



Creating Comprehensive Digital Marketing Guidelines for Yak-nak Restaurant:

Finland's Gateway to Authentic Nepali and Indian Cuisine

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ABSTRACT

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Crafting Comprehensive Digital Marketing Guidelines for Yak-nak:

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This thesis was commissioned by Yaknak Restaurant, specializing in Nepalese and Indian dishes in Tampere, Finland. The primary objective was to craft a comprehensive digital marketing plan to increase the restaurant's online visibility and attract more customers. Historically, Yaknak lacked a structured marketing approach since its inauguration, emphasizing the need for a systematic strategy to sustain itself in the competitive digital environment.

The research made use of a mixed-method approach, along with the incorporation of secondary data from scientific articles with the motive to understand digitalisation and digital marketing. The data was gathered through interviews with the management of the restaurant, a discussion with a small focus group of customers, and short surveys. Together, these methods provided a strong base for understanding the present digital landscape as well as the specific needs of the Yaknak Restaurant.

The secondary data revealed that websites and social media pages are cornerstones in addressing the customer's evolving needs developing the core of an effective digital marketing strategy. Primary data reinforced these findings indicating the significance of prioritising websites and social media among all other efforts in digital marketing.

Based on these findings, The result indicated that the Yaknak Restaurant should hire a digital marketing expert who can prepare the content and strategize marketing programs. Future research should be based on evaluating the functionality of the site and the social media engagement status as per the customer's perception to ensure that the customer expectations are met and engagement is enhanced.

Keywords: digital marketing plan, traffic building, customer engagement

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ABBREVIATIONS

SEO	Search Engine Optimisation
ROI	Return on investment
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
e-WOM	electronic -Word of Mouth
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
SERPs	Search Engine Results Pages
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
SMM	Social Media Marketing
PPC	Pay Per Click

1 INTRODUCTION

This introduction section will first examine the significance and the impact of digital transformation in the restaurant sector followed by a detailed thesis outline. The outline provides the reader with a clear and structured roadmap that outlines the thesis's main sections and components.

1.1 Background and significance of digitalisation in the restaurant industry

Digitalisation has been described as the major technological trend toward society and businesses in general. The trend has put pressure on many small, medium, and large business organisations to acknowledge digital technologies that would help adjust their business model to this new era of digitalisation. (Reis et al. 2020, 443–456.)

Digital marketing has led the industry into a new era. Consequently, To keep up with the trend restaurants are continually adjusting their strategies. The increased use of digital technologies is changing the nature of consumer interaction in different sectors and marketing strategies (Qenaj and Beqiri 2022, 66–69). The rapidly expanding digitalisation of the past few decades has thereby changed not only the marketing channels but also the behaviour and expectations of consumers, from a traditional methodology to today's limitless digital platforms. This thesis will concentrate mainly on such major changes in the context of Yaknak, a Nepalese restaurant in Tampere. It discusses how the growing power of consumers and their information accessibility propel a desire for more personalized marketing experiences. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

Kariru and Antoneta (2022) stress the fact that businesses of all sizes must keep up with the digital trend fostering their brand image and customer engagement if their target is to sustain and thrive in today's digitalized world. In the era of digitalisation, where the internet is used globally as a means of information

exchange, this thesis will aim to develop a comprehensive digital marketing plan for Yaknak restaurant.

Bhandari and Sin (2023) highlight that the company's digital marketing plan must align with its brand image and customer engagement while enhancing the traffic on its website and social media platforms at the same time to ultimately increase the sales of the company in the long term. Therefore, the formulated plan will be consistent with the company's brand image and objectives for customer engagement with the primary focus on improving a website and social media traffic and ultimately boosting sales. The main objective of the study is to provide effective guidelines on digital marketing, which would help improve the digital presence of Yaknak, resonate more effectively with its targeted audience, and help in the retention of brand loyalty while growing the business within the highly competitive restaurant industry in Tampere.

Similarly, the following modified version of the graphical representation by GlobeNewswire (2024) clearly illustrates the projected growth of this global market in restaurant digitalisation, which will rise substantially from \$6.8 billion in 2022 to \$29.6 billion by 2032, with an estimated CAGR of 16.3% (Figure 1). The growth significantly reflects the rise in the adoption of digital technologies in the restaurant sector, driven by the need for more efficiency and enhanced customer experiences.

In addition, the digitisation of restaurants, fuelled by the widespread adoption of solutions such as online ordering systems, and AI-driven tools for better service in restaurants, will have a huge impact on this industry offering a considerable opportunity for stakeholders who can leverage digital advancements. This trend strongly emphasizes the growing sophistication of digitization in the future of dining. Given their enthusiasm for Finland for such new digital trends, the thesis will hence guide Yaknak to leverage the best potential digital advancement to remain at the forefront of today's digital landscape. (GlobeNewswire 2024.)

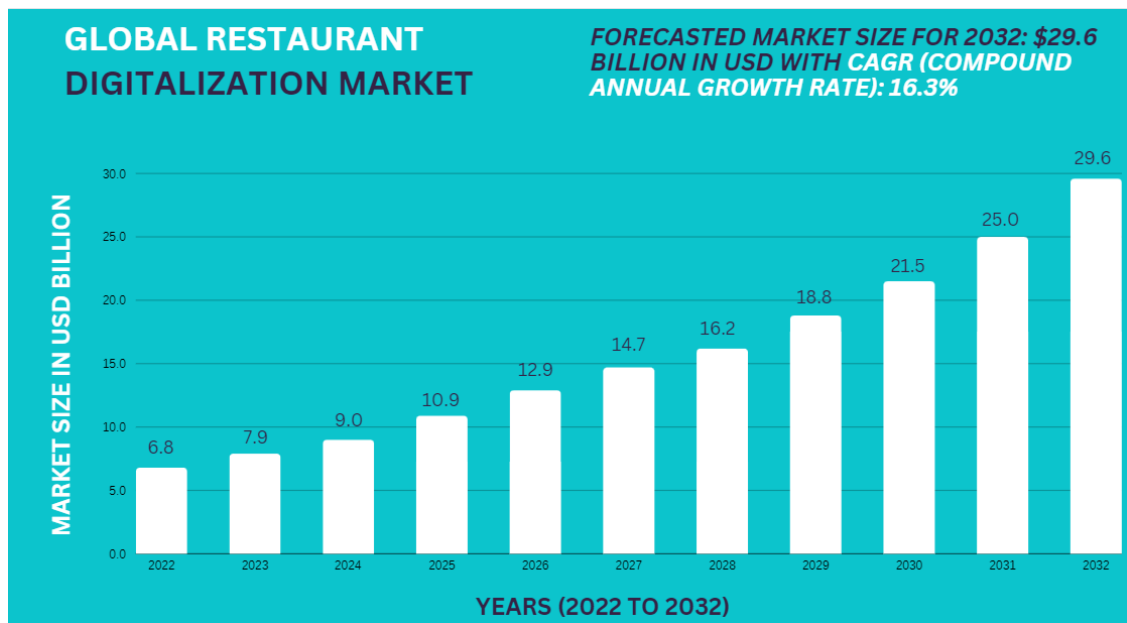


Figure 1. Global restaurant digitalisation market by Market.Us modified (GlobeNewswire 2024)

1.2 Thesis outline

The initial section of this thesis is divided into two major parts: the first represents an exploration of the topic of digital marketing in the restaurant industry, justifying the importance of the topic. Following this, the second part presents the main objective the thesis intends to achieve. Moving forward, It will articulate the structure and major points to be discussed from the beginning of the introduction to the conclusion in the final chapter of the thesis.

Subsequently, The paper will provide an overview of the proposed plan of research that has been briefly presented to encompass the main theme, objectives, and, to a larger extent, the key questions towards which this research paper is answerable. Afterwards, the thesis seeks to explore the theoretical background of the concept of marketing, digital marketing and restaurants. In continuation, the thesis aims to craft a theoretical foundation which is relevant to the subject of research. These concepts and theoretical foundations baked by a comprehensive review of existing literature will serve as the theoretical framework for this thesis to provide support in interpreting the data and findings. In addition to that, these

ground concepts will shape the research question, methodology, and reflection for the presented thesis.

The latter section will then explore the data collection method along with the interpretation of the collected data. Thereafter, the thesis will establish the background of the case company along with the industry in which the case company is operating in Finland, and finally explain digital marketing evolution from traditional marketing in Finland. The following section will discuss the findings from the conducted interviews and further analysis of the information derived critically. The information would be very critical in developing a comprehensive digital marketing strategy which the commissioner company may adopt.

Next, the thesis introduces the comprehensive, and personalized digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant. Further, this includes describing the existing digital marketing scenario, marketing strategies, and SWOT analysis for yaknak. In sequence, this is then followed by the 7Ps of Marketing Mix and SOSTAC Model application on the commissioner company with a structured approach including future planning. Eventually, it discusses the actual action plan description, thereby knowing what execution steps the company needs to undertake. In the next section, the main findings will be summarized together and recommendations for the application of these findings in the restaurant sector of digital marketing.

2 THESIS PLAN

This would provide an overview of the purpose, aims, and objectives of the study within this planned thesis, looking further into the various concepts, theoretical frameworks, and real-world examples that will undergird the analysis.

2.1 Thesis topic

The focus of this thesis is developing a comprehensive digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant. It delves into creating an effective digital strategy, emphasizing essential components crucial for the creation of such a plan. This study is particularly applicable due to Yaknak's current minimal digital footprint and the increasing importance of online presence in the restaurant industry to attract and retain customers.

The thesis will explore customer behaviours, particularly how they increasingly rely on the internet for information and reviews during their purchasing process (Pascucci, Savelli & Gistri 2023, 27–58). This trend highlights a gap between consumer digital adoption and business integration of digital channels, a gap Yaknak currently exemplifies.

Bruce et al. (2023, 1–24) imply that the key challenges in developing the digital marketing plan are the development of a coherent digital strategy, overcoming hesitation in adopting new marketing tactics, and drawing from successful digital marketing examples while avoiding negative perceptions such as being labelled as a spammer. Considering this factor, This plan will be framed on academic literature augmented with the mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection.

2.2 Thesis objective, purpose, and research question

The thesis aims to develop guidelines to craft an effective and applicable digital marketing strategy for the Yaknak Restaurant. To complete this study, the following central research question has been proposed so that the study could obtain a valid and explicit answer:

“How to craft a comprehensive digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant?”

In a way to critically answer this question, the following sub-questions intend to guide the thesis, where each sub-question is supposed to find answers to specific areas of a digital marketing strategy.

Sub-question 1: “What kind of digital marketing tools should Yaknak Restaurant utilize to enhance traffic on its websites and social media platforms?”

The question attempts to reveal the relevant tools and platforms in digital marketing that would be of great help to increase the online presence of the Yaknak Restaurant; this is through various digital channels that include social media, search engines, and email marketing, among others.

Sub-question 2: "How should Yaknak Restaurant apply these tools to exploit the full potential of digital marketing?"

This sub-question will delve deeper into the strategic use of discovered digital marketing tools. It will deliver best practices of how to use these tools effectively for the optimisation of content to reach out to the audience in various digital marketing platforms, and then finally integrate the tools to have one unified master plan. The research seeks to explore beyond just the theoretical discussion providing more of the practical guidelines that should guide Yaknak Restaurant to achieve success in this digital world. The thesis aims to provide the restaurant with an understanding of the great potential that digital marketing holds and how to use it to pull more traffic toward the company's website and its social media platforms. This is crucial because it eventually leads to business growth and more customer engagement. Thus, each recommendation and finding that will be incorporated in this particular research paper will have a valid grounding

concerning academic research and real-life examples applicable to today's modern digital marketing landscape.

2.3 Concepts

The section "Concepts" of this thesis is sophisticated since it is solely devoted to the elaboration of theoretical grounds, which could give necessary knowledge about the understanding of multifaceted digital marketing reality in general and within the restaurant industry in particular. It will cover foundational marketing theories and key terminologies that will be integrated into this study. The terms include "marketing," "digital marketing," and "restaurant marketing." This section will enrich readers with a better understanding of these crucial concepts, laying the foundation for the effective application of digital marketing and the measurement of the effectiveness of the application of these strategies in restaurant businesses. This foundational knowledge becomes the cornerstone for the thesis featuring the development of a digital marketing plan that integrates practical applications with theoretical insights.

2.3.1 Marketing

Kotler (2022) visualizes the term "Marketing" as the extensive field that emphasizes identifying and meeting customers' needs with strategic value creation and exchange. It involves a broad range of activities such as product development, market research, promotion, selling, and distribution by a company to profitably meet the demands of the targeted market. Modern marketing emphasizes extremely on building long-term relations with customers, in the course of offering customers superior value and satisfaction that will develop loyalty and induce repeat business. This relational view strictly varies from the traditional transaction-focused view signaling a turn toward long-term customer engagement and value co-creation. (Kotler & Armstrong 2022,7 –30.)

There is a vast difference in the definition of marketing, showcasing its extensive role in linking up businesses with their respective customer. According to

Rangaswamy (2020), marketing is defined as an activity by which entities produce, price, promote, and deliver goods and services to meet the requirements of individuals and organisations.

On the other hand, He et al. (2023, 1161–1181) define it as a management activity that focuses on being able to effectively predict, identify, and satisfy customer needs. In general view, marketing addresses the demands of consumers for profitability, encompassing all activities associated with designing, pricing, promoting, and distributing offerings to meet the needs of present and potential customers (He et al. 2021, 1161–1181).

