common form of business structure, the limited company (Ltd.) has shareholders, a board and accountants. Limited company is a separate entity for legal and income tax purposes and normally elects a board of directors to run the business. The shareholders of the business are not personally responsible for the debts of the company but in the event of bankruptcy, they lose their investments in the shares. In a sense, the shareholder's liability is limited to the amount of their investment in the company. With private limited companies the shares are not available to the general public, whereas with the public limited companies, the shares are available for anyone. Private limited companies are more common than public ones. In a partnership, individuals make a contract to share the company's profit and contribute to it accordingly. (Sutherland, R. 2001, 12-13.)

Companies of the interviewed entrepreneurs have been established in a variety of years and decades. Others established their companies around the beginning or mid 90s and others just recently, in the beginning of the 21st century. Most of the companies have been established by the entrepreneurs themselves and even the ones that had bought their company still had to re-do it all over again. One reason for this was because the company had been removed from the register. Thus, many of the interviewed entrepreneurs already have experienced a lot of issues relating to making a business work but some only recently established still have a lot ahead of them. The interviews showed that limited company is the most common business form. Although it is often first perceived that alternative or underground related stores must be sole traders working by themselves on a small scale and selling clothes they make themselves, the entrepreneurs have actually thought about their business plan, aims and future and want to provide customers the products they need through a business form which allows this. The mode of business shows the entrepreneur's dedication towards the customers by committing in the work and finding the best solution for delivering the product to the customer. Seasonal effects were not noticed by companies that have not been running for so long yet. Many others explained that the time running up to Halloween, Christmas and New Year is the busiest and it slows down towards summer time. Some have noticed the effects of fashion and the increased use of the Internet as these both have an affect on the customer's need for a purchase.

The interviewed entrepreneurs could easily name their main products whether they were shoes, their own brand or garments like trousers or shirts. All of the interviewed businesses actually have very different main products to offer. Some said their main product is trousers, makeup or shoes but for example a business which only sells footwear said their main product is specifically leather footwear. Others have their own name brand which sells the most because it is not widely available. The brand can include garments, makeup, shoes and many other kinds of products under one brand. Because in general entrepreneurs of a niche area see their end result as a work of art, if the customer feels the same way too they can establish a stronger bond. Often entrepreneurs who make the garments themselves and sell them on Internet are looked up to and appreciated more because of the effort they put into delivering the value. For example hand made corsets are considered a work of art by many Goths but also by the entrepreneurs themselves.

In a sense Richard Florida has not considered sales or Goths for that matter, in terms of his idea of creative class but the connection can be seen in multiple ways. In terms of Goth, one key factor of gothic stores is to create something new. By using creativity the interviewed entrepreneurs can have an influence on the direction of gothic fashion or the subculture itself. In many ways the music still drives the subculture and the representatives of the subculture themselves show the direction for companies. But the entrepreneurs can have a stand point and keep the subculture alive. With the help of Internet, more specialised companies are founded and own brands are created. The specialised companies can produce products of one kind, for example shoes and thus influence Goths to make their subculture part of their everyday life. The special brands created by companies can show a new direction for the subculture by creating new garments or accessories associated with different bands, types of music, or iconography of gothic novel such as different movies influenced by gothic novel. Many interviewed entrepreneurs expressed their interest and need in selling products to other alternative cultures or subcultures and actually subculture fashion. The examples that were given, e.g. popular music, were greatly brushed off. Most businesses already experience some crossover between different styles and cultures but none would actually exclude Goth. The idea of expanding their product variation is dependent on the fact that most of the businesses focus on subcultures in general and not just Goth.

4.2 Characteristics of Entrepreneurs

It is very common to associate the word entrepreneur with the likes of Bill Gates or other CEOs or founders of enterprises. To enhance business, information about developing a more entrepreneurial attitude in the business dealings is needed, together with some ideas concerning the behaviours that assist in succeeding. There are many definitions of entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur. Main characteristics of entrepreneurs are ambition and vision, risk taking, innovation and the ability to bounce back. Many researchers mention the characteristics of entrepreneurs, some look at the economic consequences of entrepreneurial activity, and some talk about entrepreneurship in management terms. Motivational factors of the entrepreneurs may vary from wanting to be the boss to finding a genuine market opportunity but the motivator always supports the aim.

Some people aim at profits or flexibility in their work while others want to have autonomy or gain respect. However, it is generally agreed that entrepreneurs are people who create businesses or new ventures where none existed before by bringing resources to bear on a business opportunity and make it happen. (Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

The motivators of the interviewed entrepreneurs changed variedly from having a job they like to selling products that make their customers happy. Independent work, deciding own schedules and designing garments by oneself were factors that motivate the entrepreneurs who are more business-minded. Designing the garments is one motivator for many entrepreneurs, as they work harder and gain more experience, the better the result and the more challenges they face by for example using creative thinking to come up with more complex designs. As the end result is sometimes considered as a piece of art, the fulfilment of seeing the effort put into work drives some of the entrepreneurs. The need to achieve motivates because the more one works, the better the end result. Some enjoy the fact that they are able to drive some of the fashions within the actual subculture of Goth, this being a rare opportunity for some lucky ones as the subculture has been around for a while and driving the fashions is almost always on the shoulders of companies with established status and loyal customer base. The most common reason that the interviewed entrepreneurs like their job so much is that they are able to make their customers happy with beautiful garments or footwear and they have moments when they witness this happiness. A select few have the joy to receive thank you letters from customers. Contradictive, this is an interesting motivator because almost all of the entrepreneurs have not got a clear idea of who are their target customers and even which of them are Goths.

Entrepreneurs have an eye for opportunity – they see possibilities where others do not and they seek ways to grip the possibility before anyone else. Making Goth clothes by themselves, having an own specified brand or following the change and development of gothic subculture and adapting it in the product and business in general, the Goth entrepreneurs prove they have an eye for opportunity. It is easy to use the term Goth to stand out from the mainstream but the amount of Gothic stores on Internet can baffle potential customers and the location of Gothic stores is commonly very remote, standing out from rivals in the scene is important. Successful people can handle unique problems in

unique ways and thus be resourceful. Problems are tackled immediately with confidence and persistency in the pursuit of objectives - believing in own abilities is a strong motivator. They are not troubled by ambiguity and uncertainty because they are used to solving problems. If the solution for a problem is not applicable, they will quickly identify an alternative problem-solving approach. Many start processing their work by finding a need and quickly satisfying it. In this sense they have conceptual ability when they identify problems and begin working on their solution faster than other people. In one way having a Goth store is a solution to a problem. Goth companies help keep the subculture going, developing, expanding and changing. Without this kind of net of support, the subculture would be on its own and result in a quick plunge. (UAB Small Business Development Center, Gaebler Ventures, Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

In addition, it is understood that change occurs frequently when you own your own business, the entrepreneur thrives on changes and their businesses grow. Setbacks or failures do not discourage the entrepreneurs but rather challenges them, as uncertainty does not get them deterred because they have a strong motivation to excel. Successful entrepreneurs resist the temptation to do what is unimportant or the easiest. In contrast to keeping up with the change and development of the Goth scene, it is worth remembering that in order to establish a consistent and faithful clientele, constant change of style is not favoured within the Goth scene. Some factors are default and fundamental and need to be applied continually. (UAB Small Business Development Center, Gaebler Ventures, Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

Even though most entrepreneurs know how to work within the framework for the sake of profits, they enjoy being their own boss. The meaning of intangible capital is understood once the need for growth is realized. Similar to the values of the creative class by Richard Florida, Gothic entrepreneurs most often enjoy having a life-style business which they can rule according to their own decisions and simply like the fact that their customers are on the same level with them. Moreover, both Richard Florida and Edvard De Bono remarked that the assets of creative people are in their heads. Once the Goth entrepreneurs take expansion into consideration, most likely they will deliberate on this point. Entrepreneurs have an overpowering need to achieve, although they keep an eye on profits, this is often secondary to the drive toward personal success. They have high standards and get a sense of accomplishment from personally succeeding. One proof of

this is the drive some of the interviewed entrepreneurs get when directing the underground or Gothic fashion into a new course. Many entrepreneurs even have a respectful attitude toward money because it is not sought as an end in itself, but rather as a method of keeping score or as a tool toward accomplishments. (UAB Small Business Development Center, Gaebler Ventures, Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

An important trait is the ability to accurately weigh and measure risks in a sphere of realism. Risks are taken to a certain degree because many entrepreneurs do not have the need to grow as a business for example. Entrepreneurs will change their direction when they see that change will improve their prospects for achieving their goals. There is a tendency to anticipate developments by making things happen rather than reacting to outside developments. The risks taken by entrepreneurs are moderated and calculated, they only appear risky to others because they have not thought it through properly. Tolerance of uncertainty is a strong trait for an entrepreneur. Seldom people have the ability to go back and forth from being an entrepreneur and not being one – it is often harder to be employed by someone if you have been an entrepreneur yourself previously. Self-confidence drives the entrepreneur, when in control and taking risks or simply when operating their own business. Entrepreneurs are often independent and this usually makes them good leaders too – they do not always function well in structured organizations and do not like someone having authority over them. This is a similar trait to the one of creative class where creative people have started to move away from the cramped organisations into businesses where they can have an influence on formalities and procedures. (UAB Small Business Development Center, Gaebler Ventures, Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

Entrepreneurs have a never-ending sense of urgency to develop their ideas and have high commitment and determination. Once they achieve a goal, they quickly replace it with a greater goal. They have an appetite for hard work and most entrepreneurs start out working long, hard hours with little pay. In Finland, many middle-aged, already professional people have started to found an increasing amount of own businesses in the last few years. These entrepreneurs have already been working, earned their salaries and now want to express themselves the way they consider right. The amount of educated people from the work life becoming entrepreneurs is still small. But at the end, creative ideologies and concepts are brought to the surface after first being part of a subculture

in their youth, then in the business life for few years and establishing own identity and believes through own way of life. In addition, after being in the working world, they can actually afford to be themselves. Successful entrepreneurs can comprehend complex situations that may include planning, making strategic decisions, and working on multiple business ideas simultaneously. (Gaebler Ventures, UAB Small Business Development Center, BusinessTown.com, Partnerships in innovation and Entrepreneurship.)