2.3.2 Digital marketing

According to Chaffey (2023), digital marketing means “Achieving marketing objectives through applying digital media, data and technology”. Digital marketing is characterized as one of the key strategies in today's digital landscape, enabling businesses to communicate directly with an audience on the online platform. It emerged as the most interactive, personalized strategy with the ability to respond to user needs in real-time. Faruk, Rahman and Hasan (2021) stated that Digital marketing allows the precise measurement of the results thus allowing companies to identify customer segments according to their online operations. Digital marketing, unlike traditional marketing, has become an expert at engaging customers effectively (Faruk et al. 2021).

Furthermore, Faruk et al. (2021) also noted that digital marketing is capable of facilitating real-time tracking and evaluation of marketing efforts. It allows an organisation to gain more insight into the behaviours and preferences of its consumers with the utilization of these features. Other than that, Digital marketing is quite affordable and flexible. It offers businesses a golden opportunity to create brand awareness, sales, and customer engagements. Additionally, it also allows targeting specific sets of audiences in the market with specific messages (Faruk et al. 2021).

Besides that, Digital marketing encompasses three different forms of media which are paid media, earned media, and owned media. Firstly, Paid media refers to online advertising done on various platforms to either raise the traffic on the website or to increase the search engine ranking of the site. Secondly earned media are produced through organic engagements, word of mouth, and social media interactions that result in valuable conversations happening in online and offline worlds. Finally, owned media refers to the assets of a company, say a website or social media accounts, which a company has control over to increase its online presence. (Spotts et al. 2022, 387–397.)

However, Poorani, Vidhiya, and Santhosini (2021, 46–53) stressed that there are some challenges in applying digital marketing effectively such as online reputation management, selecting one effective tool from a myriad of effective tools, and addressing privacy concerns. Despite the hurdles in staying ahead in the dynamic marketplace of digital marketing, the firms with the major motive to thrive in the competitive market must continuously adapt and adjust their digital marketing tactics. In addition, they should constantly upgrade their tactics in alignment with the new consumer behaviour and technological developments. (Poorani et al. 2021, 46–53.)

2.3.3 Restaurant marketing

Restaurant marketing has emerged as a dynamic form of strategy that effectively deploys multiple techniques for the promotion of dining places, mesmerizing the customers with its offers, and ultimately developing brand loyalty. The development of this in the digital era has some fresh dimensions added to it. Andriani and Hutauruk (2024, 41–52) emphasize that social media are now the cornerstone of marketing strategy for small and medium dining facilities since it proved to drive business growth. The focus is on the need to optimise digital media for marketing success.

Furthermore, Mehdi et al. (2024, 1–21) stress the need for strategic planning in marketing a restaurant arguing that an excellent strategy focuses on the balance

between services offered and market demand, ensuring that the growth strategies are practicable and up-to-date with consumer needs.

Mawardi (2024, 1–21) points out that the significance of green marketing does have a major influence on customer repurchase intentions as part of the major effort in the direction of sustainability. The customer in today's world is primarily attracted towards a brand known for promoting environmental responsibility. Hence, aligning marketing efforts with such values has become crucial not only for the planet but also for business.

2.4 Relevant marketing theories and models

This section of the thesis incorporates the appropriate theoretical frameworks relevant to crafting a digital marketing plan for Yaknak restaurant. The 7PS Marketing mix and the SOSTAC models offer comprehensive methods for developing the digital marketing strategy in the service-driven restaurant industry. Additionally, any business exploring digital marketing aims to increase online visibility and customer engagement. This highlights the key reason to incorporate the importance of the company website, social media platforms especially Meta platforms and TikTok, and digital tools such as Google Analytics and SEO. (Kumar 2021.)

Moreover, the section discusses how content marketing strategies can be leveraged to attract customers towards the restaurant's digital platforms. It also explores the real-world example of how the Royal Mustang restaurant in Pori achieves success by leveraging effective digital marketing strategies. Given the potential of these theories and tools, the Author points out that these theories, case studies and tools are relevant in answering the research question.

2.4.1 7Ps marketing mix model

The widely recognized traditional 4Ps marketing mix was developed in 1960 by E. Jerome McCarthy. It consists of four very important elements ranging from

products, price, place, and promotion. The 7Ps marketing mix is an extended version of the traditional 4Ps, which is extended with three more elements - People, Process, and Physical Evidence. It is designed to support businesses with comprehensive tools for reviewing and defining their marketing strategies across multiple dimensions. Furthermore, this framework is found to be relevant and very significant in crafting a digital marketing plan for Yaknak restaurants. In the following section, the thesis will explore the seven elements of the 7ps Marketing Mix model. (Hanlon 2023.)

The product element of the marketing mix refers to what a company has to offer to its customers. It encompasses physical goods, services, and digital products. A product objective is to create a new or fulfil an existing customer need. The product must be evaluated and developed continuously to remain relevant and competitive. Key aspects to be considered in this regard include the design, quality, features, variety, and brand name of the product. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

The price company is defined as the expenses customers have to incur in exchange for a product or service. Pricing is a very essential element of the 7 PS marketing mix because it determines the positioning and competitiveness of the product in the market and eventually its profitability. Businesses should make major considerations on production costs, competitor pricing strategies, market demand, and the value of the product itself when setting prices. The range of strategies can vary from premium pricing, competitive pricing, discounting, and bundling. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

place or distribution is defined as the act of making the product available at the right time and location for the customer. It encompasses logistics, distribution channels, coverage, and locations. It is all about ensuring that the products will be able to be delivered in convenient manners to the consumers whether through a physical retail setting, an online platform, or a hybrid method of distribution. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

Promotion refers to an activity which is carried out to make the customer aware of the product while persuading them to purchase it. It encompasses activities

that are related to public relations, direct marketing, advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling. An effective promotion strategy always ensures that the desired messages are delivered to the target audience through the most suitable channels. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

People is a central element of the 7 PS marketing mix. It is highly significant to product-based firms. This dimension encompasses all individuals directly or indirectly related to the business, including the employees, management, and the customers themselves. customer service, training, and motivation are critical dimensions, as the customer's quality of experience is highly linked with the interaction with the company's personnel. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

The process element of the 7 PS marketing mix comprises the procedures, mechanisms, and flow of activities in the consumption of services. Generally, It may involve the processes of sales, service and delivery. Efficiency, service quality, and customer satisfaction are the most important factors here, which directly affect the experience of the customers and the perception of the brand. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)

Physical evidence is the environment in which the service is delivered and where the firm and customer interact. For instance, it includes packaging in the case of product-based companies. This element significantly influences the customer's perceptions of the quality and reliability of service. It includes the physical facilities, layout, signage, and even digital spaces companies use in interacting with their customer. (Fahrizal et al. 2022, 182–187.)



Picture 1. Key elements of 7Ps marketing mix modified (Hanlon 2023).

2.4.2 SOSTAC model

The SOSTAC model is a widely recognized marketing framework that was innovated by PR Smith in the 1990s. The model consists of six vital components: Situation, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions, and Control. PR Smith is an internationally admired speaker, marketer and author who crafted this model, which has been recognized as one of the top three business models in the world. The SOSTAC model was first published in 1996 in PR Smith's book "Marketing Communications: An Integrated Approach", as a guide for planning marketing. It has drawn interest from dominant organisations and startups such as LinkedIn, KPMG, and Greenpeace, among others. (smith & Zook 2024, 306-341.)

The first stage, Situation Analysis, begins with a comprehensive review through digital SWOT analysing all factors that can be influencing consumer decisions. This analysis delves into the micro and macro environmental aspects, focusing on the behaviour of customers, competitors, and intermediaries as critical. (Smith n.d.)

The Objectives section specifically focuses on the target of "where do we want to be?" based on identifying specific markets for engagement. It outlines a detailed approach for the engagement of digital channels and setting concrete goals concerning cost reduction, sales, and volume projections. (Smith n.d.)

The strategy is the main element in the model, dealing with the key question: "How do we get there?". The strategy can be defined as a tangible approach to the realization of set goals, with a primal focus on product proposition, market segmentation, and targeting. It is crucial to identify the target market with an emphasis on aligning the preferences of customers with the ability of the company. (smith & Zook 2024, 306-717.)

Tactics incorporate specific strategic components, which include the marketing mix, customer relationship management (CRM), and digital communications, clarifying "How exactly do we get there?" (Smith n.d.).

This is followed by the Actions stage, whereby the implementation of the plan is explored, including task allocation and responsibilities definition. The application of effective internal marketing will guarantee that a plan succeeds (Smith n.d.).

Finally, the Control phase is for measuring campaign effectiveness. It addresses "How do we know we get there?" by stating the objective of early establishment of objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) for ongoing analysis and monitoring all through the campaign. (Smith n.d.)



Picture 2. SOSTAC model, modified (Smith N.d.)

2.4.3 Company website as the digital marketing platform

The website stands out as the most crucial and widely used digital marketing tool within today's digital landscape. According to Sharma and Tripathi (2023, 27–31), The usability of the website, the presence of quality content, and interactivity are the major elements of raising user engagement, brand awareness, and conversion rates. Furthermore, the ease of use and the navigability of a company website act as the cornerstone factor for the effectiveness of digital marketing. (Sharma & Tripathi 2023, 27–31.)

The things that need consideration in developing a user-friendly website are

- The reason behind building this website
- The primary objective for establishing the site

- The targets and objectives that are to be accomplished through this website
- The contribution of the website to the success of the organization. (Martini et al. 2022, 81–90.)

Furthermore, the easier navigation, organization, and mobile optimise action of the site is the key factor for the enhancement of customer experience. The enhanced customer experience results in higher customer engagement and conversion rates of the customer. Besides, the content that resides on the website of an organization is of great value. The quality, relevance, and frequency of updating the website are attributes that can help in attracting and retaining visitors (Sharma & Tripathi 2023, 27–31). Moreover, informative content that is relevant to the needs of the customer adds engagement, value, and visibility while making the website accessible to potential customers. Also, the more time spent on the website, the better the SEO of the website. (Martini et al. 2022, 81–90.)

Interactive features, for instance, chat functions, feedback forms, and links to social media on a website, further create an avenue of two-way communication between a company and its users. This level of interactivity increases user experience, encourages user participation, and nurtures a sense of community around the brand. In light of these considerations, user engagement with interactive features can contribute to deepening the bonding of the customer to the brand which is vital for a successful digital marketing strategy. (Martini et al. 2022, 81–90.)

In addition to that, the comprehensive digital marketing approach is characterized by the integration of a website with social media platforms and mobile accessibility. It also makes use of the brand's online presence to further increase user engagement through shared content that drives back the traffic to the website. Similarly, making the website mobile-friendly will enable the company to reach the increasing number of users who access the web through mobile devices, further extending the reach and access to the brand. (Sharma & Tripathi 2023, 27–31.)

2.4.4 Social media marketing

Social media marketing is defined as the strategy of gaining targeted audiences and improving brand visibility through social media platforms (Thakkar 2022). Specifically, it is a set of actions carried out on social networks to distribute and share content for designing the company image, driving traffic to websites, boosting sales, engaging with current customers, and attracting new ones (Hayes 2023).

Remarkably, the rapid growth of interactive digital platforms has enabled social media to overshadow traditional channels such as TV and radio. According to Data Reportal (2024), the number of people using social media has soared to 5.04 billion worldwide, equivalent to 62.3% of the world population, with roughly nine out of every ten internet surfers active monthly on social media. With the presence of such a large number of users, social media has emerged as an extremely powerful marketing tool for a variety of businesses. The most critical aspect of it is that it offers three fundamental pillars in marketing: connection, interaction, and access to customer information. In connection, with social media marketing (SMM), businesses can reach out to their current and prospective clients effortlessly and economically unlike the traditional marketing avenues.

Moreover, SMM opens a path to greatly improve customer relationship management (CRM). Besides, either through direct or indirect interactions on social media, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is promoted among both already existing and potential customers (Wan & Forey 2024). Social media platforms document all these interactions, hence giving tangible metrics on the return on investment (ROI), which demonstrates the value of the third marketing pillar under SMM: customer data. This becomes a major resource to be used for market analysis, strategy fine-tuning, and the development of new marketing approaches.

According to the latest data, in the year 2024, the use of social media is very high in Finland, with the general population of 80.4% using social media platforms, which constitutes 4.46 million citizens (Kemp 2023). The most popular social media platforms in Finland are Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube. Notably, YouTube stands out as the most explored social media in Finland, more than 4.46 million users use it for various interests and ages. Furthermore, Facebook having over 2.3 million users is largely used by the 25-34

age group (Kemp 2023). Similarly, Instagram With an approximate number of 2.2 million users, reaches out to the younger Finnish population, especially those aged 18 to 24 years (Kemp 2023). Finally, In early 2024, Tiktok had 1.64 million Finnish adult users, who represented a 30.2% share of Finnish internet users. Moreover, Ad reach to TikTok increased by 15.2% from early 2023 to early 2024(Picture 3). (Kemp 2023.)



Picture 3. Major social media used in Finland (2023)

Despite, YouTube standing out as the most used social media according to these statistics, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are the major social media platforms that Finnish companies consider most relevant for incorporating in a marketing plan today. This is because these selected platforms offer diverse content possibilities with better engagement possibilities. They also provide businesses with strong advertising tools. Also, influencer marketing is more effective on these platforms compared to YouTube. Considering the nature of business and the current marketing situation of yaknak the thesis will target the Meta platform(Facebook and Instagram) and TikTok to enhance its existing minimal presence on these platforms rather than exploring a bunch of possibilities at the same time.