The interviewed entrepreneurs were given a list of typical entrepreneurial characteristics and chose the ones which fit them the most. These characteristics are general characteristics determined by studies to tell about entrepreneurs in general and have been discussed above. The most popular characteristics among the entrepreneurs were the need to succeed or work hard and focusing on the customer rather than competition. These were popular among the entrepreneurs regardless of their country. Answers were received from 5 different entrepreneurs. The small amount of answers shows the unwillingness of entrepreneurs to participate in questionnaires but also questions the reliability of the given answers. Such a small amount of answers gives only a narrow perspective. Here are the answers in order of popularity:

- Focus on the customer rather than competition; 2 Fin, 3 Brit
- The need to succeed/work hard; 2 Fin, 3 Brit
- Self-confidence/Independence; 1 Fin, 1 Brit
- Taking Risks; 1 Fin
- Understanding change/Adapting to change (If needed, adapts to the current situation); 1 Brit
- Innovation, doing things different to others; 1 Brit
- Seeing opportunity (where others do not); 0
- Finding different solutions (there may be more than one solution for the same problem); 0
- Seeing different situations (the concentration is not always focused on a problem at hand); 0

4.3 Competition and Rivalry

Entrepreneurs tend to ask the right questions but are more sensitive to gaps in knowledge in their fields – they are innovative through experience they have gained in their work. It is this experience that tends to be vital to entrepreneurs as a learning experience but also as a way of experimenting with creativity. It is understood that problems are not always the correct issues to be looking at. Innovation in short means turning creative ideas into something concrete, for example products, where an innovative person has the required ideas and entrepreneurs take the product to market. For example many of the interviewed entrepreneurs have their own brand and some use creativity or innovation to move the underground fashion to another direction and think of ideas which make them leaders in the underground fashion. The process starts by collecting ideas by using ways of creative thinking and using it as a means to standing out. Innovators give new perspectives and see that there are two sides or views when looking at one problem - they do not want to blend in to the crowd. The most important factor in terms of competition to the Gothic entrepreneurs is to stand out from their competition within the scene in order to gain more established position in the scene itself and more customers. (Henry, J. 1991, 32-33.)

Doing things differently and creating goals that are slightly stretching and challenging means breaking free from the conventional ways of looking at different situations. For example, business strategy should always be approached in a less conventional way because one key to succeeding is making your rivals irrelevant. It is very common to focus on the competition in business life today and in the conventional business strategy the industry's conditions are seen as given and it is thought that competitors actually set the rules in the given field. In the value or innovative logic it is believed that the conditions can be reshaped and focus is always shifted towards the customer. For example, the newly established Gothic companies should not necessarily follow the lead of the longer running businesses but promptly establish their own rules and ways of working. Moreover, a lot of comparing is involved in the conventional business thinking and growth is often sought through expanding customer base which then leads to more target segmentation. Through this comparing between rivals and other businesses, it is realized in logic or innovative strategy that customers themselves focus on real value rather than product differentiation. The most interesting fact found here is that custom-

ers who find value will tend to become faithful ones that return to the same company for their needs. Real value for Goths may be for example the authenticity of the product. These days it is easy for mainstream fashion victims to find Goth-like clothing wherever they shop because Goth style has become a fashion statement. It is similarly easy for any retailer or entrepreneur start to manufacture or sell Goth like garments in great heaps straight of the production line. The easiest part is to take a garment and call it Goth. In this sense these entrepreneurs and retailers are focusing on the competition, realising that anti-fashion style sells these days. Thus, the foundation of innovation is to listen to the customer because it is something extraordinary and conventional businesses often forget that. Indeed, the fundamental need of the customer becomes that of the entrepreneur. (Craven, R. 2001, 14-15.)

Since one way to be innovative is by removing self-limiting believes and playing with boundaries, alternative as well as subculture related businesses can easily get a foothold in innovation. Already with the whole concept of Goth, entrepreneurs are breaking away from conventional way of thinking. Goths themselves stand out from mainstream and popular culture by being members of a subculture, as a business this kind of a concept is completely different from a conventional business. By providing services and products for Goths, the mainstream is cut out of clientele. To differentiate themselves from other Goth stores, the interviewed entrepreneurs have to come up with something different or new. Coming up with a new solution or idea can sometimes be challenging with subcultures if the subculture at hand has been around for a long time and the rules are already set for the scene. If an entrepreneur of a subculture comes up with something new, it can easily become popular among the members of the subculture. This is because many members of Goth subculture have been around from the beginning and have basically already seen everything. When ever something new is thought of, it is tested and considered by the members of the subculture and with any luck, strong popularity may turn it into its own subculture. Gothic business can easily influence itself by gothic novel's iconography. As some of the entrepreneurs stated themselves, they enjoy coming up with new ideas and seeing if they become popular and being able to drive some of the fashions of Goth subculture.

Competition is not the most important aspect in the innovative strategy, as opposed to distinguishing factors that deliver superior value from all other factors in the given in-

dustry. There should always be continuous improvement within the company. It is not always enough for the entrepreneur to assume that knowing the product is adequate, sometimes it helps to consider the product's values and what it represents. Innovators are not constrained by the current situation but are looking for real value-adding opportunity and seeking to solve problems across the entire chain rather than relying on what is right or wrong. It should be argued that some factors given by the industry as a default can be eliminated completely or their importance can be reduced. In these cases the real value that needs to be delivered to the customer is looked at from another point of view and if the required factors are reduced, it is found that maybe the value has not been delivered to the customer yet. For example, the interviewed entrepreneurs of gothic stores may find that the actual gothic customers are not getting what they need from the store and choose to shop elsewhere. In terms of delivering value to the customer, if the actual value is not delivered to the Goth customers, then the value delivered to alternative customers should be raised. Thus, obviously, the Goth customer would turn to the rivals and the entrepreneur would focus on the alternative customer. (Craven, R. 2001, 16.)

As some factors can be raised and new ones can be created, the business can break out from its limits of competition. This is because the company evaluates the fact that the customer has not received at all what he wants and that there must be a way for the value to be delivered. Then it is realized that this way has never been thought of by anyone else, thus creating an innovative idea and raising the importance of delivering the value to the customer – at the same time minimizing the rivals. In this case for example, the entrepreneur could think of another way of delivering value to the Gothic customer, e.g. improving customer service to be more acquainted with the subculture and its members. The company would not have to raise the importance of alternative customers but shift the focus slightly towards the Goth clientele and raise its importance instead. This way there is a possibility that the customer would construe the products on sale in the same way as the entrepreneur. (Craven, R. 2001, 16-18.)

Researching Goth subculture has shown that it has become easy for members of the popular culture to try out being a Goth whenever they want to try something new because major brands and stores have started to manufacture copies of products straight from the production line. For stores of the popular culture, one way of standing out from

their competition can be by trying Goth influences in their products as Goth has become some what a trend even in Hollywood. As the main focus in logic or innovation strategy is not on competition but rather on the value that the customer receives, the entrepreneurs must understand the value themselves. Being a Goth contributes here enormously but also some knowledge of the scene, following the trends within the scene and experimenting with different ideas can help. The value or the meaning of the product can be seen from the Goth point of view for example in decoration, where it is common knowledge that Goth-like furnishings or interior decorations are hard to come by. Or for example the meaning of music can be used in the sense that the scene evolves around music and any band-related material is favoured by customers.

4.4 The Customer and Internet

Knowledge of the customer is vital because to get inside their heads and listen to them is something that is often forgotten in today's business world. On some level it should be kept in mind how demanding customers can be and have become due to technological changes and the ever growing notion that everything can be and should be available now and here. This point on its own raises the question of loyalty on the customer's part towards the entrepreneur. It is easy and fast to get what you need and when the means are provided, changing the vendor to another should pose no problem. Customers have more information on different products, companies and businesses now. Alternative businesses may have a harder time to stand out and be different because their clientele consists of all kinds of customers, the concept of alternative life-style is so broad and many of the entrepreneurs of alternative life-style businesses do not know their target customers. In this kind of a situation products have to be looked at from the point of view that all customers on all levels are satisfied. Trying to be innovative and bring new ideas into the business is a challenge when wanting to be different from other alternative life-style businesses and keep customers returning. If a company for example sells shoes fit for alternative life-style but the target customers are Goths, it is easy to stand out from other shoe stores by following the Gothic scene and creating new ideas for shoe styles based on the changes within the scene itself. (Sutherland, R. 2001, 13, De Bono, E. 1992, 23, Shurety, S. 1999, 44.)

Most of the interviewed entrepreneurs had not thought it through when it came to their customers. Many of them considered themselves as the type that rather concentrate on the customer than competition but at the end had not specified even the target group who they are selling their products to. To be able to concentrate on your customer, offer them something to satisfy their needs and create something new when their needs are not met, you must know who you are targeting to promote and sell your products to. Among some answers were vague descriptions which can easily mean anyone, such as: "Anyone who wishes to buy our clothing". Others had a clear idea of their target group even though some wanted to bring out the fact that all customers are as important and some customers are not focused on any more than others. Most general answer for target customer is young people 20-30 years of age. This obviously is a rough and kind of vague estimation and young people of 20 to 30 years can mean a twenty-year old who is not a Goth but maybe into alternative life-style. Other answers included: Goths, others who want to look sexy, teenagers.

Nevertheless, Internet makes business easier for both the customer and the entrepreneur because it's virtuality of time and space. With the help of different networks, companies are reaching new and wider audiences of customers and markets and through improving customer service, entrepreneurs can provide detailed information about the services provided. E-business is conducted through online purchasing, wholesale and retail. Internet is an easy and efficient way to sell products globally and entrepreneurs can establish closer relationships with wholesalers, retailers, service providers and establish subsidiary sites if they like. There is a prospect of increased profit when companies trading custom-tailored garments can expand their made-to-order services. Competitive advantage allows more freedom and with innovation, better services can be provided, company image can be moulded and thus customer's views can be manipulated. (Sutherland, R. 2001, 19, De Bono, E. 1992, 28-30, Shurety, S. 1999, 44.)

Many of the interviewed Finnish entrepreneurs have noticed the growing number of Gothic stores being established around Internet within the last few years. This will obviously result in a tighter competition between the stores, others have better quality or lower prices and others have been around longer and are more reliable in the eyes of the customers. Some of the British entrepreneurs simply wish to become and finally stay a consistent part of the market or carry on as they have before without paying any concern

to the competition, trusting their position and clientele. In terms of being unconventional and standing out, this method obviously helps when wanting to stand out from the conventional businesses but to stand out from among the other Gothic stores may pose a problem. Some explained their concerns for some of the means of selling products on the Internet, such as auction online sites where private customers can sell their products and the highest bidder wins it. In these cases it should be noted that online Gothic stores focus on customer service and product knowledge combined with the quality and range of products, where as the auctioneers try to depend on the price.

One entrepreneur answered that they do not know their typical customer because they work through Internet. This is an unexpected answer because the most important fact about companies is to know their customer, even though they would operate using the Internet. Also, in describing their entrepreneurial characteristics, this entrepreneur described themselves as focusing on the customer rather than competition. If you do not know your customer, it is not possible to focus on them. The idea behind innovation lies on the value delivered to the customer and not about competition – Internet is an easy way of going off track from the focus point and forgetting that the customer makes the final decision. Most entrepreneurs characterised their most typical customer as a female and gave some kind of idea of style or size e.g. size six (UK) feet, bridesmaids or size M, bridesmaids or brides.