2.4.5 Meta platforms

Ramanathan (2024) states that Meta, formerly known as Facebook Inc., has emerged as an efficient and effective digital marketing tool leveraging its diverse range of platforms, which include Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Messenger, strategically managed to become a giant in the arena of digital marketing. The ecosystem will provide novel opportunities for enterprises of all sizes to find and engage their target audiences in a personalized and effective way. As a digital marketing tool, Meta offers a suite of advertising and engagement features. With these features, Meta meets diverse marketing objectives from creating brand awareness to generating leads, converting sales, and customer service which are vital for the success of business in today's digital landscape. (Ramanathan 2024.)

Moreover, another strength of Meta in attracting marketers lies in its sophisticated level of targeting options. This would require a large extent of user data to help the advertiser correctly specify the audience that they consider the best fit. As a rule, Meta enables advertisers to reach out to their audience with striking accuracy, utilizing huge data from millions of users. Marketers can target users by demographics, interests, behaviours, and even life events, assuring that their messages are conveyed to the kinds of people who are likely to be interested in their product or service. Such laser-targeted efficacy of targeting will multiply the return on investment (ROI) for the marketing campaign because of minimal wastage and maximal relevance. (Adi, Oktavian & Hidayatullah 2022, 1–10.)

Another core advantage that places the Meta platform above its competition is the variety of ad formats and placements it offers. This enables marketers to be able to create engaging experiences to suit campaign objectives and audience preferences using placements from conventional image and video ads to more engaging formats such as Stories and carousel ads. In addition, Meta's platforms also offer varied ad placements such as in feeds, stories, in-stream videos, and the Audience Network that allows ads to reach beyond Meta platforms to other internet audiences. (Sadewa, Mataram & Sari 2023,96–106.)

Meta platform also offers powerful analytics and measurement tools such as Meta Business Suite. These tools offer the feasibility to manage all the meta platforms from one platform making it easy for marketers to get insight into details of the performance data of their campaigns. However, as noted by Adi (2021, 1–10), these insights make it possible to optimise in real-time enabling the advertisers to adjust their strategies based on what works best. For instance, the number of reaches, impressions, clicks, conversion, and engagement rates will give a clear view of the campaign's effectiveness and ROI, hence guiding the marketer in making data-driven decisions. (Adi et al. 2021, 1–10.)

Moreover, Meta's commitment to innovation and development guarantees that it will remain at the frontline in digital marketing trends. The platform constantly evolves through the implementation of new features, the latest of which include AR filters, Instagram Reels, and Facebook Marketplace providing an innovative roadmap for creative engagement and marketing. Therefore, businesses can always get one step ahead by memorably reaching their audience through the effective utilization of these innovations in the right manner. (Ramanathan 2024.)

2.4.6 Tiktok

According to Gesmundo et al. (2022, 343–361), TikTok has rapidly evolved as one of the best digital marketing tools incorporated into social media. It has introduced a revolutionary way of changing how brands interact with their audiences, particularly the younger demographic. Fundamentally, TikTok is a creative and authentic short video-sharing app which offers a unique blend of entertainment, information, and interaction with the community. The sudden rise of the platform mainly comes with the power of the algorithm in surfacing content to the users based on their interests, creating an engaging, personalized experience for the users. (Gesmundo et al. 2022, 343–361.)

As Barta (2023) highlights, the platform TikTok is a great chance for marketers to tap into a huge and engaging audience. Unlike traditional marketing channels which are all about plain advertising, TikTok's approach is all about blending in while standing out which means TikTok users try to fit in while being unique at

the same time. The app also allows marketers to create content that would never fit in with a normal advertisement. This requires creativity, and marketers have to come up with content that is funny, interesting, and relatable. Successful campaign marketers, tend to capitalize on trendy hashtags, challenges and sounds to bolster visibility and engagement. (Barta et al. 2023.)

Additionally, one of the impressive features offered by TikTok is its algorithm, with the ability to make the content of even the smallest of accounts go viral. Nowadays, more content is now put in front of more people, through which even small brands can reach huge viewers without spending too much on ads. However, It is critical to understand and follow trends of the platform, and users' preferences for success on this platform. (Fitri & Syaefulloh, 2023, 3946–3971.)

Apart from organic content, TikTok offers a wide range of advertising formats, including In-Feed ads, Branded Hashtag Challenges, and TopView ads. These will show on top of the feed when one opens the application. The formats allow more intrusive marketing approaches, wherein brands can position themselves through the users' feeds with messages intended for the users. In addition, comprehensive Tik-Tok targeting options can ensure that the ads reach the most suitable audience in terms of demographics, interests, and behaviour. (Gesmundo 2022 et al. 343–361.)

The platform also aids in developing influencer partnerships, leveraging personalities who have been able to gather mass followers and credibility in the TikTok community. Influencer campaigns will be especially effective on TikTok because of the authentic connection between the content creators and their audiences. By collaborating with influencers, brands can tap into existing communities and attain recommendations that feel very personal and real. (Gesmundo et al. 2022, 343–361.)

2.4.7 Google analytics

Shaheen (2023) emphasizes that Google Analytics is a complementary service provided to website owners to enable them to analyse their website traffic. It is

available to anyone with a Google account forming part of the larger Google Marketing Platform suite. This tool equips the user with the ability to track where the visitors come from, how they are interacting with his or her site, and which marketing is most effective. It also offers an insight into what kind of demographics are going to be visiting the website facilitating targeted content design accordingly with marketing strategies. (Shaheen 2023, 1273–277.)

Beyond the standard traffic metrics, Google Analytics also offers its users other very advanced features of conversion tracking and event tracking. This feature offers deeper insight into user actions, such as product purchases and subscriptions to a newsletter. This allows easy actionable insight for the orientation of adjustments in strategy and optimisation efforts with the customization of reporting and a friendly interface.

In simple terms, Google Analytics is an invaluable resource in helping businesses enhance the performance of their website and make well-informed data-driven decisions on matters that would enable them to reach their marketing objectives more effectively. Therefore, Google Analytics will be utilized in developing a digital marketing plan for Yaknak restaurant. (Shaheen 2023, 1273–277.)

2.4.8 SEO marketing

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation. Leonard (2023) states that it is the process of enhancing a website's appeal to search engines with the motive to rank the website high in the search engine results pages (SERPs). It is not a very straightforward task to achieve a top spot in SERP. The strategic planning and the deployment of various tactics are very crucial before identifying an optimal approach that elevates the visibility of the site. (Leonard 2023.)

Moving forward, Khosla (2023, 25–28) highlights that SEO marketing stands at the forefront in establishing a solid online presence, and it goes beyond the mere existence on the web. SEO marketing is implemented with the principle of making content on the website a premier choice in answering search queries. In general, SEO can be defined as designing strategies that can fully communicate to the

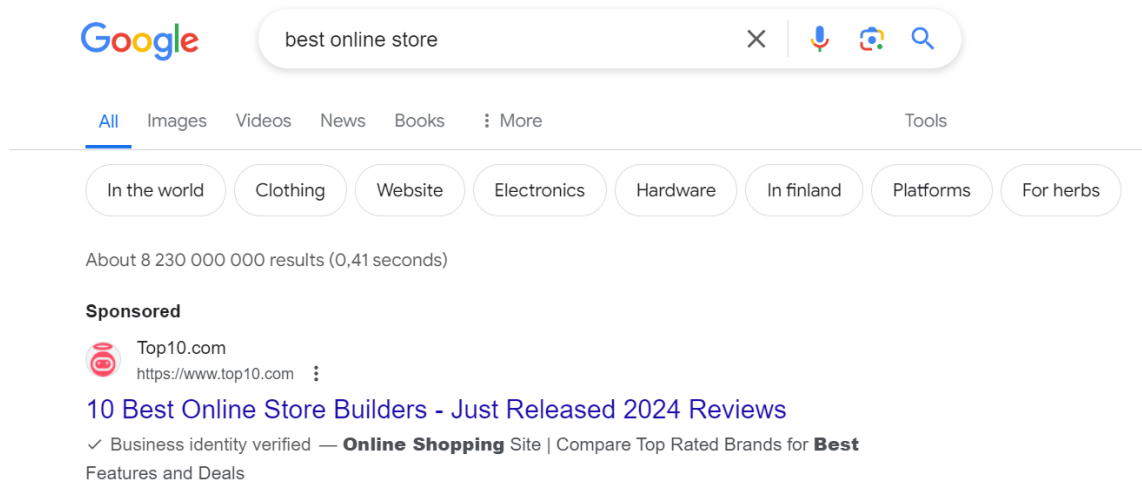
search engine, like Google, making the website the most authoritative and relevant answer provider to the question being asked by users. Furthermore, once recognition from the search engine is attained, the website content is propelled to the top of the search results, sometimes even within special sections for instance, the "people also ask" boxes, amplifying the visibility of the website to potential visitors. (Khosla 2023, 25–28.).

Moreover, understanding how search engines work sheds light on the complexities of SEO. Through powerful algorithms and the assistance of web crawlers, the digital giants crawl the entire web, indexing billions of pages. This involves, among others, keywords, relevance, freshness, and user engagement, among other things, when setting content priorities. It is to ensure the user is provided with up-to-date information regarding their search intent. For instance, the search query "local coffee shops" may be more relevant to the potential of search engines in matching user intent, showing listings of nearby coffee shops instead of how-to guides to make coffee. (Leonard 2023.)

Furthermore, the concept of SEO goes beyond search engine mechanics; it is more about building a credible brand that is positively accepted and preferred by its users. This trust is based on transparency. A good listing on the SERPs will result in an upsurge of interaction with content by the users, hence increasing the reputation and credibility of the brand. It will also include Local SEO and Technical SEO to make the site locally discoverable and technically adept in speed and mobile friendliness. (Leonard 2023.)

In continuation, Chaffey (2023) implies that PPC is a prominent advertising tool that functions by displaying a company's website link at the top of search results when a customer inputs specific keywords into the search engine. However, the difference lies in the fact that these ads are marked as paid, which can influence the perception of relevance in comparison with organic results. Furthermore, The main difference between traditional advertisement and PPC is that the cost is paid when the ad is clicked, and the customers are driven to the website of the company. It is focused in such a way that ads are shown only when certain keywords are typed, thus reducing irrelevant exposure. PPC is proven to be a very useful lead more often as those audience who click on these ads are highly

motivated and interested in the subject on which they are working. As a result, search engine optimisation and pay-per-click are parts of one consistent strategy of digital marketing that will be considered and, therefore, require explanation in detail. (Chaffey 2023.)



Picture 3. Google pay-per-click example search, search “best online store”, screenshot made on the 30th of April 2024.

2.4.9 Content marketing

Content marketing is a versatile business strategy, and that's where a business maintains itself in touch and retains the customer base with targeted customers using written articles, videos, audio, and other media published in various formats. This approach captures the audience, nurtures customer loyalty, and boosts sales at an affordable and effective rate in comparison to traditional marketing strategies. (Demand Metric n.d.)

Furthermore, MailChimp (2023) emphasizes that a significant portion of consumers feel a closer connection to the brands through custom content consumption, and this is what makes content marketing a very important tool in the process of building brand reputation and boosting sales. Additionally, having a proper understanding of the preferences of the target audience is vital for effective content marketing. Businesses can deliver value consistently by selecting appropriate

content formats and platforms based on audience preferences. (MailChimp 2023.)

In continuation, Content is considered effective if it is empowering, reframing, and entertaining for the audience (Basilier 2023). Video content has very clearly established itself as a highly influential medium with the majority of consumers being convinced to purchase products or services after viewing business videos in today's digital landscape. Therefore, it becomes evident that Concrete, actionable, and fun content maximizes audience engagement and brand impact. (Basilier 2023.)

In addition, according to Basilier (2023), text-based content remains the cornerstone of social media content marketing, which provides the base for the effective delivery of messages. The integration of high-quality visual aids, for example, infographics or a presentation of products, is suggested to increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of the content. Hence, Authentic content that shares insights and values seamlessly increases brand authenticity and equally helps to build relationships with customers. (Basilier 2023.)

2.4.10 Royal Mustang's successful digital transformation

According to Gurung (2018, 1–36), Royal Mustang Nepalese Restaurant has been successful in implementing a strategic and perceptive approach to digital marketing boosting its sales and maintaining a long-lasting relationship with its customers ultimately raising the visibility of its brand. In general, the restaurant has been able to show how properly designed digital tools can be used not just to attract but to build lasting relationships with customers. Significantly, Royal Mustang didn't rely on a single channel for its digital marketing efforts. Instead, a comprehensive digital marketing strategy that drew SEO, social media, and content marketing formed a master plan. This master plan guaranteed visibility in several digital platforms, tapping into the different customer segments and their preferences.

Royal Mustang also partnered with platforms like Trip Advisor which benefited them with greater visibility. TripAdvisor is a highly regarded platform specifically by travellers and local diners who seek authentic dining experiences. Moreover, TripAdvisor offers an invaluable opportunity to build a reputation and attract new customers. Therefore, the greatest lesson, in this case, is that a diversified marketing strategy using a mix of channels will cast a wider net for prospective customers. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

Subsequently, the restaurant engaged customers on its social media pages and website. Royal Mustang created a community around the brand by actively seeking and responding to customer feedback. Therefore, this regular engagement helped the restaurant fine-tune its offerings to suit customer preferences and also highlighted the critical role that listening to the customers and acting upon their feedback plays in building brand loyalty. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

Furthermore, Local SEO can turn the tide for restaurants and local businesses. Royal Mustang made sure that its online content was optimised for local searches, so much so that it surfaces right at the top when potential customers search for Nepalese cuisine in that area. This not only increased foot traffic to the restaurant but also boosted online orders from there. So, the real takeaway in crafting a digital marketing plan for Yaknak from the above is the importance of local SEO in driving both physical and online customer engagement. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

Moreover, through targeted digital advertising, the brand awareness of Royal Mustang increased, attracting new customers. The restaurant was able to stand out for its ability to adequately represent authentic Nepalese cuisine and a unique dining experience. This underscores the importance of digital campaigns showcasing the unique selling proposition (USP) of a restaurant to stand out. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

3 THE COMPANY CASE STUDY & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TRENDS

This section of this research paper provides an overview of the company that has commissioned the study and the industry where it operates. Additionally, it investigates the historical evolution of digital marketing in general and in Finland. The chapter is targeted to explore these issues profoundly, considering the necessity for a detailed analysis of the company and gaining insight into the fundamentals of digital marketing.