Goth is very popular in Finland, the amount of bands, events and generally members of the culture, is growing every year and the turn up at events can be over 300 people. Still, most of the few Gothic entrepreneurs work by themselves on a small scale only on Internet. The Finnish entrepreneurs could not answer the question of how many of their own customers are actually Goth relying on the fact that they sell their products through Internet. The British gave straight forward answers and the average ended up at 80% of customers being Goth. Some also pointed out that the remainder are punk, fetish or metal initiated members of underground scenes, where as others pointed out the fact that they also sell products to the representatives of the popular culture and cannot be sure who are real Goth and who are not. Gothic scene has always been big in Britain, the subculture started there, and there is a lot of stimulus to keep the subculture going all around. Most of the entrepreneurs work on an International scale on Internet. As Internet is becoming increasingly popular among people of all cultures and ages in the

world, the trust between the customer and entrepreneur becomes slimmer as the customers have better access to all the information they need.

All British entrepreneurs stated that they started out online and that is the reason for their existence. Finnish entrepreneurs explained that Internet and online shopping eases sales with the fact that no extra employees are needed, schedules do not bind the work and they have a return policy on goods which on its part helps the customer with their decision of purchase because some people still are not at ease with buying online and want to try on clothes before buying. The returning is free which the customers have been very satisfied with. Most of the Finnish companies have sales abroad to a minimal extent. The British companies have continuous sales abroad and in a larger scale by being world wide companies. Some Finnish companies were newly establishes and stated their need to concentrate on the national markets at first. The future and present market situation made others consider growth but others wanted to concentrate some issues at hand that need to be addressed before thinking about growth.

Many of the interviewed entrepreneurs see a future for stores since there still remains a number of customers who like to try clothes on themselves before making the actual decision of purchase. Also, some customers need a product urgently and straight away and cannot wait for it to be delivered. Many stores may come to struggle to compete against under priced items online, people still want to feel and see things for themselves. Most of the entrepreneurs are not satisfied with their current status of profits and see themselves as being in a starting position and slowly getting to their target. Many explained that being ambitious they wish to expand their business or that all spare money they may have is used for growing the business. Only one entrepreneur of a company in a smaller scale exclaimed being satisfied with the profitability at the current state. This is understandable, since smaller businesses often do not seek expansion.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Creative class is a new way of looking at the economy and has been identified as one of future's leading ways to compare economies in the world. It is new in its views because it strives from the work people do and is implemented from there in the workers' way of life within the organisation and outside of it. Creative class is equally a part of the employees' work but also their free time. Creative class was studied based on the researches of Richard Florida. The lives of the members of the creative class combine all aspects of life: work, free time and home. Their minds are set on the creative level also outside of work. The aim throughout this thesis has been to study the Goth subculture, creative class and entrepreneurship, to see how Goth entrepreneurs see the work they do, the business they run and their own way of life. The Goth subculture is looked at from its own point of view, from within the scene itself, but also from the view point of business. The connection between Goth entrepreneurs and creative class is looked into. Equally important is to study how these entrepreneurs in this subculture handle their own business and it is compared to the general norms of business.

The Goth scene started as a music genre and turned into a movement on its own, the music is the subculture's essence but subcultures need more in order to flourish. Only in the recent years, bands have started to brand themselves Gothic, along with the media and even Hollywood starting to utilise the term with styles and ideas unknown to the subculture but seen from the outside as Goth. The values such as iconography of gothic novel, the bourgeois ways and open-mindedness of the scene, the ideas of anti-fashion and anti-society and the variety within the music are all disconnected from the term Goth. It is no wonder why many members of the subculture change their style to something else or try to shelter the scene from the wandering eyes of the outsiders. Likewise, it is no wonder why many outsiders take an interest in the scene on the outside and it is commonly considered a phase that will pass with time. At the same time, the scene is one of the longest running subcultures and so popular even, that it has developed its own subcultures within itself.

Goth subculture was researched first to study its values and ideas but also to see how strong it is as a way of life for the entrepreneurs. This thesis was based on questionnaires sent out to entrepreneurs who were located in Finland and Britain. It was soon found that the subculture is very aware of its existence. The members of the subculture have strong views and opinions when it comes down to it. The subculture itself fosters

its ideas and values even so, that it tries to keep the mainstream from its shops and the idling gaze of teenagers from its set of values. This in turn, creates two camps within the business life of the subculture. It was found that either the Goth entrepreneurs sell product to those of the scene or they widen their customer base so that they sell to the likes of alternatives, regardless of their specific taste or values. Those entrepreneurs keen on the subculture tended to be British, they sell products mainly to Goths, being Goth themselves. Here it was found that these entrepreneurs, being in the scene itself, have become to know the scene and understand its changes. In addition they accept the interest of the mainstream buyers on some level and try to adapt this in their business if they feel it is necessary.

Those selling to the alternatives in general or having mainstream buyers in their clientele either sold their products under the brand of Goth or admitted humbly to having nothing to do with the scene. Their understanding of the scene itself was vague and it was shown that in their case their focus needs to be more on the general level, where the understanding of alternative life-style needs to be higher. These entrepreneurs tended to be Finnish and mostly admitted to not being in the Goth scene themselves. Although, it was realized that Goths themselves fall under the category of alternative being members of a subculture rather than popular culture. The general idea of all entrepreneurs is to stay underground to avoid mainstream but be alternative to attract customers from all subcultures. It was noticed that media creates a picture of Goth which is then considered true by the popular culture. Moreover, many companies can say they are selling Goth style clothing but in reality are selling products in the image of Goth coined by the media and not the true concept of Goth.

Business and entrepreneurs were studied to see how well Goth entrepreneurs fit into the norms and standards set by other researchers but also to see how serious the Goth entrepreneurs are about their work. Entrepreneurs' qualities were studied and were reflected to the work of the entrepreneurs. It was verified that the entrepreneurs are independent workers and focused on competition. Their sense of modern innovation, where customers are focused on rather than competition, was vague because they claimed to be customer focused but turned out to be very aware of their competition. In terms of adapting to change, many of the entrepreneurs adapt to changes within the subculture if necessary but it was left uncertain of how much they would adapt to changes within their own

field of business. It was observed that most entrepreneurs tend to rely greatly on Internet and this can dim their focus on other areas of business. Many have great plans for the future. They want to have more customers and establish a market position but then, still do not seem to be in the business for money and do not see money as a status symbol. It was perceived that subcultures have the ability to restrict individualism. Goths can be seen as individuals in comparison to mainstream but within their subculture they can be seen as a mass. The basic need to break free from rules and the general open-mindedness of the subculture separates it from popular culture. Goth encourages individualism as a subculture but not as actively as creative class maybe requires. In the entrepreneurial sense it was noted that many entrepreneurs expressed strong interestests in certain areas of their work, mainly the Finnish entrepreneurs being the most business-minded. Thus, it was established that the entrepreneurs have capability and knowledge for the future plans many of them set for themselves.

As well as looking into the qualities of entrepreneurs and comparing their work to that of other businesses, it was studied how much of their work actually strives from their way of life and is done to enrich the soul and how much their work is actually focused on profit. The connection between creativity and business should be noted on all levels of society and economy in today's business world. The entrepreneurs of a niche area generally consider their product a piece of art and it was established on numerous occasions that this is the case for Goth entrepreneurs. Even though these entrepreneurs proved to have little knowledge of their customers, they expressed their enjoyment vividly of having customers who enjoy their products. The idea of creativity is to find something new - it strives from lowered inhibitions and is influenced by the creative person's motivations and goals. Creativity should be used to develop businesses as it has an effect on the economy as well. It was proven that it is old fashioned to consider creativity as a separate entity from business world and that many entrepreneurs still see this separation. Creativity is a means to enrich the soul but simple copying and comparing with other companies is an easy means to gaining profit. It was found that many companies use Goth fashion to gain profit by selling clothes that are said to be Goth and their look is copied from the Goth concept created by the media.

A lot of the ways how the entrepreneurs conduct business is based on their own ideas and needs and not on those of the business world or customers. Creative chastity is not

able to enter employees' lives if business and own way of life are separated and seen as two different things. It was discovered that all the entrepreneurs focused greatly on Internet, rather than their location. The entrepreneurs do not go where talent is and it seems that they hardly consider the opportunities outside the frame of Internet. Additionally important is the establishment of the fact that as well as in general entrepreneurs having a notion that the end result is a piece of art rather than just a product for sale, most of the Goth entrepreneurs feel this way too. In addition it is realized that many Goth entrepreneurs say they are customer focused but actually do not know much about them, or at all, and in reality seem to have a better knowledge of their products rather than the customers. It was discovered that all of the entrepreneurs are very dependant on Internet and praise it as a means for running their business. Similarly it is noted that at the same time there is a growing number of stores online which means the increase of competition but also the unreliability of customers because it is made easy for them to find another store. All in all, it was found that the entrepreneurs have potential for successful business owners within the frame that is set for them. It is likely that some faults within their own organising skills, lacks in knowledge or pressures from the outside will bring some set backs but some of the companies had already been running for some time. It proves that if one plan maybe fails, another may work.

In general, the entrepreneurs of alternative companies see themselves more as business-people and having their own business as a means for gaining profit. They have established business plans and handle their business very much according to the pre-set norms of business culture. The Goth entrepreneurs do not see themselves as business people and wish to keep the term business separated from what they do. They see themselves more as part of the subculture and have their own business to do what they like and support the subculture as a whole. It is this fundamental attitude which proves fatal for these entrepreneurs in this research to be part of creative class. It is not often that the creative class walk the streets and shout out loud that they are part of a new creative class which will soon determine the value of each economy. Yet, the creative class are paid for their creative work, they have their fundamental values which lead them at work as well as in their free time and they organise in to social groups to support this lifestyle. It is the fundamental point of creative class essentially which keeps the Goth entrepreneurs separate from creative class – creative class starts from work and thus enters the minds and lives outside the work. With Goths, the whole idea of their busi-

ness is lifestyle, not business itself. The values are implemented from outside of work and the business is run by the subculture.

It may be worth asking whether the Goth entrepreneurs themselves have a common-place understanding of what it is to be business-minded. They should be brought to understand that within their own frame of work they are business professionals because many of them have had their businesses running for many years and some of them even employ people and grow as a company. Getting Goth entrepreneurs to be counted in creative class begins by Goth entrepreneurs first understanding their own acknowledged entrepreneurial skills as part of themselves.

6 SUMMARY

In this thesis the concepts of creative class and Goth subculture were studied closely in order to find whether or not the entrepreneurs of Goth subculture fit into the idea of creative class. The Goth subculture was studied as a way of life but also as a frame for a business. Unfortunately, it was not possible to receive any numeric statistics on the amount of Goths in certain regions. The only average number on Goths can be seen in the percentages of Goths some entrepreneurs estimated to be part of their clientele in chapter 4.5 The Customer and the use of Internet in Business. Creative class was looked into and Goth entrepreneurs were studied in its reflection. Finally, the entrepreneurs were viewed in the light of business and entrepreneurs in general to study the business of Goth entrepreneurs. The fundamental aim was concluded by interviewing entrepreneurs to hear their own views and to understand their work and way of life. Theories on creative class, entrepreneurship, creativity and business were researched to support or confront their answers and to bring out new or dissimilar points and issues to consider in the study. This task was tricky since the views and theories were perceived to be very different at times and in a sense the entrepreneurs promoted their detachment from creative class.