3.1 Detailed overview of Yaknak restaurant

Yak-Nak is a special restaurant in Tampere serving authentic Nepalese and Indian food. The idea of this restaurant began with the owner's imagination during his final thesis, being a student of international business. Additionally, coming from a family in Nepal that had remained in the restaurant business for a considerable amount of time in the country, he was inspired to bring a piece of Nepalese culture to Finland. After receiving positive feedback on his thesis from his supervisor and peers, he embarked on the journey of exploring the availability of an authentic Nepalese restaurant in Finland. (Yaknak n.d.)

After conducting the research, The commissioner discovered that many restaurants claimed authentic dishes but fell short of this authentic promise while serving. This finding only fuelled his ambition further in setting up a truly authentic Nepalese restaurant. He teamed up with a friend in Tampere and crafted a business proposal, which they submitted to Business Finland. Luckily, the proposal was accepted, providing foundational funding for the Yaknak. (Yaknak n.d.)

Moreover, the name for this restaurant was decided as "Yak-Nak," honouring the importance that yaks and naks have in the Himalayas, which resonates with the authenticity and respect that this restaurant has towards the culture. The insides of Yak-Nak are beautifully decorated to narrate the stories of Nepal and create an atmosphere that is inviting for their guests. There are plenty of options on the menu, ranging from momos, thukpa, and dal bhat to butter chicken and rogan

josh, besides a few Nepalese exclusives for the very adventurous diners. (Yaknak n.d.)

Despite the nice cuisine and ambience, Yaknak's digital presence is quite minimal the owner confessed that digital marketing was not on priority when he commenced the business because of the low budget. This situation highlights a common challenge faced by businesses in the restaurant industry which is leveraging digital marketing to enhance customer outreach and online visibility.

3.2 Restaurant industry in Finland

In Finland, the restaurant industry is evolving day by day featuring a vibrant and dynamic nature. It reflects the country's rich culinary heritage and its openness to global influences resulting in the demand for novel and authentic international cuisines (Mattayev 2022, 5–53). This trend offers a fertile ground where establishments such as Yaknak Restaurant strive to survive and make a lasting impact on the industry. With this regard, this paper emphasizes the need for familiarization in terms of the Finnish restaurant industry, consumer behaviour, and the digital landscape that will be used in developing effective and comprehensive digital marketing strategies for Yaknak Restaurant. (Spivakovskyy, Spivakovska, & Bazherina 2021, 129–149.)

The restaurant industry in Finland is based on professionalism and high-quality of service. Consumers in Finland are very quality-conscious about food, sustainability, and authenticity, which are critical factors in making their dining choices. The industry is also highly regulated for the sake of establishments meeting the stipulated health, safety, and quality standards. These considerations combined with the fact that Finland has a very stable economy as well as a high standard of living, are prime factors for restaurants to flourish with unique and high-quality dishes. (Mattayev 2022, 5–53.)

Furthermore, a digital presence and online marketing are an inevitable framework for success in the restaurant business in Finland. The population has a huge internet penetration rate and widely uses smartphones impacting the decisions of

consumers in Finland. Moreover, customers are highly influenced by online content, reviews, and social media activity. This suggests that there is a very high potential for growth in the Finnish restaurant industry for restaurants like the Yak-nak if aligned with quality and authenticity considerations, along with strategic and sustainable online customer engagements. (Spivakovskyy et.al 2021,129–149.)

3.3 Digital marketing evolution in the restaurant sector

Restaurants were required to incorporate components such as geo-targeted advertising, SMS marketing, and mobile apps, into their marketing strategies to compete in the digital landscape. Additionally, these technologies allowed restaurants to have more personalized communication with customers offering promotions and updates straight to their mobile devices. Furthermore, the ability to collect and analyse the data about customers enabled restaurants to tailor their offerings and messages precisely. (Liu et al. 2022.)

In recent years, the focus has shown the tendency to shift towards a more integrated digital marketing approach with the combination of various channels and tactics composing a consistent and unified customer journey. Social media advanced as a crucial platform for customer engagement evolving from traditional basic advertising to include more interactive elements such as live-streaming events, partnering with influencers, and user-generated campaign content. (Jahan et al. 2022, 249–254.)

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has made digital marketing an absolute basic survival tool and created the need for rapid adaptation and innovation within the sector. The increase in using digital platforms for handling orders and contacts, processing payments, and customer service skyrocketed during this time to survive the lockdowns. This also led to virtual events and experiences such as online cooking classes and virtual wine tasting to maintain engagement with their clientele. However, it is crucial to consider that digital marketing will continue to evolve in Finland with technological improvement, changing consumer behaviours, and sustainability and personalization concerns. (Mattayev 2022, 5–53.)

4 DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

The chapter outlines the research objectives, the research design, the research methodology and the data collection methods used in this study. It presents the outcomes from the initial data gathering. Additionally, the chapter incorporates the theoretical framework previously described into the analysis of the interview findings.

4.1 Research methodology

In this section of the thesis, the methods used for research will be explained. The research methods of primary data collection are broadly classified into qualitative methods and quantitative methods, each serving specific benefits based on their nature. The author decided to apply a mixed approach to collect primary data in this research by conducting an in-depth qualitative and quantitative study to seek comprehensive insight into the status of Yaknak, exploration of customers' thoughts and experiences along with the numerical data (Taherdoost 2021 10–38). The secondary data were researched from multiple scientific publications and different online sources.

According to Taherdoost (2021 10–38), The qualitative method of data collection can be defined as a research strategy applied in primary data collection to obtain rich textual data through direct interaction with research subjects. It is renowned for providing an in-depth view of personal experience from the side of the customer's expectations, which would be very important for developing targeted and personalized marketing strategies. This method executes interviews, focus groups, observation and document analysis for gathering quality and descriptive data. Conversely, the Quantitative approach employs surveys, longitudinal studies and experiments for the collection of statistical data to analyse the feature which can be captured numerically for gaining insight. In general, the application of quantitative analysis was to ensure the strategies developed were evidence-based and aligned with the needs of the target audience. (Scribbr n.d.)

Furthermore, The hybrid model combining both qualitative and quantitative research approaches was selected because it enables the researchers to explore and quantify phenomena. This helps to gain both depth and breadth in the data collection and analysis. The use of quantitative data to validate qualitative insights contributes to a more comprehensive understanding. Consequently, the results obtained have high credibility and reliability allowing the researcher to work on the limitations of each method, which are inherent in their application. For instance, biases in qualitative research and the inability of quantitative methods to capture the context and depth of some data points. (Scribbr n.d.)

The qualitative component of this study will be the conducting of in-depth interviews with the management of Yaknak and a focused group interview comprising four restaurant customers to reveal insights on the official website and social media of the Yaknak Restaurant, especially in SEO optimisation. Therefore, these interviews are aimed at providing insights into perceptions, experiences, and suggestions on Yaknak's digital presence. For analysing these answers, the marketing theories and case studies mentioned above as a theoretical framework, such as SOSTAC and 7PS of marketing and more will be utilized.

On the quantitative side, structured and simple questionnaires will be disseminated to the customers visiting the restaurant to gather general numerical data on customer preferences, digital engagement levels, and the impacts of various digital marketing initiatives on customer behaviour. This would be complemented with an analytical review of the website and social media analytics since these give concrete numbers on user engagement, the efficiency of content, and the reach of the digital marketing effort. A case study of Nepalese restaurants running successfully in Finland has also been integrated into the theoretical framework of this study.

Furthermore, the case study of a successful Nepalese restaurant currently operating in Finland will contribute to the theoretical framework by providing real-world examples, showcasing how a well-designed and well-implemented digital marketing strategy can be utilized within the food service industry in Finland. Moreover, it provides valuable empirical evidence of market tendencies, customer behaviour, and competitive strategies in the restaurant business. This dual

application provides a full context for Yaknak's digital marketing efforts and grounds the analysis in both theoretical perspective and practical realities within the market. In addition to that, secondary research will form the foundation for primary data collection involving a comprehensive review of the literature focusing on digital marketing within the business, the trends, challenges, and proven strategies.

Moving forward, a SWOT analysis of Yaknak's restaurant will lay down the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to serve as a basis for guiding the development of targeted digital marketing strategies. Additionally, the situational analysis of Yaknak's social media channels also determines the effectiveness and level of engagement of the currently applied marketing strategies. This methodological framework acknowledges the dynamism in digital marketing and the restaurant industry featuring adaptability in its approach. This combination of secondary research and a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches aims to gain an exhaustive understanding of Yaknak's needs in digital marketing in terms of the identification of opportunities for strategic growth and development defining the comprehensive marketing solution in the form of an action plan for the Yaknak Restaurant.

4.2 Objectives of research

According to Taherdoost (2021, 10–38.), there are various necessary steps to follow while planning for the interview, starting with the identification of a clearly defined objective that aligns with the overall purpose of the project. Given the objective of this thesis was to develop a digital marketing plan for a restaurant, the research aimed to explore the current digital marketing environment for the restaurant, evaluate the level of alignment in its sales and marketing efforts, and further investigate the company's customer perception of these activities. (Taherdoost 2021, 10–38.)

Additionally, the research also sought to determine keywords a customer would possibly use to access the restaurant's services or products. This insight would

help to refine the design of the company's website and improve its search engine optimisation strategies.

The collected data were expected to paint a broader picture after analysed, while the opinion of the customers was particularly valuable to the commissioner and the authors. A feedback section for the general comment in the customer feedback survey allowed the customer to share their overall impressions of the restaurant. This decision to include a feedback mechanism was primarily based on the fact that the survey focused heavily on dining behaviours and general impressions of marketing efforts rather than on the direct measurement of customer satisfaction. (Taherdoost 2021, 10–38.)

4.3 Data collection methods

As soon as the objectives of the research were established, the author had to choose the best approach to acquiring primary data. As already mentioned, the method of collecting primary data applied in this research comprised a mixed approach by conducting an in-depth qualitative and quantitative study to seek comprehensive insight into the status of Yaknak and prospective areas that can be researched in the future.

The major aim of the thesis was to answer the following research question: "How can an effective digital marketing plan be crafted for Yaknak Restaurant?". In the pursuance of answers, the author explored various digital marketing theories and crafted questions for the interviews and the survey. In continuation, the author profoundly explained how the method of data collection was applied in the study along with the procedure of data analysis. (Scribbr n.d.)

4.3.1 Qualitative method of data collection

The interviews were conducted within two distinct categories: the top-level management team of the Yaknak Restaurant, and its customers. Furthermore, the author believed that each group would provide novel insights into Yaknak's

marketing strategies and customer decision-making process. Therefore, the questions were prepared for each set comprehensively to cover the depth and breadth of insight which is crucial (Taherdoost 2021 10–38). The interviews with the management team of Yaknak were conducted via email while the interviews with the small focused group of customers were conducted face-to-face, with the interviewees being chosen by Yaknak's management. The interviewed small focused group of customer received a handsome discount in their launch as a token of appreciation from Yaknak restaurant.

Besides, the interview with the Yaknak top-level management was conducted to delve into the current digital marketing practices and the impact of these practices on their overall business strategy. It aimed at assessing the efficiency of the strategies currently online, the understanding of some challenges they face, and the discussion on their usage of digital marketing tools such as SEO and social media strategy. It was also meant to examine how customer feedback influences Yaknak's content strategy, determine the barriers to developing a digital marketing plan, and assess management familiarity with the marketing theories and willingness to adopt successful strategies from others.

Similarly, the mini focus group interview with yaknak's customers targeted insights regarding the online engagement of customers of Yaknak Restaurant primarily focusing on how they access or get engaged with the restaurant online. The main motive for the author to decide to organise mini focused group interview with the customer was to gather rich and descriptive data allowing a deep understanding of the customer's perspectives, experiences and behaviours in a delicate way. It was also designed to examine the user-friendliness of the website and the type of content that customers are most interested in along with the frequency of engaging with the website. It also aided in exploring searching behaviours, seeking recommendations on digital improvements, and measuring the tendencies to recommend Yaknak's online channels. In other words, the interview was designed in a way that the SEO for the Yaknak restaurant is analysed with a minimal focus on social media analysis. The mini-focused group interview took place in Yaknak restaurant on March 26, 2024, as scheduled by the commissioner.

After collecting all the qualitative data from the interview with the management team and the mini-focused group of customers the author organised them according to the role of the respondents and analysed them collectively along with the customer feedback survey data obtained from quantitative analysis to obtain an overall image from the opinions. The marketing theories discussed in the second chapter were utilized as an analytical tool to interpret the responses.

4.3.2 Quantitative method of data collection

In terms of quantitative analysis, the simple feedback survey featuring Yaknak restaurant's digital experience was deployed to analyse the digital expertise of Yaknak's customers. In general, it was designed to generate overall insights into the customer perspective on Yaknak's website and social media and the customer. As the Yaknak restaurant's visibility on social media platforms is significantly low, the commissioner decided to collect the data physically from the customers who dine there offering discounts and gifts to the customers who answered the survey. Hence, the author delivered a sample questionnaire in printed format as requested by the commissioner for the data collection on March 12, 2024. The commissioner returned the collected responses on April 25, 2024. He mentioned that he analysed those responses surfacely by himself. After the data collection, the responses were arranged and converted into a percentage to facilitate the interpretation. This conversion helped the author to visually represent the interpretation through piecharts for each finding of the survey.