The method of this thesis was desk research with the help of theories from Richard Florida on creative class and various other authors on creativity, business and entrepreneurs as well as Goth subculture itself. Internet was used mainly to find out about Goth subculture but also on modern notions of entrepreneurship. The framework was based on Richard Florida's studies and other literature was used as theory to support other findings within the thesis. In terms of studying Goth subculture, it is vital to know where to look for literature and what kind of literature is needed. Goth subculture has been studied on some level but for a thesis like this it is hard to find literature which would not focus on the musical aspects as much but would mention more about the subculture itself. None the less, it can be deduced that the meaning of music is considerable to the subculture. Creativity on the other hand, seems to be even less studied than Goth subculture. Edvard De Bono's work proved vital for this thesis, as other authors were impossible to find to support the theory of creativity, even Internet proved useless on this subject. It was established that creativity is still considered as part of the art world even by researchers because much of the literature found on creativity would be about art or related issues. By contrast, entrepreneurship and business have been studied on a wider scale and a lot of literature could be found. All the same, this literature is inclined to focus on the means of starting your own business rather than the actual meaning of entrepreneurship itself and its values. This in turn led to the use of Internet in this matter.

Internet can be trusted in terms of amount of material but not quality. Often enough many of the search enquiries give results highly influenced by the website author's own views and opinions and often cannot be trusted as a neutral source of information for a thesis. This was realized especially in the case of Goth subculture where many authors would make statements about the subculture entirely false. In terms of creativity, only search results based on creative companies were found and the studies of entrepreneurship on Internet proved to be of the most basic nature. Nevertheless, all these studies can be adapted into the research by reading between the lines, comparing with other sources, especially literature, and focusing on the research problems set at the beginning.

To support the methods of this thesis, interviews were carried out to hear the views of Goth entrepreneurs themselves on various issues. These interviews proved the most important aspect of the work and resulted in the conclusions of the thesis. The main

problem of this thesis was the amount of answers received, as approximately 20 companies were asked before hand to fill in the questionnaire and an estimate of 12 companies replied unanimously, only half actually followed through on their agreement at the end. Another problem was the number of entrepreneurs not wanting to be seen as entrepreneurs, or part of creative class but keep Goth separate from the concept of business. At the end, this problem was turned into a conclusion. At the end it was seen that it is their need to be individuals and maintain their subculture. All in all, these problems were conquered by focusing the research on the main issues and defining the research questions more. The thesis is qualitative since the amount of answers does not allow for quantitative methods. Additionally all of the interviewed entrepreneurs sell garments and accessories; only one company was a footwear company. This limited the variation of answers a great deal and made the views of the entrepreneurs seem very much one-sided. It should also be noted that companies specifically focused on for example Goth-like furnishings or perfumes do exist but are not a part of this study.

This thesis brought new insight on creativity as it still today seems to be studied from the business and art point of view. In addition, it is still seen as a means for the art world although it is often found that creativity is essential on all levels of society and business. Goth subculture in itself is still unknown and could be studied further to improve the knowledge of society so that Goth would be known for what it represents. Creative class studies are still a modern concept and it is evident that the research will be continued consistently especially by Richard Florida. The conclusions and findings of this thesis are the result of a research which is very modern in its ways. It is not common to try and combine the mentalities of Goth subculture and business world. Hence, this study is of the most basic nature and would need further investigation to conclude more reliable results. To bring the notion of the subculture to the level of modern business requires both the support of the subculture as well as that of the society. This thesis can be seen as a good start for researching subcultures as well as studying business or creative class from the outsider's point of view. In further studies Goth subculture could be studied to see how it can improve its business side by for example implementing views from creativity and entrepreneurship in its business values. This could bring more insight on customer care and product variation. Creative class could be studied on a wider scale, bringing insight from other fields in business, to see how it can be adapted in all aspects of economy. Entrepreneurship studies still seem to focus strongly on the business side

and could be studied from the view point of other subcultures and alternative lifestyle to generally enhance the work of these specific entrepreneurs.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire for entrepreneurs

This questionnaire is made to evaluate the seriousness of gothic stores in the frame of creative business.

You and the company

1. a. Explain shortly how you ended up in this job:
1. b. What is your education?
1. c. Have you worked in business in the popular culture before?
1. d. Childhood dream job:
1. e. Do you accept Goth as your own subculture/style/way of life?

2. a. What is the current company form?
2. b. Have you established the company or bought the business operation? What year?
2. c. What are the biggest changes in the business operations during the past few years of activity?
2. d. How do you see the company in the next 5 years?

3. a. Why the current location, e.g. Britain, London, and is the market big enough? How do you achieve the market?
3. b. Do you have sales abroad?

4. a. Expand in your own words what do you like most about your job? What motivates you?

4. b. Which of the following applies to you the most? Please choose 3 most applicable.
 - () Taking Risks
 - () Understanding change/Adapting to change (If needed, adapts to the current situation)
 - () Seeing opportunity (where others do not)
 - () Self-confidence/Independence
 - () The need to succeed/work hard

- () Finding different solutions (there may be more than one solution for the same problem)
- () Seeing different situations (the concentration is not always focused on a problem at hand)
- () Innovation, doing things different to others
- () Focus on the customer rather than competition

You and the field of activity

- 5. a. Are you satisfied with the profitability of activities at the moment?
- 5. b. Are there seasonal effects on your profitability e.g. seasonal variations or fashion, etc.?
- 6. a. How do you see the progress or competition of gothic stores in the future?
- 6. b. Goth can be a changing concept, how do the changes affect your business?
- 6. c. You may have customers from popular culture in your clientele, how do you see the meaning of Goth in the market demand?

You and the customer

- 7. a. What is/are your main products – that attract the most customers?
- 7. b. Describe your most important target group:
- 7. c. Describe your most typical customer:
- 7. d. Please give an estimate on clientele dispersion how many are Goths.

Goth as a value and Creative Business

- 8. Could you see yourself selling products out of the range of Goth to improve your profits, e.g. metal related clothes or pop music?
- 9. Do you think that subculture and people who represent it have what it takes to run a serious business?
- 10. a. The rise of the creative class after the boom of technology is said to be society's current development phase. What does creative class or creative business bring to your mind and what does it mean to you?

10. b. Creative class means cost-effective business activities in a creative field. Do you see yourself more as a creative “free soul” or businessman or do you operate on both sides accordingly to the definition of creative class?

11. If your company would be situated in Finland, what would it be like?

Internet and store

12. a. How has the Internet and online shopping helped your sales/made it more difficult?

12. b. Is this an easier way of selling gothic clothes/products than through a store?

12. c. Do you see a need for stores in the future?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX 2

Kysely yrittäjille

Tämä kysely on tehty arvioimaan goottiliikkeiden uskottavuutta luovan talouden käsitteen puitteissa.

Sinä ja yrityksesi

- 1.a) Kerro lyhyesti miten päädyit tähän ammattiin:
- 1.b) Mikä on koulutuksesi?
- 1.c) Oletko aiemmin ollut kaupan alalla populaarikulttuurin puolella?
- 1.d) Lapsuuden toiveammatti:
- 1.e) Tunnustatko itse goottiuden omaksesi?

- 2.a) Mikä on yritysmuotonne?
- 2.b) Oletko perustanut yrityksen vai ostanut liiketoiminnan? Mikä vuosi?
- 2.c) Mitkä ovat suurimmat liiketoiminnan muutokset kuluneina toimintavuosina?
- 2.d) Millaisena näet yrityksesi viiden vuoden päästä?

3. a) Miksi kyseinen sijainti e.g. Suomi, Tampere ja riittääkö siellä markkinat? Miten saavutat riittävät markkinat?
3. b) Onko teillä myyntiä ulkomaille?

- 4.a) Kerro omin sanoin mikä on parasta työssäsi? Mikä sinua motivoi?

- 4.b) Mitkä seuraavista kohdista parhaiten sopivat sinuun, valitse 3 parhaiten sopivaa:
 - () Riskien ottaminen
 - () Muutosten ymmärtäminen/niihin mukautuminen (Tarpeen vaatiessa tilanteen mukaan sopeutuminen)
 - () Mahdollisuuksien näkeminen (paikoissa joissa muute eivät ehkä sitä näe)
 - () Itseluottamus/Itsenäisyys
 - () Tarve menestyä/Halu tehdä paljon työtä
 - () Erilaisten ratkaisumenetelmien löytäminen (samaa ongelmaan voi olla monta eri ratkaisua)

- () Erilaisten tilanteiden näkeminen (keskittymisen kohde ei aina ole ongelma)
- () Innovatiivisuus, asioiden tekeminen toisin kuin muut
- () Kilpailun sijaan asiakkaaseen keskittyminen

Sinä ja toimiala

- 5. a) Oletko tyytyväinen toiminnan kannattavuuteen tällä hetkellä?
- 5. b) Onko toiminnassasi kannattavuuteen vaikuttavia ajan tekijöitä esim. kausivaihte-
luita tai muoti-ilmiöitä tms.
- 6.a) Millaisena näet goottimarkkinoiden kehittymisen ja kilpailun tulevaisuudessa?
- 6.b) Goottius on muuttuva käsite, miten muutos vaikuttaa liiketoiminnassasi?
- 6.c) Asiakaskunnassasi ollee myös ns. populaariasiakkaita, millaisena itse näet goottiu-
den merkityksen markkinakysynnässä?

Sinä ja asiakas

- 7.a) Mikä/mitkä ovat ydintuotteesi – parhaiten asiakkaita houkuttelevia?
- 7.b) Kuvaile tärkein kohderyhmäsi:
- 7.c) Kuvaile tyypillisin asiakkaasi:
- 7.d) Arvio asiakaskunnan jakaumasta NOIN paljonko on ns. ”oikeita gootteja”

Goottius arvona ja luova talous

- 8. Voisitko kuvitella myyväsi muuta kuin goottituotteita esim. metalli vaatteita/pop mu-
siikkia parantaaksesi kannattavuutta?
- 9. Onko sinun mielestäsi alakulttuurista ja sen edustajista yleensä liiketoiminnan tekijöiksi?
- 10. a) Luovan talouden esiin marssista teknologiahuuman jälkeen puhutaan yhteiskun-
nan nykyisenä kehitysvaiheena. Mitä luova talous sinulle tuo mieleen ja mitä se sinulle
merkitsee?
- 10. b) Luova talous tarkoittaa kannattavaa liiketoimintaa luovalla alalla. Koetko itsesi
enemmän luovaksi ”vapaaksi taiteilijaksi” vai liikemieheksi vai toimitko luovan talou-
den määritelmän mukaisesti molemmin puolin?
- 11. Jos yrityksesi olisi Englannissa, millainen se olisi?

Internet ja myymälä

12. a. Miten Internet ja verkkokauppa on helpottanut myyntiäsi/vaikeuttanut sitä.
12. b. Onko tämä helpompi tapa myydä tämän tyyllisiä vaatteita/tuotteita kuin myymälän kautta?
12. c. Onko myymälöille enää mielestäsi tarvetta tulevaisuudessa?