Furthermore, Yaknak Restaurant decided not to request the customers for personal or demographic information in the survey to improve their digital platform. This decision was made to favour the customer's comfort, trust, and convenience. By keeping the survey simple and not requiring personal details, Yaknak hoped most customers would provide feedback without hesitation and limitation, leading to a better digital experience. Hence, the survey was conducted anonymously. The survey aims to explore how customers discover Yaknak and their experiences with the website and social media. The general purpose is to improve the restaurant's online engagement and service offerings. It also explores customer interest in a direct online ordering system. The survey hopes to outline areas of

digital improvement clearly through a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions so that Yaknak refine its online presence according to its customer expectations to enhance satisfaction and grow its business sustainably.

The author gathered the responses to the survey and analysed them together with the qualitative data to draw an overall image of the opinions. The data collected enabled the author to analyse Yaknak Restaurant's digital marketing efforts with a fine-tooth comb. It aimed to draw comprehensive overall insights, combining the customer opinions on how they perceived the restaurant online and the responses given by the management team who are involved with marketing the restaurant directly and deeply. The ultimate objective was to utilize the gathered information to suggest areas of improvement for Yaknak's digital marketing strategy. As already mentioned in the prior section, the marketing theories discussed in the second chapter were utilized as an analytical tool to interpret the responses.

4.4 Ensuring validity and reliability; acknowledging limitations

The research organised to craft a digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant was based on the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results. It involved interviewing with the management team and mini focused group of customers, with carefully designed questions to minimize bias and gather relevant data. Established marketing theories were used in the analysis to ensure the drawing of firm conclusions applicable across different respondent groups. (Taherdoost 2021 10–38.)

However, there were various limitations to consider. The email interviews with management may not have been as effective as the face-to-face interviews with customers because of time constraints and the availability of the management team. Moreover, the role of management in selecting interview participants might have introduced bias. This was because the commissioner had concerns about bothering the customers without prior notice. The commissioner believed that it was not practical to carry out interviews with random customers.

Finally, the structured survey format may not have captured the complex interaction and experiences of the customer as it was deliberately kept hassle-free and quick to answer with the motive to not overwhelm the customers. Unfortunately, these limitations were out of the hands of the author because of restrictions in areas such as time, availability of management and availability of customers. However, The author believed that the data collection method when utilized as a whole may outrun these limitations with their effectiveness.

4.5 Data analysis and interpretation

The following section incorporates insights gathered from interviews with Yaknak's management and a focused group interview with customers as the qualitative data. Additionally, it also includes the findings from a customer feedback survey, offering quantitative data analysis.

4.5.1 From Yaknak's management

The interview with the Yaknak management was meant to evaluate the current level of digital marketing efforts made by the restaurant. The questions were formulated using the SOSTAC model as the guiding principle to understand what the company has gained in terms of digital marketing and where it aims to focus its strategies in future. This approach of data collection helped the restaurant to prioritize its efforts in areas where they are urgently needed.

Being a member of the management team, the commissioner shared some insights about their current practices and the challenges they are currently facing. He described the elevation of Yaknak's digital presence as one of the major goals focusing on brand visibility and customer base building primarily through social media and Google ads. However, the management acknowledged that the efforts they made are not as integrated or strategic as they might have been creating the need for a more structured approach to digital marketing. As mentioned earlier, Bhandari and Sin (2023) stated that aligning with the company's brand image

and customer engagement is crucial to enhancing website and social media traffic and ultimately raising sales.

Furthermore, the commissioner also pointed out several challenges that have hindered the progress of their digital marketing initiatives, notably budget constraints and a lack of in-depth expertise in digital analytics. As explained in the theoretical framework, Shaheen (2023, 1273–277) highlights that Google Analytics is a significant digital marketing tool offered by Google which assists website owners in analysing their website traffic. Unfortunately, they have never explored handy tools like Google Analytics, limiting their ability to analyse their site traffic and user engagement. This gap has hindered them from developing a coherent digital marketing plan with no structured efforts made to optimise SEO.

As mentioned, Hayes (2023) stated that Online customer engagement is managed through basic interactions on social media, the performance of which is measured by very simple metrics such as engagement rates and the volume of direct customer interactions. The management team also stated that the content strategy largely comprises promotional materials, updates on the restaurant, and customer testimonials. They also mentioned, that feedback from customers through such channels sharply influences their approach, allowing the management team to make necessary adjustments to align with the customer's preferences and needs. While mentioning the barriers that lie in the way of the development of the digital marketing plan, the management team emphasized that lack of specialized knowledge and deficiency of resources are the main obstacles. Consequently, Yaknak's marketing strategy prioritizes immediate, sales-driven action, rather than long-term strategic planning.

Subsequently, the commissioner, mentioned he had studied marketing concepts such as 7Ps and SOSTAC. However, he also mentioned that he never deeply engaged in structured marketing theories such as SOSTAC that otherwise could guide more effective planning and execution. Moreover, the commissioner was keen to learn from the successes other similar businesses had with the implementation of digital marketing and revealed interest in exploring new strategies. (Reis et al., 2020, 443–456.)

However, there was a lot of concern regarding the size of investment required and the unpredictable return that this may yield. The Commissioner stressed that the digital marketing plan had to incorporate the special characteristics of Yaknak's customer base with an emphasis on local preferences while ensuring the digital efforts are consistent with the offline experiences of the customers in the restaurant. (Bhandari & Sin 2023.)

This interview showcased the initial phase of the journey started by the Yaknak Restaurant into digital marketing, driven with passion yet limited by huge gaps in strategic and technical implementation. In essence, It revealed the need for a well-structured digital marketing strategy that incorporates advanced analytics and planning to achieve business objectives.

4.5.2 From a small focused group interview of customers

Sharma and Tripathi (2023, 27–31) stress the fact that the company encompasses ease with which users can navigate and interact with the website is considered the key factor in determining the effectiveness of digital marketing. During the interview, the participants shared their experiences and feedback in the form of answers to the interview questions, which offered a comprehensive overview of the restaurant's online presence. Each customer's journey to discover Yaknak restaurant presented a mixed approach to marketing by Yaknak, indicating few discoveries from offline channels and few from online channels.

One customer's discovery through a friend's suggestion and subsequent visit to the website implies that word-of-mouth remains an influencer even in the digital age (Mattayev 2022, 5-53). This pathway further underscores the requirement of the restaurant's digital platform to meet high expectations set by personal endorsements. Another customer is influenced by positive reviews on Google Maps, pointing out the importance of enhanced online reputation as these reviews directly influenced the customer and his colleague's decision to engage with Yaknak restaurant.

Additionally, another interviewee stated that he was influenced by Instagram posts to visit their website, which proves that attractive visual content on social media can help in transforming leads. However, the customer mentioned that he struggled a lot to find the Yaknak restaurant webpage as it wasn't mentioned on Instagram. Therefore, the customer shared the hassle of searching for Yaknak again in the search engine to explore what Yaknak constitute on its website. It suggests that only having a social media presence is not enough. It is crucial to engage in those platforms with exclusive content and accessible information. Another customer mentioned that she noticed the 15-second video on TikTok from Yaknak restaurant however she also struggled to find out the website information which may even be an indication that the restaurant must provide their website link in their social media profile for easy access. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

From the discussion on the user experience of websites, most of the subjects could access key information such as menus and hours of operation without a struggle but had a little problem with navigation. Some specific problems were mobile usability and finding particular information like contact details and allergen information. These findings indicate that user experience can be enhanced with robust website design, especially on mobile friendliness and accessibility of the necessary information. (Martini et al .2022.)

The content engagement varied amongst the group, with a slight bias towards information on the preparation of the food, promotional material, and updates regarding the menu. Such diverse interest sets the ground for a need for a diverse content strategy that will not only inform and entertain but also engage customers at different levels, provoking them to interact more frequently with the restaurant (Basilier 2023.)

Search engine optimisation emerged as the area of focus for attaining better visibility and drawing a larger audience as two interviewees mentioned that they couldn't find Yaknak over the search engines effortlessly. They suggested optimizing SEO for some more specific keywords that provide visibility to unique offerings made by the restaurant. This strongly suggests potential benefits that may be brought by optimizing the SEO strategy for Yaknak (Leonard 2023.)

While discussing the potential improvements to be made, the group remarked on several enhancements that included an interactive online menu, a direct reservations system online without the requirement to call the restaurant, frequent live updates on social media, and a mobile app for easier access and engagement. Improvement of the mentioned factor will enrich the digital experience making it more engaging and user-friendly for the customer.

Moreover, The likelihood of referring to Yaknak's digital channels from experience to experience varied based on each customer's experience. The respondents mentioned that the digital channels were informative. However, they also mentioned that the improvement in usability, content and design would greatly drive a positive recommendation. The need for a strong online or digital presence was unanimously recognized as all respondents pointed out that online engagement of restaurants somehow impacts their choices on where to dine. This information from the focused group interview provides Yaknak Restaurant with invaluable insights into how its digital presence is perceived and in which areas such strategic improvements would raise customer satisfaction and engagement. Moreover, these insights are crucial for the author in generating actionable recommendations that might help Yaknak to meet and go beyond the expectations customers have in the current challenging digital space.

4.5.3 Customer feedback survey report

The survey has gathered 64 responses from Yaknak Restaurant customers. The author realised that the major way that new customers found out about Yaknak was through word of mouth, with a full 72% of respondents (Figure 2). This highlights that customer satisfaction and personal recommendations are crucial for the restaurant's popularity. (Mattayev 2022, 5-53).

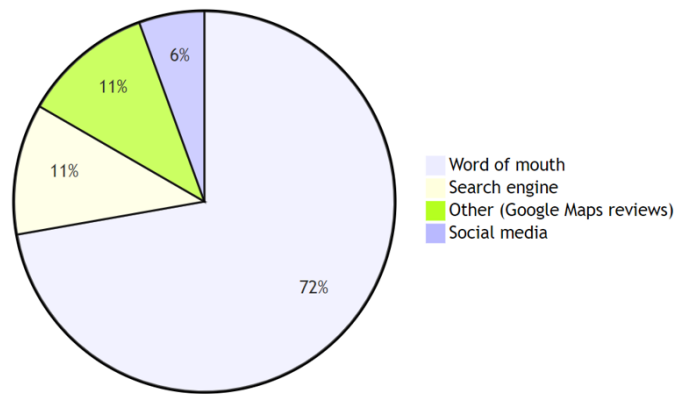


Figure 2. Initial means of discovery about Yaknak Restaurant

Moving forward, the survey reveals that customer discovery seems to be leading through word-of-mouth, suggesting Yaknak's potential digital presence is huge (Mattayev 2022, 5-53). Almost 44% of the respondents have visited the restaurant's site, thereby indicating a fair degree of digital curiosity (Figure 3). (Mattayev 2022, 5-53)

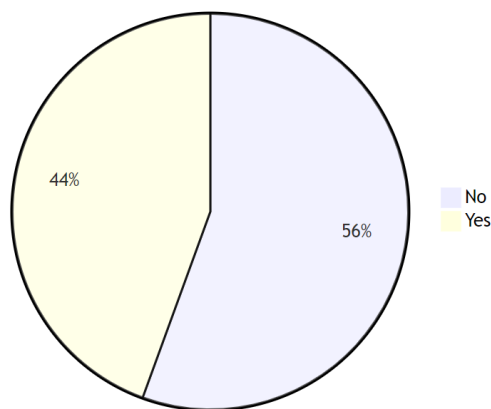


Figure 3. Yaknak Restaurant's website Visit rate

However, a third of the total respondents categorized the website as 'easy,' almost half as 'neutral,' and the remaining as 'difficult,' which points to a rather obvious need for the design of the website to be more intuitive and user-friendly (Figure 4). This consideration is not only crucial for user satisfaction but also for attracting more traffic with enhanced engagement towards the site. (Khosla 2023, 25–28.)

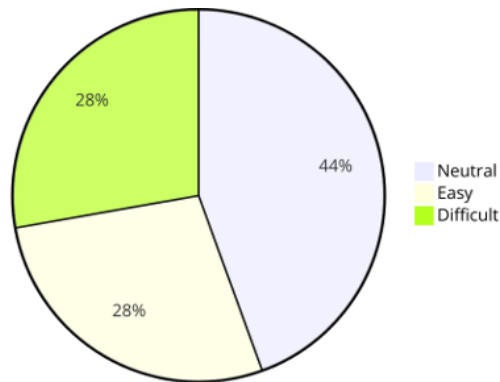


Figure 4. Ease of Finding Information on yaknak's Website

The survey also revealed that the key interests are primal in detailing menu information and pricing, essential contact, and location details, followed by the opening hours. Interest in other matters remains minimal (Figure 5). This points to the importance of clear, accessible online content for meeting these key customer needs. (Khosla 2023, 25–28.)

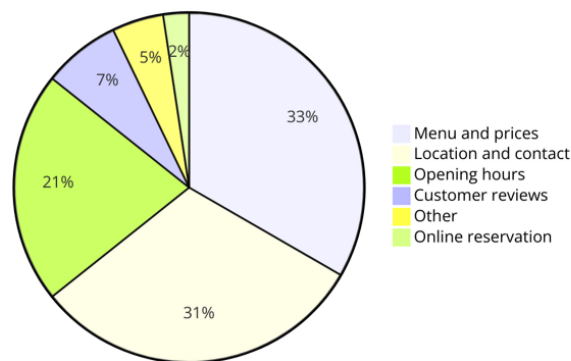


Figure 5. Rate of Preferred Information on Yaknak's Website on rank basis

At the forefront of social media, Yaknak has an average presence, with only 17% of its customers in total respondents following the restaurant on social sites (Figure 6). This shows a very minimal digital footprint on the part of Yaknak but at the

same time, it also grants a potential opportunity to leverage the digital platform strategically and effectively for engagement. (Bhandari and sin 2023.)

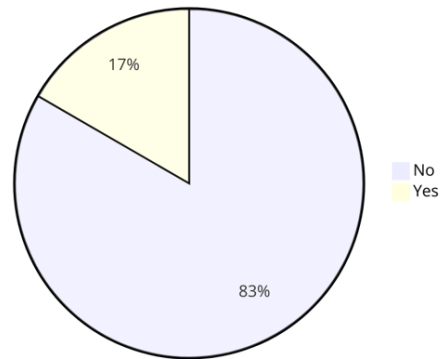


Figure 6. Yaknak's customer Social Media Engagement rate

While some sort of interest may be drawn by the content, which includes updates on menu cards, images of the dishes, and promotional information, active participation in the social media posts of the restaurant remains low. While, customer reviews on websites stand out as a significant influence, with 78% of participants considering them a key factor in their decision-making process (Figure 7). The result indicates that enhancing the accessibility and visibility for providing and viewing customer reviews on any digital platform utilized by Yaknak restaurant could be a strategic step towards influencing and boosting customer engagement on digital platforms.(Bhandari and sin 2023.)

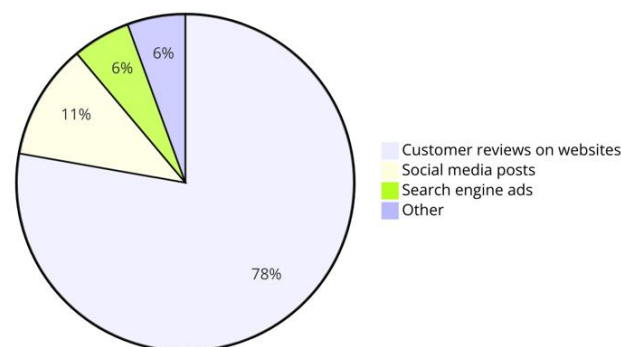


Figure 7. Digital tools Influencing customer dining decisions rate

A significant quantity, that is 72% of respondents who never engage with any of Yaknak's social media content could be an indicator of content that is not appealing or a social media presence of their perception (Figure 8). As stated by Basilier (2023) Content is considered effective if it is empowering, reframing, and entertaining for the audience.

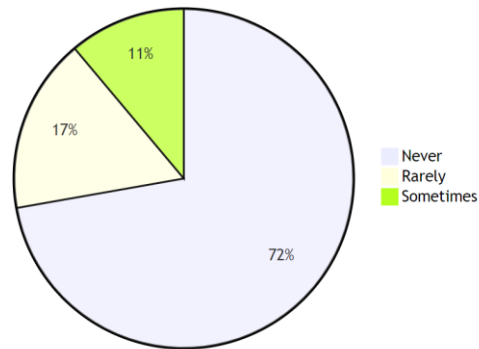


Figure 8. Frequency of customer interaction with Yaknak's Social Media Posts

This finding is consistent with the way most respondents first heard about Yaknak, highlighting the importance of a positive online reputation. The survey revealed a complex perspective on the importance of a digital presence in dining decisions, with a majority of respondents indicating a neutral stance (Figure 9). This suggests an opportunity for Yaknak to captivate this undecided audience through improved digital strategies. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

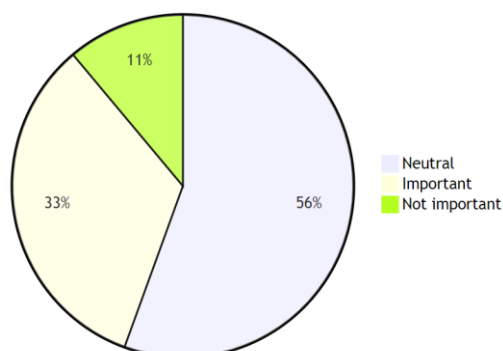


Figure 9. Significance of a restaurant's digital presence in Dining Choices

Another finding from the survey was the majority of responses expressed a preference for the integration of an online ordering system directly onto the Yaknak website, indicating a trend toward streamlined dining experiences (Figure 10). This suggests that Yaknak should now prioritize rebuilding its website with the exclusive feature of directly ordering from the menu section of the website. The findings from the survey and analysis of the author align together based on the theoretical frameworks of this research.

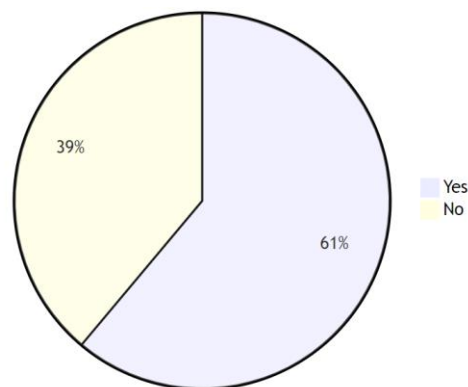


Figure 10. Preference for a Direct Food Ordering Option on Yaknak's website

Furthermore, The findings from the feedback section suggested making Yaknak more visible online. The customers were interested in making the website more friendly on phones with menus more minimalistic yet giving all important information. They also believed that Yaknak has to keep its information updated on popular sites such as Google Maps and Instagram. In short, the analysis pointed out that Yaknak has to focus on more people talking about it while improving its online presence. By doing so, Yaknak can win more customers, make them happier, and stay competitive in the Tampere restaurant industry. The data gathered mostly came from customers who have discovered Yaknak from other means rather than knowing it from digital platforms. This finding pointed out a huge gap in the market that Yaknak could be able to exploit by leveraging its efforts into the enhancement of its digital platform. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

5 DIGITAL MARKETING PLAN FOR YAKNAK

This chapter outlines the digital marketing strategy devised for the company, as formulated by the authors. It begins with a critical analysis of the current marketing scenario and a SWOT analysis. Subsequently, the study will deep dive into the application of the 7 Ps of marketing and the SOSTAC model, followed by an action plan that details recommended steps the company should take.

5.1 Current marketing situation

The results from Interviews and surveys carried out suggest that Yaknak lacks a sound marketing plan making it tricky to analyse their strategies. Their marketing effort seems scattered and inconsistent suggesting the lack of an underlying business plan guiding their actions. According to the commissioner, during the inauguration time, Yaknak restaurant had few traditional marketing practices. Besides that, they had also collaborated with food delivery partners such as Wolt and Foodora and with a food rescue platform, ResQ, which helped them generate more than 50 % of their revenue. There is also free delivery for more than 30 euros, therefore providing more customers with the comfort of enjoying the Yaknak experience from home. Despite its reputation for quality fare and service, the digital footprint of the restaurant is minimal, lacking a comprehensive digital marketing strategy. (Yaknak n.d).

The author noticed that the website of the Yaknak Restaurant falls short in terms of maintenance and user accessibility. It is quite challenging for the customers to get any information about the restaurant. The method of ordering food online by the customers using the restaurant's website is quite traditional, even though the restaurant offers home delivery services. In addition, the website has not been optimised for a long time, as they have revealed a mixed approach on the website with Finnish and English language, which may cause confusion and hassle for the customer. They also tried to reach out on social media, having profiles on Meta platforms like Facebook and Instagram. The restaurant's Facebook is minimal in terms of engagement, with 126 likes and 127 followers, and its activity

timeline corresponds with its Instagram account. The restaurant's Instagram has 104 followers and a very minimal level of posts. They also have an account on TikTok where they post some content about the restaurant sometimes a week inconsistently. As of now, Yaknak Tiktok has a profile with 34 followers and 250 likes. At the bottom of the Yaknak Restaurant website are icons whose direct links are made to these pages of social media, hence promoting easy access to visitors. (Yaknak n.d).

Moreover, Yaknak management never sought to use the Google Analytics tool, and this still affects the assessment of the effectiveness of the digital marketing efforts. Unfortunately, the authors could not access data from Yaknak Restaurant's Google Analytics. Without that information, analysis of the website's performance metrics became quite challenging. In increasing search engine visibility, it is very crucial to understand how the visitors find the company website. Yaknak can analyse keywords in organic searches and discover the areas in need of improvement to appear higher in Google search results. For example, when customers search for information regarding similar products, Yaknak's website is not on the first page of the search results, suggesting more optimisation is necessary. (Shaheen 2023, 1273–277.)

5.2 Competitors

Yaknak is considered one of the top three restaurants serving the authentic taste of Nepalese and Indian cuisine in Tampere. The other two popular restaurants, Subham and Gopal, also deal with Asian cuisine and have a similar customer base to Yaknak. The reason they became popular might be that they chose locations near the Tampere city centre to establish the restaurant.

Furthermore, Subham Nepali Ravintola has a very detailed website that offers services from online orders to reservations. Additionally, the restaurant maintains an active number of 201 likes and 183 followers on Facebook. It is not active on Instagram or TikTok. In this case, Yaknak can use this opportunity to ensure that it maintains a strong presence on these platforms and probably reaches out to a younger market that loves to engage with visual information. Subham restaurant

is highly rated on Google Reviews (4.5 from 219 reviews) and accounts on TripAdvisor with positive ratings further suggest a strong reputation which Yaknak need to at least meet or exceed by providing excellent customer service and quality offerings to the customer by leveraging digital marketing tools. (Subham n.d.)

Gopal restaurant features vegetarian and organic-based Indian foods. The restaurant communicates this niche well with its website and Facebook page, where it has 4,572 likes which seems significantly higher engagement than Subham and Yaknak. However, they do not have an Instagram account, where Yaknak can acquire visibility by showcasing their different varieties of menu options. Yaknak can differentiate favourably by highlighting its wider variety of dishes, catering not just to vegetarians but to a broader audience seeking authentic Nepalese and Indian flavours. The decent 4.0 Gopal Google review score from 50 reviews suggests that Yaknak should focus on quality and possibly their use of organic ingredients to attract health-conscious customers. (Gopal n.d.)

5.3 SWOT analysis

According to Will Kenton (2023), SWOT analysis is a strategic framework that helps the business to outline its internal strengths and weaknesses alongside the opportunities and threats presented by the external environment. This analytical approach assesses a company's capability at its core from both an intrinsic level examining the strengths and weaknesses, and from an extrinsic level considering opportunities and threats from the overall market environment. Since the SWOT analysis is highly subjective and crafted from an individual's viewpoint, it should serve more as a guide rather than a strict directive. In this thesis, the SWOT framework is particularly used to assess the company's possibility in digital marketing. (Kenton 2023.)

5.3.1 Strength

Yaknak Restaurant has emerged as the most reputable Nepalese restaurant in this very competitive Tampere restaurant scene with its authentic Nepalese and

Indian cuisine, offering an exclusive dining experience with traditional flavours and cooking techniques. Authenticity has been the key to making Yaknak the most unique culinary destination, gaining a reputation in the city. In line with this, the restaurant's unwavering commitment to exceptional customer service has established a loyal customer base with its reputation fostered through word-of-mouth and e-WOM support. Remarkably, despite its minimal digital presence, Yaknak has been continuing its performance profitably, thereby indicating not only the operational efficiency but also the strong market demand for its offerings. (Mattayev 2022, 5–53.)

Furthermore, Strategic partnerships with leading food delivery platforms such as Wolt and Foodora have not only expanded the reach of Yaknak but have also indirectly boosted its digital visibility. Additionally, Its strategic location in an urban area taps into a wide demographic, including students and tourists maximizing the exposure. Therefore, this combined strength further fortifies the competitive edge of Yaknak Restaurant, promising sustained growth in the market position.

5.3.2 Weakness

Despite its notable strengths, Yaknak Restaurant has several internal weaknesses. One of the main concerns is the minimal digital footprint of the restaurant. In an era where the success of a business is weighed in its online visibility, Yaknak's efforts in digital marketing are also minimal quite similar to its online presence (Hussain et al. 2023, 96–114).

The restaurant's website is notably outdated, and not very user-friendly lacking essential features such as smooth navigation and a well-functioning online ordering system, vague menu content and vague content which resembles how they evolved on the front page. It has the direct on the customer service and the possibilities of a restaurant to increase its target audience. Additionally, the mixed-use of Finnish and English language on the same page of the website confuses the customer, creating a hassle for the customer's overall online experience. As Sharma and Tripathi (2023, 27–31) stated the ease of use and the navigability of

a company website act as the cornerstone factor for the effectiveness of digital marketing. (Sharma & Tripathi 2023, 27–31.)

In addition to that, Yaknak has poor engagement on social media platforms like Facebook, and Instagram, where the number of followers is lower, and there are almost no noticeable contents or activities that could involve or attract new customers. The poor utilization of social media as a marketing platform and a customer engagement tool illustrates a missed opportunity, considering the relevance of the platforms today in this digital era (Kumar 2021, 1–21). There does not appear to be a digital marketing strategy in place because Yaknak has not capitalized on its full potential of digital marketing opportunities that could significantly enhance its visibility and customer reach. Together, these weaknesses illustrate critical areas for improvement for Yaknak Restaurant to compete more effectively in Tampere and beyond in future.

5.3.3 Opportunities

The digital platform offers a fresh start for Yaknak to expand its online visibility to its full potential as Yaknak has never really focused or planned any digital marketing strategies until now after its establishment. A well-articulated digital marketing strategy comprises enhancement and improvement of the website and active presence in social media which increases online visibility and customer engagement. With search engine optimisation of websites for user experience, Yaknak will be able to rank higher, making it easier for potential clients to find out the offerings of Yaknak. In addition, the use of social media platforms to project its unique Nepalese cuisine and culture can help draw food enthusiasts out to find their authenticity. (Barta et al. 2023.)

Furthermore, growing consumer interest in ethnic and international cuisines gives Yaknak the possibility to position itself in the market as a unique platform for culinary adventures of Nepalese land here in Finland. In addition to that, Collaboration with food bloggers, and influencers, and participation in local food events will be able to open up Yaknak's authentic Flavors to a much larger audience creating buzz and attracting new patrons. The other route to growth is through the growing

popularity of food delivery services. By enhancing delivery partnerships with platforms such as Wolt and Foodora, or by searching for new delivery collaborations, Yaknak will be in a position to cover an increase in demand for home dining experiences and further solidify its market standing. (Hussain et al. 2023, 96–114.)

5.3.4 Threats

Nevertheless, Yaknak Restaurant faces several external threats which are capable of impacting the future success of the restaurant. The competitive culinary landscape of Tampere, teeming with restaurants of various cuisines, presents a challenge in holding customer interest and market share easily. Additionally, rapid technological developments and digital marketing trends also serve as a threat suggesting the need to be flexible and update its digital presence. (Jung & Shegai 2023.)

In addition, new laws such as GDPR further add compliance complexities, which would potentially hinder marketing efforts. Finally, evolving consumer expectations of convenience, sustainability, and online services demand that Yaknak continue to be innovative with its service offerings for its survival. Addressing these threats would require Yaknak Restaurant to be strategic and flexible enough to ensure further growth and competitiveness in the market. (Wang, Jiang & Yang 2023, 70–91.)



PICTURE 4. SWOT analysis of Yaknak Restaurant's digital marketing actions

5.4 Application of the 7Ps marketing mix

As already mentioned in the theoretical framework section, the 7PS marketing mix, being an expanded model is ideal for service-centred businesses, including restaurants such as Yaknak. 7PS marketing forms a more effective form of the traditional marketing mix. In this manner, Yaknak can comprehensively evaluate and strategize all the elements of its service, starting from product offerings and pricing strategies up to customer interaction and service delivery processes, hence ensuring that all elements of customer experience are widely enhanced. (Hanlon 2023.)

5.4.1 Product

Yaknak Restaurant's core offering is its unique blend of Nepalese and Indian cuisines, setting itself in a unique position in the Tampere Market. Yaknak should make use of menu description images and videos of high quality on digital

platforms to better communicate the authenticity and quality of the dishes. The restaurants should also emphasize the origin and preparation of the dishes which can further appeal to a customer trying to have a dining experience on authentic Nepalese or Indian cuisine. Some virtual kitchen tours or interviews with chefs online could enhance the visibility of the culinary ability and authenticity of the yaknak dishes. (Jung & Shegai 2023.)

5.4.2 Price

Pricing is a very critical factor in the marketing mix of Yaknak as it impacts perceptions of both value and quality. In the digital arena, Yaknak can make use of dynamic pricing strategies that adjust in real-time based on demand, promotions, and special offers. At the same time, these pricing strategies must be communicated to the customer through all their online sources for transparency, thereby ensuring that customers feel that they deserve value for their money (Jung & Shegai 2023). Additionally, special discounts communicated through digital restaurant platforms can drive online traffic and conversions.

5.4.3 Place

In terms of Yaknak, 'Place' extends beyond physical location to include the digital space for customer contact with a brand. This means improving Yaknak's online presence so that its website can be user-friendly for ordering food from home by customers. Yaknak must be found through local online searches, which can be addressed by applying reliant SEO marketing strategies targeting local keywords along with an increment in positive feedback through the use of Google Maps to ensure its discovery for customers is seamless. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

5.4.4 Promotion

Digital promotions are extremely vital for Yaknak to attract and retain customers. This could be in the form of advertisements on different social media platforms

and websites, as initiatives that target a specific audience, and partnering up with local influencers who will deliver the messages and ideas from the restaurants to a wider market. Part of the promotion also includes the use of customer reviews and testimonials which will be posted on the website, Google Maps, or on different social media sites to build reputation and gain more clients. (Thakkar 2022; Hayes 2023.)

5.4.5 People

The 'people' variable of the marketing mix in a digital context does not only involve the actual staff providing customer service but also concerns those managing the digital interactions. Proper training of all employees should be done in managing effective and efficient customer service in the online domain, social media interaction, and responses to reviews and queries. This would make sure that the digital interaction reflects the commitment of the restaurant toward the quality of service and customer satisfaction. (Hayes 2023.)

5.4.6 Process

The efficiency of the online process is an important factor in enhancing customer satisfaction. This essentially refers to how streamlined and seamless the process of ordering online can be made to ensure it is quick and easy for the customer to follow. Yaknak should design its process in such a manner where the process of order-making involves as few steps as possible while providing clear communication regarding delivery timing, and ensuring that the process of payment is secure. Similarly, developing a clear online process for lodging complaints and giving feedback will enhance trust and loyalty among customers. (GlobeNewswire 2024.)

5.4.7 Physical evidence

Physical evidence refers to the visual and textual content that portrays the restaurant online. It includes website and mobile app design, quality of photos and videos for menu items, and general branding. Ensuring consistent visual identity and brand message on every single digital platform helps reinforce Yaknak's brand into the subconscious of the customers and enables the development of a strong online presence. Digital confirmation of online orders and bookings is significant in terms of increasing customers' confidence in the authenticity of transactions. (Demand Metric n.d.)

By applying the 7Ps marketing mix to its digital strategy, Yak-nak Restaurant will have the possibility to improve its digital presence, attract more customers, and provide a seamless experience corresponding with its authentic and quality brand values. This approach will be instrumental in not just achieving the short-term goals of visibility and sales increase through the online channel but also in building long-term customer loyalty and brand strength in the competitive restaurant industry. (Hanlon 2023.)

5.5 Application of the SOSTAC model

Based on the earlier discussion in the theoretical framework section, SOSTAC is a useful model for pulling up a digital marketing plan. The SOSTAC model breaks down into six steps that guide the user from analysing the current situation to the execution of the plan. It first looks at where the company stands and sets a clear target. Then, it figures out the strategy and tactics needed to achieve those targets. Finally, it decides how to measure if the goals are met. (PR Smith n.d.)

5.5.1 S - where are we now?

While reviewing the current scenario of Yaknak Restaurant, the author discovered that Yaknak has not created or followed any form of a digital marketing plan. This means, Yaknak hasn't leveraged the whole potential of digital marketing. The result of data collection revealed the need for the restaurant's website reconstruction, with the motive to update it for enhanced operability and

appearance, and language options being added. In addition to that, The Yaknak Restaurant also operates accounts on popular social media including Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. However, the restaurant has not made attempts to increase its followers on the platforms, and content is not posted regularly, thus pointing to the lack of engagement in social media. (Kumar 2021.)

5.5.2 O - where do we want to go?

The Yaknak Restaurant intend to enhance its digital marketing efforts with the sets of objectives in mind. The restaurant dreams of exploring the growth step by step in brand identity and overall visibility in the market with a well-defined strategy of digital marketing and its implementation. Additionally, it aims to set itself apart from competitors in the industry. The central aspect of these goals is to drive higher traffic to the website and social media so that at some time in the future, it could acquire new customers while maintaining the relationship with the existing customers. (Bhandari & Sin 2023.)

5.5.3 S - how do we get there?

A well-functioning website and a strong presence on social media will provide the base for these online and offline marketing activities. With this foundational support, Yaknak will stand out from its competitors and pursue a positive brand among its current customer base and potential customers who haven't explored Yaknak yet. When the website has been optimised for performance, Yaknak will make use of search engine optimisation techniques to attract increased traffic to the site. Along with that, Yaknak is planning to put an effort into the social media platform in the form of Ads with some creative content to gain visibility. (Khosla 2023, 25–28.)

5.5.4 T- the details of the strategy?

To complete the website, Yaknak Restaurant will have to undertake research thoroughly in a bid to understand the customers better so that the website effectively serves the needs and preferences of the customers (Hayes 2023). According to the current marketing scenario, the site is not yet optimised properly and requires further adjustment. Yaknak Restaurant is planning to optimise the website by adding all required and important content like a direct ordering option available on the menu and optimizing the language possibilities to Finnish and English effectively. Following that, search engine optimisation should be planned and implemented. It is significant to consider the keywords mentioned in interviews when planning search engine optimisation for the restaurant's websites. Based on the above objective, the authors have built a more detailed, descriptive strategic plan, which follows in the next chapter 5.6. (Bruce et al. 2023, 1–24).

5.5.5 A- the details of tactics. who, when?

As a small restaurant owner, The commissioner should do some research on marketing companies in Finland, especially in Tampere. Afterwards, hire service from a marketing agency for a short period short time The other option could be leveraging the capabilities of a digital marketing trainee at a lower cost to address this dynamic environment of digital trends. Even if it seems a hassle to hire a marketing officer in the beginning, Yaknak can implement a simple content strategy using free planning tools, focusing on low-cost content creation such as customer-generated media and straightforward videos shot on smartphones. Once the basics have been implemented and the effectiveness has been measured, the advancement of digital marketing strategies can be continued. (Kumar 2021.)

5.5.6 C- metrics to measure results

It is vital to monitor KPIs such as customer engagement in social media, local website traffic, online reservations and customer reviews in Google Maps, social media platforms and website. Yaknak should explore tools like Meta Business Suite and Google Analytics to extract the measurement of user behaviour and campaign performance. With the regular review of these metrics, Yaknak can

assess the effectiveness of strategies guiding the adjustment where necessary. By practising monthly review sessions, Yaknak could align its digital marketing efforts with its business objectives ensuring a dynamic cost-effective marketing approach which maximizes the impact of addressing customer preferences. (Shaheen 2023, 1273–277.)

5.6 Formulation of a detailed digital marketing action plan

This chapter comprises the necessary steps and procedures for Yaknak Restaurant to implement the crafted digital marketing strategy effectively. The primary focus will be on the development of a functional and high-quality website, raising followers in social media platforms, especially in Meta platforms and TikTok. Additionally, the following chapter will outline other relevant steps and procedures based on the theoretical framework to ensure the effectiveness of the application.

The first stage of the website design is to adequately research the target market. These include optimizing the digital marketing tools to analyse the internal and external data regularly. The most important consideration is to understand the customer's intention regarding yaknak's products and their value delivery. Following this, the Yaknak Restaurant should identify its unique selling point and determine how it adds value to customers. After the determination of position and value, the goals and objectives of the website should be established. These objectives should align with the overall strategy and positioning of the company to ensure the coherence of the digital marketing effort. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

Yaknak Restaurant must conduct research into the customers before finalizing the positioning and value decisions. Yaknak should leverage its strengths such as authentic Nepalese and Indian taste in its cuisine to craft a unique selling point. Furthermore, the author strongly suggests that Yaknak create a direct ordering possibility from the menu section of the website, as Yaknak has been offering home delivery options to the customer in the traditional way. Another important factor to consider is ensuring website compatibility across various platforms including mobile and desktop. Before launching the website, thorough testing of the website is necessary to ensure ease of use and feasible, compatible, user-

friendly navigation for the customers. In this regard, different methods of testing can be implemented. For instance, usage information on the site regarding the product information and time spent on the website can serve as valuable insight. Yaknak can use the outcomes from these results obtained from Google Analytics to determine if the website is meeting its objectives. However, the limitation of not having Google Analytics hinders this possibility suggesting the implementation of such a tool. (Kumar 2021, 1–21.)

After the website gets updated and enhanced, Yaknak should consider ways to improve Search Engine Optimisation. All the SEO enhancement activities should aim to drive more visits by search visibility. Since Yaknak Restaurant is situated in Tampere serving Finnish and international customers, there are at least two different languages it should consider when planning SEO strategies which are English and Finnish. An effective SEO is based on knowledge about customer search behaviour and relevant keywords (Martini et al .2022). In addition to that, Yaknak should implement a Google Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising strategy with the motive to enhance website visibility and SEO improvement. The strategy implementation involves research for keyword research related to Nepalese and Indian cuisine in Tampere followed by setting up targeted ad campaigns and the creation of compelling ads with a clear call to action as a final step. (Chaffey 2023.)

As already mentioned, Tools like Google Analytics can be instrumental in businesses in terms of SEO improvement and PPC management. For SEO, it helps to determine which keywords are working best and where website traffic is coming from. Yaknak Restaurant would need to spend time reviewing the results of campaigns to optimise its SEO strategy. Since the measurements for the existing website are not available, Yaknak Restaurant needs to analyse keywords on its own. After optimisation, Yaknak Restaurant can implement a traffic-building plan. With the implementation of this tool, measurable objectives to increase traffic to the website can be defined, and online and offline marketing efforts can be combined to give a seamless customer experience. Simultaneously, for PPC, Google Analytics aids in analysing the performance of ads, refining ad copy and adjusting the bids based on detailed insight into traffic sources and conversion paths. (Shaheen 2023, 1273–277.)

Another important factor to consider is their presence on social media platforms, especially focusing on Meta platforms(Facebook & Instagram) and TikTok. Furthermore, integrating the link to the webpage of Yaknak can be considered the most crucial effort on social media platforms. Yaknak can thrive on meta platforms by creating stories and engaging short content featuring the signature dishes of Yaknak etc. Similarly, Yaknak can perform interactive challenges during cooking while providing cultural insights into Nepalese and Indian cuisines. In general, posting reliable and entertaining content and keeping the meta platform up-to-date might enhance the visibility of Yaknak on meta platforms, especially Facebook and Instagram. To manage the presence on meta platforms effectively, Yaknak can leverage the Meta business suite. Meta business suite is an integrated tools which facilitate businesses of all sizes with content scheduling, interaction and engagement with customers and analysis of engagement metrics across meta platforms to ensure that the marketing efforts are cohesive and effective as desired by the commissioner. (Khosla 2023, 25–28.)

Simultaneously, Yaknak should leverage TikTok to enhance the online visibility of the restaurant by capturing the attention, especially from the younger audience. This can be done by creating exclusive short reels, engaging content which features the preparation of signature dishes of Yaknak, and interactive challenges during cooking while providing cultural insights into Nepalese and Indian cuisines. This must be done regularly by specifying a certain time to get a sustainable impact on visibility and customer engagement. The main objective of this approach should be showcasing the restaurant's unique offering while inspiring viewer interaction and content sharing which are significant for the expansion and boosting of marketing potential. Additionally, Yaknak should also utilize local influencer marketing through TikTok to gain more visibility.

Furthermore, Yaknak Restaurant should maintain a strong presence on TripAdvisor is essential. Initially, Yaknak should create a detailed profile that highlights its unique offerings, such as its authentic Nepalese and Indian cuisine, and any special services like home delivery. Once the account is active, Yaknak should actively encourage satisfied customers to share their positive experiences by leaving reviews. This can be facilitated through reminders at the end of their

meals, or by following up via email. Additionally, Yaknak must monitor its TripAdvisor profile regularly to respond promptly to customer reviews, addressing any criticisms and thanking patrons for their feedback. (Gurung 2018, 1–36.)

To implement the crafted digital marketing plan effectively, Yaknak should at least hire a digital marketing professional for a short period. However, a marketing officer, especially a dedicated one, may require a high amount of investment, which limits Yaknak financially to consider hiring one given its small size and budget. Moreover, Yaknak could explore other alternatives, such as hiring a part-time professional to manage some of the marketing activities or using freelance for some projects to save costs while still having an expert digital marketer on board. Yaknak can also hire a practical trainer which will incur minimal cost and at the same time offer a similar advantage. In conclusion, the decision made should be consistent with Yaknak's budgetary constraints and strategic goals.

6 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant aligning with the needs and directions given by the commissioning party, with a major emphasis on increasing website and social media traffic. In addition, this research investigated the formulation of a structured digital marketing strategy to discover the critical website and social media prerequisites to support traffic growth.

The author drew insights from academic literature and publications to study and analyse both internal and external perspectives relevant to Yaknak comprehensively. Thorough data collection was conducted to understand the internal and external perspectives that are relevant to Yaknak.

In this Journey, the fundamental goal was to respond to the research question "How to craft a comprehensive digital marketing plan for Yaknak Restaurant?" concluding in the chapter of the digital marketing plan in Chapter 5. The sub-questions "What kind of tools for digital marketing should Yaknak Restaurant use to enhance its traffic on its websites and social media platforms?" and "How should Yaknak Restaurant apply these tools to exploit the full benefits of digital marketing?" were elaborated in the previous chapter. To summarize, the author recommended that Yaknak restaurant prioritise the development of its website, improving its position in search engines through SEO improvement recommendations, enhancing the presence and engagement in social media and many other measures to enhance the effectiveness of this digital marketing plan. Notably, having a strong website, high engagement in social media and a well-crafted strategy are the major components of digital marketing strategies for attracting more traffic to the website and social media.

This thesis provides Yaknak Restaurant with a guide for improving its internal digital marketing capabilities. Specifically, the recommendations will aid in the building of a properly designed website, raising engagement in mentioned social media platforms while unifying marketing efforts, and improving brand equity for

Yaknak. The author believes that these initiatives will have a measurable positive impact on the performance of the restaurant's sales.

The specific recommendations the author formulated are discussed in a detailed way in Chapter 5. The author recommends that Yaknak Restaurant follows the guidelines in this report for the website creation emphasizing the importance of researching and acknowledging its customer base before any marketing decision. Once the improved website is launched, it is recommended to design and implement a comprehensive traffic plan.

Furthermore, enhancing engagement in specified meta platforms and TikTok is also recommended. The restaurant should also focus on the implementation of PPC for a short interval of time followed by the exploration of the travel and restaurant review platform Trip Advisor. Furthermore, the Implementation of management tools like Google Analytics and Meta Business Suite enhances the effectiveness of the developed action plan for the implementation. These recommendations collectively contribute to the main suggestion to hire a dedicated digital marketing professional who would be able to make the most of the restaurant's digital marketing efforts considering the financial limitation on the budget of the restaurant.

7 LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

It is a universal truth that there is no research without limitations. Therefore there are a few limitations that the author experienced from the beginning to the end of this thesis process. First of all, even though the qualitative data was very insightful, it was based on a rather small group of the restaurant's clientele and management which doesn't generalize the findings. Therefore, the responses may not substantially represent the varieties of consumer interactions and experiences. Besides, there is the possibility that responses might be prejudiced through biases since the entire research is subjective. For instance, interviewing customers face-to-face provided more insight into their perceptions and experiences. However, few customers felt difficulties in providing their valuable time for the focused group interview due to their busy schedules. It may have impacted their responses.

Likewise, the collection of structured quantitative data may not bring forward a comprehensive account of diverse customer interactions and experiences. The time constraint in data collection and the specific digital platforms under analysis also may not suggest wider market trends or future changes in consumer behaviour. Additional research in this sector would have yielded meaningful insights in optimizing websites. The mixed-methods approach enriched the study in terms of both depth and breadth, However, integration of the two methods might not have been easy due to discrepancies in the interpretation and synthesis of the data. Additionally addressing these technical skills gaps, for instance, an individual with proficiency in WordPress shall be in a position to offer much deeper proposals for the enhancement of websites. A visual plan outlining the key points of the website would have helped in conveying the recommendations more appropriately.

This thesis has been a significant learning process for the author serving as his most extensive project up to the point. It was a bit intimidating in the beginning, but it made him confident in his skills. For example, challenges like time management were something to worry about for the author at the inauguration time of this study. It was important to remain flexible throughout the projects. Despite all

these limitations, with proper guidance from the supervisor, the author successfully crafted the digital marketing plan for Yaknak. Furthermore, the author realised the significance of the company website and social media platforms among other forms of digital marketing tools, which prompted the author to check the Yaknak Restaurant website for its functionality and user-friendliness. Additionally, the author also gained a deeper understanding of digital tools like SEO and Google Analytics, Meta Business Suite.

Following that, further expansion of research can be made with wider and deeper coverage to address these limitations. The application of longitudinal studies in the data collection method can aid in understanding the effects of the implemented digital marketing strategies better in the long term, adapting them to variations in the dynamics of digital marketing (Scribbr n.d.)

Moreover, the number of respondents to the survey can be increased with a wider scope or diversified in the sample size. Moreover, the scope of further research might be broadened by exploring the benefits of integrating advanced analytics tools and technologies such as artificial intelligence(AI). These advanced tools offer personalized marketing efforts along with many other crucial features in predicting customer behaviour with greater accuracy. Therefore, it is suggested that research be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of diverse digital marketing platforms and types of content, providing a deeper understanding of the core actions and strategies to enhance customer engagement and loyalty. (GlobeNewswire 2024.)

In addition, Benchmarking through comparative studies with other restaurants or businesses located in a similar geography and offering would be extremely useful in surfacing industry-specific best practices in digital marketing for yaknak. It not only benefits Yaknak but also a wider framework in which other businesses in the region can draw digital marketing strategies. In essence, the author points out that integrating these findings into further research will refine the efficacy of digital marketing strategies yielding ultimately healthy business outcomes and enriched customer experiences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview questions for yaknak's management Team

1. How would you describe Yaknak's current digital presence, and what role has digital marketing played in your strategy so far?
2. What challenges have you faced in implementing digital marketing strategies, and how important do you think it is for Yaknak?
3. Which digital marketing tools or platforms are you familiar with, and have you made any efforts to optimise your website for SEO?
4. Can you discuss your current online customer engagement strategies and how you measure their success?
5. What type of content do you share online, and how has customer feedback influenced your digital content strategy?
6. In your point of view, Identify the main barriers in crafting a digital marketing plan for Yaknak and describe how you prioritize digital marketing within your operational needs.
7. Are you familiar with any marketing theories like SOSTAC or the 7Ps? How do you visualize a digital marketing plan supporting Yaknak's objectives?
8. Would you be interested in exploring successful digital marketing strategies from similar businesses, and do you have any concerns about adopting a digital marketing strategy?
9. Is there anything crucial about Yaknak's situation or goals that we haven't discussed but should consider in developing a digital marketing strategy?

Appendix 2. Interview question for Yaknak restaurant small focused group of customers

1. How did you first learn about Yaknak Restaurant, and what motivated you to visit their website or follow them on social media?
2. When visiting Yaknak's website, what information are you typically looking for? How easy is it to find this information?
3. Have you encountered any difficulties navigating the website or finding specific information? If so, please describe.
4. What type of content (e.g., menu details, promotions, behind-the-scenes stories) do you find most engaging on Yaknak's website and social media platforms?
5. How often do you engage with Yaknak's content by liking, sharing, commenting, or clicking through to the website from social media?
6. If you use search engines to find information about restaurants, what keywords or phrases do you typically use?
7. How easy is it to find Yaknak Restaurant through search engines? Are there areas where you think their visibility could improve?
8. What improvements or additional features would you like to see on Yaknak's website or social media channels?
9. How likely are you to recommend Yaknak's digital channels to friends or family based on your current experience? Why or why not?
10. How important is a restaurant's digital presence in your decision to visit or order from them? Can you share any experiences where a restaurant's digital engagement particularly impressed you?

Appendix 3. Yaknak restaurant digital experience feedback survey questionnaire

Yaknak Restaurant Customer Feedback Survey

1. How did you first hear about Yaknak Restaurant?

- Social media
 Search engine
 Word of mouth
 Other (Please specify)

2. Have you visited Yaknak Restaurant's website?

- Yes
 No

3. How would you rate the ease of finding information on our website?

- Easy
 Neutral
 Difficult

4. What were you looking for on our website? (Select all that apply)

- Menu and prices
 Opening hours
 Location and contact information
 Customer reviews
 Online reservation option
 Other (Please specify)

5. Have you followed Yaknak Restaurant on any social media platforms?

- Yes
 No

6. Which type of content do you prefer to see from us on social media? (Rank in order of preference) (1 to 4)

- Menu updates and food photos
 Promotions and special offers
 Behind-the-scenes and staff stories
 Food and cooking tips

7. How often do you engage with our posts by liking, commenting, or sharing?

- Frequently
 Sometimes
 Rarely
 Never

8. What digital marketing tool would most likely influence your decision to visit Yaknak Restaurant?

- Social media posts
 Customer reviews on websites
 Search engine ads

9. How important is a restaurant's digital presence in your decision to dine there?

- Important
 Neutral
 Not important

10. Would you like us to include a food ordering option directly on our website instead of going to our delivery partner's website?

- Yes
 No

11. Do you have any suggestions for improving our digital presence? (Open-ended response)

Your suggestion: _____ ...Continue in the back of this survey paper.

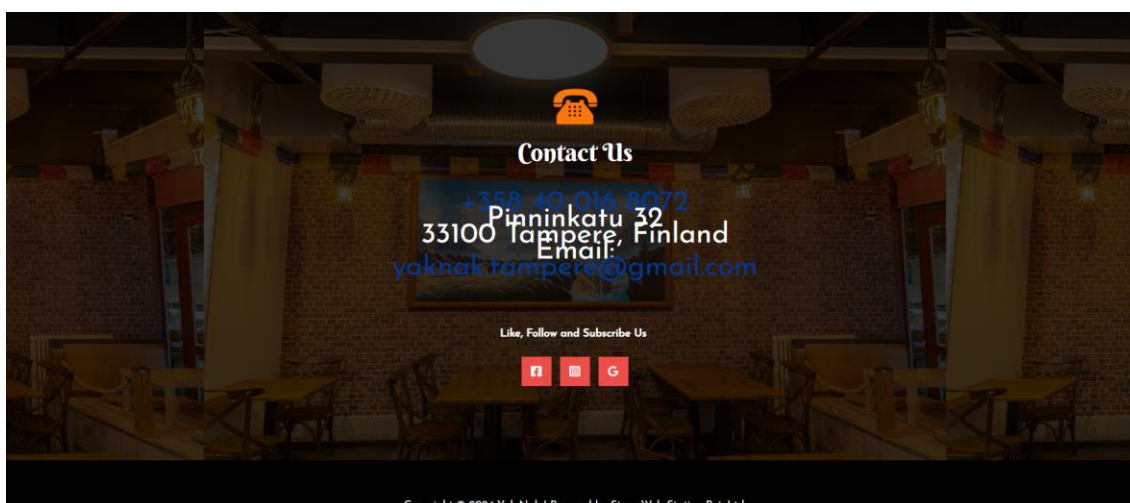
Appendix 4. Yaknak restaurant interior photography (Yaknak n.d.)



Appendix 5. Yaknak restaurant exterior photography (Yaknak n.d.)



Appendix 5. Yaknak website page screenshots (Yaknak n.d.)



Lounas Menu

MAANANTAI

Curryt

Liha:

**Butteri Kana (LG)*

(Tandoori marinoitu ja grillattu kana rinta filee talon Cashewpähkinä-tomaatti-kerma kastikkeessa)

**Kana Korma (LGP)*

(Höyrytetty Kana rinta filee paloja talon sipuli-tomaatti-kerma kastikkeessa)

Kasvis / Vegaani: