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Degree programme in International Business

2024

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# Creating marketing handbook for a case company

– Learning diary



Bachelor's Thesis | Abstract

Turku University of Applied Sciences

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## Creating marketing handbook for a case company

- Learning diary

Eläinklinikka Lexavet is a new private veterinarian clinic in Helsinki. The author completed her professional training there and asked her to do the thesis with them. The main objective of the thesis was to broaden the author's knowledge in onboarding and to create a usable marketing handbook for the case company. Learning diary thesis template was chosen for this task.

In order to create the marketing handbook, five main objectives were set: research onboarding process and materials, find a framework that can support with the creation of onboarding materials, research case company's marketing tools and existing onboarding materials, create a marketing handbook based on the gathered information and reflect on the newly acquired information.

To achieve the main goal of creating a marketing handbook, onboarding was researched using articles and learning books provided by the authors learning institute. With the already existing onboarding materials, and this newly acquired knowledge, the author had a good base to start creating the marketing handbook. In the end a usable marketing handbook was created.

Keywords:

Onboarding, marketing, employee handbook

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Suvi Rahkonen

## Markkinointikäsikirjan luominen yritykselle

- Oppimispäiväkirja

Eläinklinikka Lexavet on uusi yksityinen eläinlääkäriklänikka Helsingissä. Opinnäytetyön kirjoittaja suoritti harjoittelunsa Lexavetissä ja halusi jatkaa työskentelyä heidän kanssaan. Opinnäytetyön päätavoitteena oli tutkia uusien työntekijöiden perehdytysprosessia ja luoda käyttökelpoinen markkinointikäsikirja tapausyritykselle. Opinnäytetyöpohjana käytettiin oppimispäiväkirjaa.

Viisi päätavoitetta asetettiin markkinointikäsikirjan luomiseksi: perehdytysprosessin ja -materiaalien tutkiminen, perehdytysmateriaalien luomista tukevan viitekehysten löytäminen, tapausyrityksen markkinointityökalujen ja olemassa olevien perehdytysmateriaalien tutkiminen, markkinointikäsikirjan luominen ja opitun pohtiminen.

Markkinointikäsikirjan luomisen päätavoitteen saavuttamiseksi perehdytystä tutkittiin artikkelien ja kirjoittajan oppimisinstituutin tarjoamien oppikirjojen avulla. Olemassa olevien perehdytysmateriaalien sekä uuden opitun tiedon avulla, kirjoittajalla oli hyvä pohja aloittaa markkinointikäsikirjan laatiminen. Opinnäytetyön avulla luotiin käyttökelpoinen markkinointikäsikirja.

Asiasanat:

Perehdytys, markkinointi, työntekijän käsikirja

# Content

<b>1 Description of the current situation</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Company info	7
1.1.1 Company background	7
1.1.2 Company's services	8
1.1.3 Industry and competitors	8
1.1.4 Possible challenges and opportunities	12
1.2 Authors time at the company	13
1.3 Thesis objectives	13
<b>2 Week 1 – 29.1.2024 – 4.2.2024</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 What is onboarding?	15
2.2 Why is onboarding important?	17
2.3 Onboarding materials	18
<b>3 Week 2 - 5.2.2024 – 11.2.2024</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 Onboarding framework	20
3.2 The 6 C's	20
3.2.1 Clarification	21
3.2.2 Culture	21
3.3 The other C's	22
<b>4 Week 3 – 12.2.2024 – 18.2.2024</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1 Company's current onboarding materials	25
<b>5 Week 4 – 19.2.2024 – 25.2.2024</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 Company's website	27
5.2 Company's social media channels	29
5.2.1 Facebook	29
5.2.2 Instagram	31
5.2.3 Google account	31
5.2.4 Metricool	32

<b>6 Week 5 – 26.2.2024 – 3.3.2024</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1 The old materials	34
6.2 Creating the handbook	35
<b>7 Week 6 – 4.3.2024 – 10.3.2024</b>	<b>38</b>
7.1 Final thoughts	38
7.2 Conclusion	38
<b>8 Reference list</b>	<b>42</b>

## Appendices

Appendix 1. Marketing handbook

## Pictures

Picture 1: Porter's five-forces model (Hollensen, 2016a, p.118)	9
Picture 2: Simple onboarding process map. (Visual Paradigm Online, n.d.)	16
Picture 3: Lexavet's values from their old onboarding handbook (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).	19
Picture 4: The 6 C's of employee onboarding (Bayer and preppio, n.d.).	20
Picture 5: 6 C's of employee onboarding – confidence (Bayer and preppio, n.d.).	23
Picture 6: Introductory page of the Lexavet's old onboarding materials (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).	25
Picture 7: Lexavet's current onboarding materials (Rahkonen, 2024).	26
Picture 8: Lexavet's website. (Lexavet Oy, 2023a)	27
Picture 9: Lexavet's Call to Action. (Lexavet Oy, 2023b)	28
Picture 10: Lexavet's Facebook analytics from Metricool (Montells and Metricool, 2024).	29
Picture 11: How often should companies post on social media (Macready and Cohen, 2023)	30

Picture 12: Lexavet's website's traffic sources (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).	32
Picture 13: Metricool's features (Montells and Metricool, 2024).	33
Picture 14: Lexavet's old onboarding materials, front page (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024)	34
Picture 15: Lexavet's new marketing handbook, front page (Rahkonen, 2024).	35
Picture 16: Branding - Marketing handbook (Rahkonen, 2024).	36
Picture 17: Metricool –The new Marketing handbook (Rahkonen, 2024).	37

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# 1 Description of the current situation

## 1.1 Company info

Eläinklinikka Lexavet is a new private veterinarian clinic located in Pukinmäki, Helsinki. The company was founded in August 2023, and I started working there a month after the opening. Eläinklinikka Lexavet is a small business with currently 10 employees.

### 1.1.1 Company background

Eläinklinikka Lexavet is a limited liability company founded in 2023 (Finder, n.d.). The clinic opened its doors on 19.08.2023. The company is co-owned by two veterinarians and the CEO. The industry in which Lexavet operates is the veterinary industry and the company is aiming to be one of the most reliable and customer-oriented clinics in Helsinki (Lexavet Oy, 2023a).

## Organizational structure

Lexavet is co-owned equally by three people, two of the company's veterinarians and the CEO. Although one of the people has the CEO title, all important decisions go through all the co-owners.

There are currently ten full-time staff working at the clinic and the company is likely to hire more personnel in the future. The employees consist of veterinarians and clinic nurses. These people report directly to the owners. Both the nurses and the veterinarians are responsible of taking care of the patients. The nurses usually handling phone calls and emails, since they have little more free time. Still, the veterinarians are also communicating a lot with the customers to ensure their pets are getting the correct care also at home.

## Marketing

At the time of writing this thesis, the CEO was primarily responsible for the company's marketing. As the company was in its early stages, hiring student interns as a part of the initial marketing team was a strategy that served dual purpose: conserving the company's financial resources while providing students with valuable hands-on experience to further their studies.

The company's marketing strategy involves using platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as targeted advertising through Google Ads. The company also provides educational blog posts to their customers. This helps them to educate people but also create a feeling of trust towards the company.

### 1.1.2 Company's services

The company offers many different veterinary services, from basic health check-ups to dental care and in the future x-rays. The simpler services such as basic check-ups and vaccinations can be booked online on Lexavet's website: <https://lexavet.fi/>. Due to the nature of some of the services, like for example dogs' castration or dental care visits, it is still necessary for the customers to call the clinic and book their appointments with the help of the vets and nurses.

Currently the company offers these services: health check-ups, vaccinations, surgery, dental care, ultrasound, and different laboratory tests.

### 1.1.3 Industry and competitors

The veterinary industry in Finland is almost monopolized by Evidensia Eläinlääkäriasemat which is owned by EQT AB, a Swedish global investment organization (Yle and Laakso, 2023). Evidensia started as a private clinic in 2012 and was bought by EQT AB in 2014. After that the company has steadily grown and bought most of the smaller vet clinics in Finland. In 2021 Evidensia bought the second biggest veterinary chain in Finland bringing them very close



to the monopoly status in the industry. Evidensia's turnover increased to 90 million EUR with this acquisition. The other bigger clinics still operating outside Evidensia have turnovers between 2 – 6.5 million EUR. (Yle and Laakso, 2023).

To help me with my further analysis of the industry, Lexavet's competitors and possible future, I will be applying Porter's five forces model.

Porter's five-forces model	The five-sources model
<b>Market competitors</b>	Horizontal collaborations with other enterprises operating at the same stage of the production process/producing the same group of closely related products (e.g. contemporary global partnering arrangements among car manufacturers)
<b>Suppliers</b>	Vertical collaborations with suppliers of components or services to the firm – sometimes termed vertical quasi-integration arrangements (e.g. the <i>keiretsu</i> formations between suppliers and assemblers that typify the car electronics and other industries in Japan)
<b>Buyers</b>	Selective partnering arrangements with specific channels or customers (e.g. lead users) that involve collaboration extending beyond standard, purely transactional relationships
<b>Substitutes</b>	Related diversification alliances with producers of both complements and substitutes. Producers of substitutes are not 'natural allies', but such alliances are not inconceivable (e.g. collaborations between fixed-wire and mobile telephone firms in order to grow their joint network size)
<b>New entrants</b>	Diversification alliances with firms based in previously unrelated sectors, but between which a 'blurring' of industry borders is potentially occurring, or a process (commonly due to new technological possibilities) that opens up the prospect of cross-industry fertilization of technologies/business that did not exist before (e.g. the collaborations in the emerging multimedia field)

Picture 1: Porter's five-forces model (Hollensen, 2016a, p.118)

The aim of this model is to identify and analyze any industry's competitive "forces". These five forces are competition, the threat of new entrants to the industry, supplier bargaining power, customer bargaining power, and the ability of customers to find substitutes for the sector's products (Gratton, 2024).

## Market competitors

Market competition depends on multiple factors such as the concentration of competitors of equal size, the structure of costs or the degree of differentiation of a company's products from its competitors (Hollensen, 2016b, pp.113–118). In the veterinarian industry, the services provided by different companies are basically the same. This means that the strategy for differentiation is mostly based on price and customer satisfaction.

It is important for a company to find the right balance for these different factors because, for example, a short-term oriented strategy in aggressive low pricing can lead to long-term loss of standing in the industry (Gratton, 2024).

As Lexavet is located in Helsinki, there is a lot of competition around. There are many smaller private clinics in Helsinki, but the biggest competition comes from Evidensia. Evidensia has multiple clinics in the area. One of Porter's forces, the competitive rivals, tackles this issue. Since the services that any veterinary clinic offers are so similar, the competition tends to be more intense as customers can easily switch between clinics.

One positive aspect of Evidensia being one of the biggest competitors to Lexavet is that in recent years, Evidensia has received negative attention from both their employees and their customers (Yle and Laakso, 2023). This will help Lexavet to acquire new customers through earning customers loyalty with more customer centered service.

The status Evidensia holds in the industry has allowed them to lift their service prices throughout the years. The increased prices though, have not affected positively to the employees' salaries (Yle and Laakso, 2023). This has had a negative effect on the employees' opinions about the company, and many employees would prefer to work elsewhere, but the options are very limited. At present, 11 of 13 on-call veterinary clinics in Finland are owned by Evidensia (Yle and Laakso, 2023).

## Suppliers

Suppliers very often have a strong position in the industry, since their pricing will directly influence the price of the final product. They can also be the only source of something important that the company needs (Gratton, 2024).

## Buyers

The bargaining power of customers is for example dependent on the concentration of product, service suppliers or if the products / services purchased are highly standardized and undifferentiated. Companies can attempt to lower buyer power by, for example, increasing the number of buyers to sell to or differentiating their products from the competition. (Hollensen, 2016b, pp.113–118)

One of Porter's five forces is customer power (Gratton, 2024). Customer opinion of Evidensia has declined, increasing the opportunities for smaller private clinics. There are many stories of malpractice on the internet and there is even a webpage devoted to informing customers which clinics are owned by Evidensia, so they can avoid them (Eläinsairaalat, 2021). Porter's model points out that nowadays, in many sectors, customers are savvy, and they know the competitive terrain well. This, in theory, can help the customers to negotiate better prices, but in Finland's case customers will mostly just vote with their feet. (Gratton, 2024). As mentioned in the segment before, Evidensia's monopoly status has allowed them to control the prices as they see fit and with so much control over Finland's veterinary industry, the customers don't have that much power than in other situations. This again has created a unique opportunity to Lexavet to adjust their prices and be an interesting new clinic to many pet owners.

## **Substitutes**

The last force describes the ability for customers to find attractive substitutes for the products they want to purchase. The relative price of the substitute as well as the cost of switching to a different product are factors influencing this force. (Gratton, 2024) Since Lexavet is located in Helsinki, there are many substitutes for the customers to choose from. This means that it is very important to Lexavet to come up with a strategy to keep the customers from changing clinics.

## **New entrants**

New entrants in the industry are increasing a company's competition and are strongly linked to the entry barriers of the market. For example, big capital requirements are a big hurdle for possible new competitors. (Hollensen, 2016b, pp.113–118) Since we are talking about veterinarian industry, it is not the easiest for new competitors to rise. The high startup costs for equipment and facilities and different safety regulations and licenses are definitely slowing down any new entrants.

### **1.1.4 Possible challenges and opportunities**

Starting a new business is always challenging. It might take years to build a reliable customer base. The biggest challenges right now are building the company's brand and gaining enough customers to be profitable.

As mentioned in section 1.1.3, the main competitor, Evidensia, doesn't have the best reputation. This opens up great opportunities for the new clinic to gain the trust of the customers and find comfortable footing in the industry.

## 1.2 Authors time at the company

I started working at Lexavet on 11.9.2023 and completed my professional training there. I was part of the company's marketing team and had the opportunity to use my acquired knowledge in many different areas of marketing.

My main tasks were to create social media posts for the company, answer customers' messages and write articles for the company's blog. The CEO wanted me to be able to learn as much as possible, so I was also able to create Google ads campaigns, design webpages, do keyword research and interview new hires for my position.

During my internship, I wrote and published 16 articles for the company's blog. I used Google ads' keyword planner to research the most used keywords and choose topics for the articles based on that. I was also using Wordpress's SEO analytics to optimize the blog posts. It has been very rewarding to see how my work has affected the SEO ranking of the company's website.

Since I enjoyed my time at the company and my work had positive results, I wanted to do the thesis with this company, if possible. I asked the CEO for possible ideas for the thesis project, and he asked me to create a "marketing handbook" as part of the company's onboarding process.

## 1.3 Thesis objectives

As the company is relatively new, there is no clear onboarding process yet. Therefore, it is important to create onboarding materials for new future employees in the marketing department. The main objective of this thesis is to broaden my knowledge in onboarding and to create a usable marketing handbook for the company.

The CEO has specified that the "marketing handbook" should contain the following information:

- Company's contact information and communication channels.

- Company values.
- Mission, goals, and branding.
- Marketing strategy.
- Company's social media channels and basic of how to use them.
- Other marketing tools (Metricool, Google ads etc..) and basics of how to use them.

In order to achieve the main aim of the thesis, I have created following weekly objectives:

- Objective 1: Research onboarding process and materials. Find answers to the questions: "What is onboarding?" and "Why is onboarding important?"
- Objective 2: Research frameworks about onboarding. Find a framework that can help identify all needed aspects to make onboarding materials.
- Objective 3: Research case company's marketing tools and existing onboarding materials.
  - Part A: Analyze the materials the company is currently using as part of their onboarding process.
  - Part B: Create list of the marketing tools the company is currently using and explain why the company has chosen these specific tools.
- Objective 4: Create a marketing handbook based on the gathered information.
- Objective 5: Finalizing the work. Reflect on what I have learned; in what I succeeded, and what I would do differently in the future.

## **2 Week 1 – 29.1.2024 – 4.2.2024**

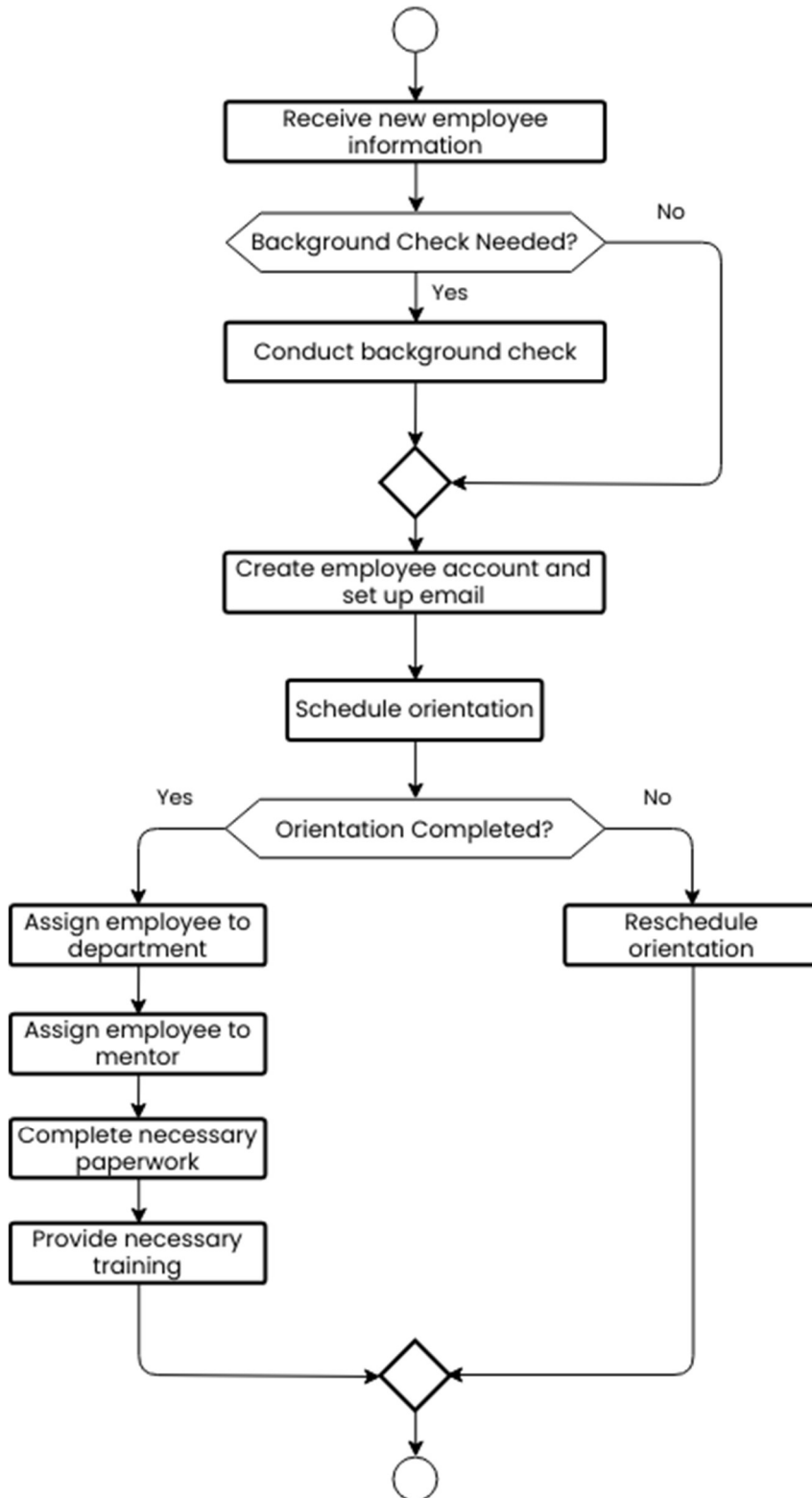
### 2.1 What is onboarding?

One of my main tasks is to research onboarding. Before I started my research, my experience of onboarding was mostly limited to a brief introduction of the company, a short guidebook to the office tools I would be using and the usual phrase “ask if you don’t understand something”. This maybe works up to a certain level in smaller comapnies, but definitely makes the new employee feel uncertain of their tasks and abilities and therefore makes them need to spend more time with someone more knowledgeable within the company. Working with more experienced workers should be part of the new employees’ start, but good training and onboarding materials or employee handbooks would certainly help with the transition to the new position.

According to Crail and Watts (2023), Forbes defines onboarding as "a process that encompasses everything required when new employees start work. It includes completing paperwork, setting up workstations and computer access, communicating role expectations, and making social introductions they need to succeed with a new company." Onboarding processes should help the new hires to understand their roles and responsibilities, help them get comfortable in their new setting, get familiar with the company’s policies and protocols and let the new hire meet their new teammates (Hi Bob, Inc., n.d.)

The onboarding process can be divided into the onboarding materials and the orientation and training done by human resources. Effective onboarding has several benefits. It helps employees to adapt faster, perform better and stay with the company longer (Bayer and preppio, n.d.).

As this thesis focuses on the onboarding materials / employee handbooks, I tried to narrow down my research mainly to that part of onboarding. However, it was hard to find articles that only focus on the material aspect, as it’s only one part of the process.



Picture 2: Simple onboarding process map. (Visual Paradigm Online, n.d.)



My onboarding at Lexavet was basically straight out of the onboarding process map above. It was straightforward and effective, but still made me feel like part of the team even though I was fully working remotely. As I was the CEO's first intern, he made sure that I got enough training and attention to be able to fulfill my tasks without problems.

## 2.2 Why is onboarding important?

The onboarding process is important because it provides new employees with the basic information, they need to be able to start their jobs. As Dessler (2016, 269–270) emphasizes, "Even high-potential employees can't do their jobs if they don't know what to do or how to do it." And a successful Onboarding process can not only improve retention by 82%, but also increase productivity by up to 70% (Benedettelli, 2021).

I have been in a situation where I received a new type of work task, and no one had time to thoroughly explain it to me. It was terrifying and if new hires start their new jobs with such feeling, I can understand why they would want to switch jobs as fast as possible. To improve the onboarding process and to make the new hires feel safe and welcomed, companies should always provide some materials to get their new hires started and possibly appoint an older employee from the team to act as a mentor and help them succeed straight from the beginning.

It's important to provide the employees with materials and support to get them started but also to immerse them in the company's culture. A good way to do this is to share with them the company's vision, mission, and core values. When the new employee gets a good grasp of the company's culture, they can align with the values and contribute to the company's overall purpose. (Newhouse, 2020.)

Last but not least, the employees should be monitored regularly (Newhouse, 2020). This will ensure that the employees have understood all their work tasks,

and it will make them feel supported when their team and manager check in with them regularly.

For larger companies all of this is a must, since otherwise the HR would be struggling with the recruitment volumes. But especially small to medium-size enterprises (SMEs) should not rely on improvisation. After all, the smaller the number of employees, the more vital it is for the company to integrate and retain them. (Benedettelli, 2021) By facilitating these relationships early on, especially SMEs can enhance employee engagement and retention. Studies have shown that employees who receive a structured onboarding experience are more likely to stay with the company for the long term, reducing turnover costs and fostering a stable workforce. (Edwards, 2023)

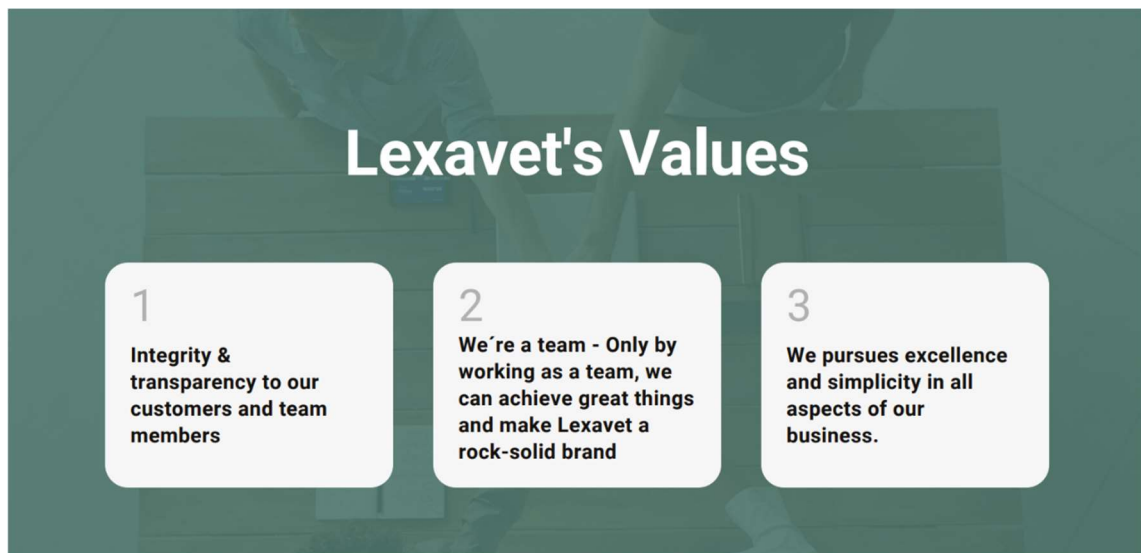
Some specific steps are common to successful onboarding process in both big and SMEs: communicating the corporate culture, illustrating company internal dynamics, exemplifying each role objectives and related responsibilities and facilitating relationships between the new employee, the team and the company (Benedettelli, 2021).

### 2.3 Onboarding materials

Onboarding materials, or handbooks, are useful in communicating essential information to employees and building a positive workplace culture (TriNet, 2023). I found that a handbook that contained basic information on how to complete basic work tasks and tips on the use of the company's tools were the most helpful part of my first ever onboarding process. A report by BambooHR shows that 28% of HR professionals believe that an employee handbook is the most critical aspect of their overall onboarding experience (Oragui and Helpjuice, 2022). My first employee handbook allowed me to learn the basics of the office tools and find my own ways to polish my work process. The handbook gave me a sense of safety as a new employee and that is something I want to create by the end of this thesis. A handbook that makes new employees feel

safe and get basic information of the tasks and tools they need to know in order to do their jobs and find the workflow that fits them.

A good handbook provides the employees with information about the company's mission, vision, values, policies, procedures, working conditions and code of conduct (TriNet, 2023).



Picture 3: Lexavet's values from their old onboarding handbook (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).

Since I am focusing on the marketing side of the company, the handbook I will create will at least include welcome materials, company's contact information and communication channels, company's values, vision, goals, branding, marketing strategy, company's social media channels and basics of how to use them and their marketing tools (Metricool, Google ads etc..) as well as the basics of how to use them.

## 3 Week 2 - 5.2.2024 – 11.2.2024

### 3.1 Onboarding framework

This week, I wanted to find a framework I could use as guidance while working on the handbook. When researching frameworks around onboarding, “6 C’s of Employee Onboarding” was referenced most. The framework was created by Tayla Bauer who studied employee onboarding for 25 years (Bayer and preppio, n.d.). Even though this framework covers the whole onboarding process, I still think it has many good points that I should keep in mind while preparing the actual materials.

### 3.2 The 6 C’s

The 6 C’s of this framework are: compliance, clarification, confidence, connection, culture, checkback.

## The 6 C’s Of Employee Onboarding — Here They Are

- Compliance
- Clarification
- Confidence
- Connection
- Culture
- Checkback

### It Started With 4 C’s, Then 5 C’s

I first developed the 4 C’s of onboarding a decade ago.

They were based on the academic research done on effective onboarding process and published by the SHRM Foundation (Society for Human Resource Management).

The 4 C’s since evolved into the 5 C’s of Onboarding: Compliance, Clarification, Confidence, Connection, and Culture.

Picture 4: The 6 C’s of employee onboarding (Bayer and preppio, n.d.).

Compliance refers to the mandatory onboarding tasks needed for all new employees. Clarification refers to how well new hires understand their roles and performance expectations. (Bayer and preppio, n.d.) Confidence refers to employees' feelings about doing the job well and their competence to tackle new challenges. Connection refers to how accepted and valued new hires feel. Culture refers to how well new hires understand their new organization's norms, values, stories, and symbols. Checkback refers to onboarding feedback. (Bayer and preppio, n.d.) Checkback allows HR and Managers to course correct, identifying areas where a new hire is excelling, and areas for improvement (Finn, 2023).

All these C's are important parts of the onboarding, but I think clarification, and culture are the most important ones when thinking about the handbook materials. It is important that the handbook materials are well written and easy to understand and knowing the company's norms and values is an important part of especially marketing.

### 3.2.1 Clarification

Clarification refers to how well new hires understand their job and performance expectations (Finn, 2023). This is basically the main part of the materials I will be creating. Onboarding materials should for example include the company's contact information and communication channels and mission and values, but what the new employees need the most, at least as of my own experience, is clarification. When you know what you are supposed to do, it brings confidence and makes the transition to the new company much easier.

### 3.2.2 Culture

Culture refers to how well new hires understand their new organization's norms, values, stories, and symbols (Bayer and preppio, n.d.). This part of the materials will contain a short story about the case company and information

about their mission, values, and branding. It's important that the new employees get a good glimpse to the company's culture immediately from the day one. Especially in marketing, since even one wrong social media post can cause a lot of damage to businesses.

Lexavet allows its marketing team to have flexible working hours and encourages the team to find the most suitable working hours to them. In regular in-person work sessions the whole team can feel the warm welcome and work closely as a team. Lexavet's work culture is focused on teamwork and you can see this also on their onboarding materials. "We're a team - Only by working as a team can we achieve great things and make Lexavet a rock-solid brand".

### 3.3 The other C's

As mentioned before, all the 6 C's are important when thinking of the whole onboarding process. I would really like to be able to bring something to the materials that would increase the employees' confidence, but at the moment I am not sure if I can achieve that.

## Building New Employee CONFIDENCE



Confidence employee onboarding

*Confidence* refers to employees' feelings about doing the job well and their competence to tackle new challenges.

It is a state of mind.

While an organization cannot directly help new hires feel better about themselves, they can design onboarding experiences that help build up employees rather than tearing them down.

Picture 5: 6 C's of employee onboarding – confidence (Bayer and preppio, n.d.).

It is mentioned in the source materials that confidence is a state of mind, and it takes full onboarding experience to help employees to build up their confidence (Bayer and preppio, n.d.). A great way to build up the new employees' confidence is to assign them a mentor (Finn, 2023). As I am writing this thesis, I don't have full confidence in myself, but hopefully in the end of this process, I have overcome this issue.

Overall, I think this framework provides a solid foundation for understanding good onboarding processes. It goes through the most important points the company needs to think about to lift the quality of their onboarding process. Though, some parts of it are quite generic but I guess that is normal to frameworks. It also contains two C's, confidence, and connections, that are mostly not on the employer's hand. I think including these two C's would make the onboarding process better for the new employees, but since the employee

can barely affect those, it makes me wonder, if they were added to the framework just so 6 C's sound better than 4.



## 4 Week 3 – 12.2.2024 – 18.2.2024

### 4.1 Company's current onboarding materials

The aim of this week is to go through the company's existing onboarding materials and see how I could utilize this material to create my handbook. When I started my practical training at the case company, it had only been open for a month, so they didn't really have any onboarding materials. I went through my tasks with the CEO, and he showed me personally how most of the tools used by the company worked. I was also directed to watch multiple informative videos on YouTube. Of course, the direct support from the CEO was great, and should always be part of onboarding, but broader materials would help when the CEO's schedule is tight.

## About today

### Introduction

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### Meet Your Teammates

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### Your Role

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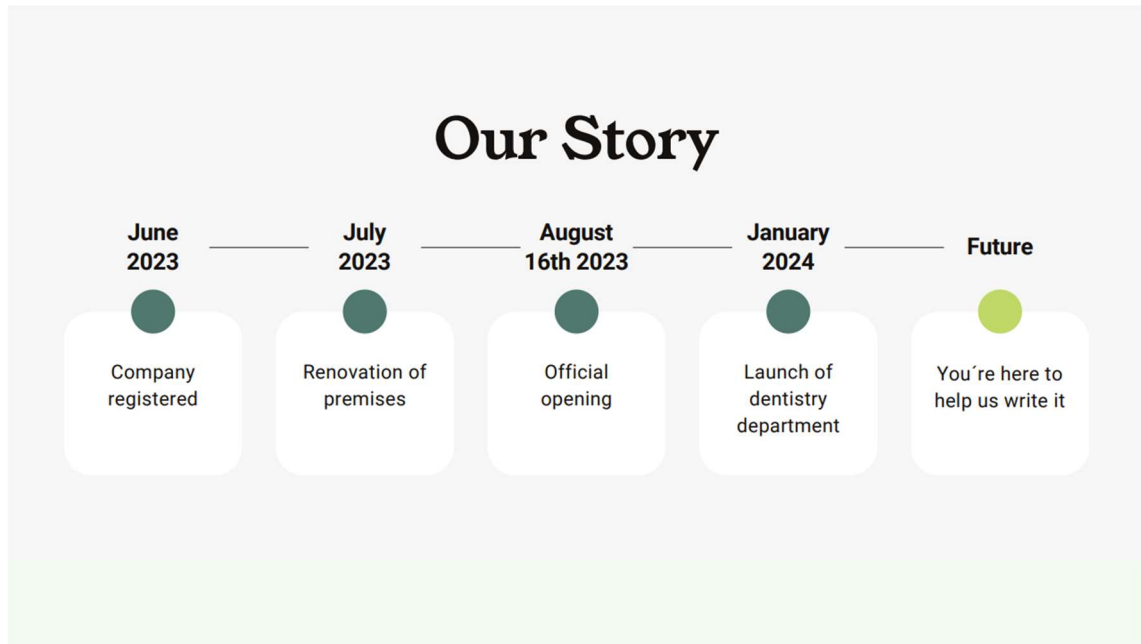
### Onboarding Checklist

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### Systems and Tools

Picture 6: Introductory page of the Lexavet's old onboarding materials (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).

Short onboarding materials were prepared for the new interns who started working after me. These materials covered the basic onboarding materials and the company's brand and customer experience. These materials are a great starting point, and I will use them as my base, but I think there are still many things to improve to be able to make them better.



Picture 7: Lexavet's current onboarding materials (Rahkonen, 2024).

The materials that the CEO had prepared contained some of the information that I was asked to include in my handbook. I am certain that the information provided in the materials is to the CEO's liking, so I was thinking of using some of the pages almost as they are in the old materials, just with some visual improvements. I will also try to make everything in the handbook very clear, to comply with the Clarification of the 6 C's.

The biggest change to make the onboarding materials as a marketing handbook is to add the marketing aspect to it. The existing materials provided me a lot of direction on what I want to achieve and what I think the CEO would like to see. The existing materials are mostly covering the Culture part of the 6 C's framework, so my biggest tasks are to make the marketing part clear and give the new hires confidence.

## 5 Week 4 – 19.2.2024 – 25.2.2024

### 5.1 Company's website

Having a visually pleasing and user-friendly website is a necessity in the modern digitalized world. The company's website is usually the first impression a customer is going to get from the company and as we all know, first impressions are important. "If you have a professional-looking website layout, you are giving your visitors the perception that you have given meticulous attention to every detail and that you care about professionalism. You are organized, and focused and you mean business" (Deep Focus, 2023).



Picture 8: Lexavet's website. (Lexavet Oy, 2023a)

I think Lexavet has done a great job with their website. It is visually pleasing and brings the customers attention straight to their industry: the animals.

Companies' sites should always reflect their company, products, services and ultimately their brand (Ideas On Purpose, 2017). Lexavet uses a lot of white and their brand colors, keeping the page clean and professional looking and truthful to the brand image.

A visually appealing website is a good start, but any website should also be user-friendly and easy to navigate. Every page should always be fast and

functional because any one of them could be a potential customer's first or only impression. Broken, slow, or poorly constructed areas will leave visitors frustrated and encourage them to leave. (Ideas On Purpose, 2017.) On Lexavet's website, customers can easily find information about their opening hours, prices, and the procedures they are doing. Customers can also book an appointment through the website.



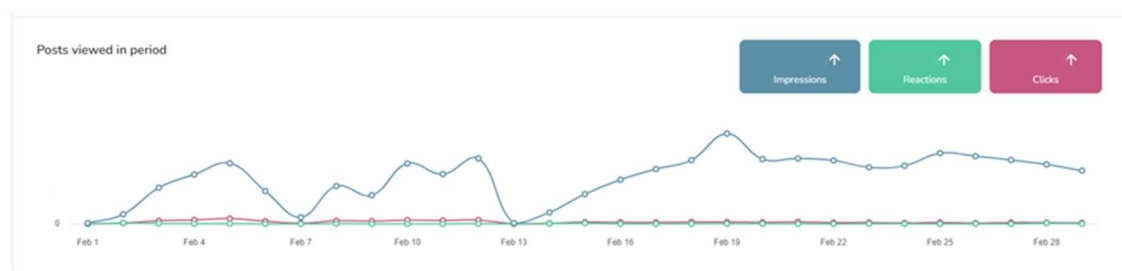
Picture 9: Lexavet's Call to Action. (Lexavet Oy, 2023b)

To help the customers through the appointment booking process, Lexavet uses clean call to actions (CTA) on their webpages. CTAs are very important since they are a key element on a webpage, acting as a signpost that lets the user know what to do next. Without a clear CTA, the user may not know the next steps to take to purchase a product or sign up for a newsletter and is likely to leave the site without accomplishing their task. (Optimizely, 2019.)

## 5.2 Company's social media channels

### 5.2.1 Facebook

Even if Facebook does not have the novelty, it once had and seems less popular among the younger crowd, it's still the largest social networking site (Thompson, 2021). There were 3 905 800 Facebook users in Finland in July 2023, which accounted for 69.1% of its entire population (NapoleonCat, 2023). As a future marketer, I think a Facebook account is almost imperative for any company. Facebook is a great social media platform to share any news or information with your customers and interact with them. Paid advertising on Facebook is also easy and quite effective. Facebook's ad targeting options are a marketer's dream. Companies can target customers based on demographics, interests, behavior, and more, taking the guessing game out of advertising (Keating, 2023). On top of being a great platform to inform your customers about your brand, Facebook provides an easy way for the customers to contact the company via Facebook messenger.



Picture 10: Lexavet's Facebook analytics from Metricool (Montells and Metricool, 2024).

While doing my training at Lexavet, I was asked to create a social media posting schedule. As I researched the topic, I quickly realized that different platforms have different suggested posting frequency. To my surprise Facebook's posting frequency was one of the highest in many articles compared to other platforms.

## How often should you post on social media in 2024?

<b>Instagram</b>	3-5/week
<b>IG Stories</b>	2/day
<b>Facebook</b>	1-2/day
<b>X (Twitter)</b>	2-3/day
<b>LinkedIn</b>	1-2/day
<b>Threads</b>	2-3/day
<b>TikTok</b>	3-5/week
<b>Pinterest</b>	1/week
<b>GMB</b>	1/week



Picture 11: How often should companies post on social media (Macready and Cohen, 2023)

As seen in Picture 11, Hootsuite (Macready and Cohen, 2023) suggests that companies should post 1-2 times a day on Facebook. To me this sounded, and still does, too much. Of course, it depends on the business field and to some companies this number of posts might work, but I would quickly unfollow a company on Facebook, if I saw their advertisement on my feed twice a day every day. Of course, not every single follower sees all the posts your company posts, but I still wanted to do more research on the topic.

As Lexavet is a Finnish company, I researched how often Finnish professionals advise companies to post on Facebook. Sankala (Sankala, 2021) wrote in her blog that even though Facebook's organic posts are only shown to approximately 10% of the follower base, it's still not advised to post too much, so you don't bury your own posts just to post something to get visibility. Sankala (Sankala, 2021) suggests that companies start posting 3-4 times a week on Facebook and see how it fits with the company's rhythm. With this knowledge I assigned the Facebook posting schedule 3 times a week with the possible addition of last-minute informational posts. Combined this with Lexavet's Instagram account, the company was now scheduled to post almost every day, alternating between more serious and more lightweighted content.

### 5.2.2 Instagram

Lexavet is using Instagram as their second social media platform to share pictures of their cute pet clients and their clinic. They are using Instagram to share similar content than in their Facebook, but they are also utilizing Instagram stories a lot. Instagram is also a great app for companies to advertise their services since it's free to download to everyone and the users can freely share all the content (Thakur, 2023). I think Instagram stories are a great tool in the veterinary industry since adding a picture to the stories is easy and fast and the vets can also do it by themselves with very little extra time. The stories get a lot of extra attention and seem to work well to promote the company. To my surprise, many customers were engaging with the stories. Depending on the content, there were quite a lot of shares and messages compared to how young the company was.

### 5.2.3 Google account

Having a Google account is almost as important to the company as having a website. Businesses with a Google Business Profile get priority in local searches, increasing the brand's visibility to potential customers and improving

their growth prospects (Meuser, 2023). Google profile allows the company to advertise their page organically or through paid Google ads and receive Google reviews. A big asset of Google is the customer data that the company will gather. This can help the company to improve their website or better target their audience through more refined advertising.

Traffic source			
Source	Access	↓	Percent
google.com			54.37% >
Direct			22.14% >
facebook.com			19.24% >
instagram.com			2.17% >
Linstagram.com			0.77% >

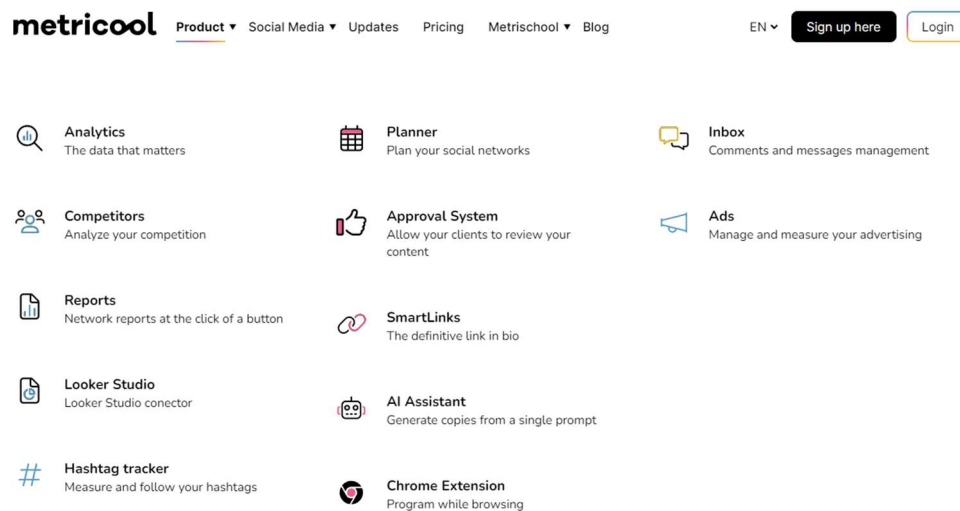
Picture 12: Lexavet's website's traffic sources (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024).

Picture 11 shows that Google brings the most customers to Lexavet's website. Google doesn't only recommend Lexavet to people who are searching for vet clinics, it also gives its' customers the chance and place to leave customer reviews. Google makes it easy for customers to leave a review and for business owners to request one (Meuser, 2023). Lexavet currently has 91 Google reviews with an average of 4.9 / 5 stars. As a customer, seeing this number of good reviews will most likely consciously or unconsciously affect their decision.

#### 5.2.4 Metricool

Metricool is a social media marketing tool that allows the company to keep track of its social media platforms on one website and it collects data on customers social media usage habits (Montells and Metricool, 2024).





Picture 13: Metricool's features (Montells and Metricool, 2024).

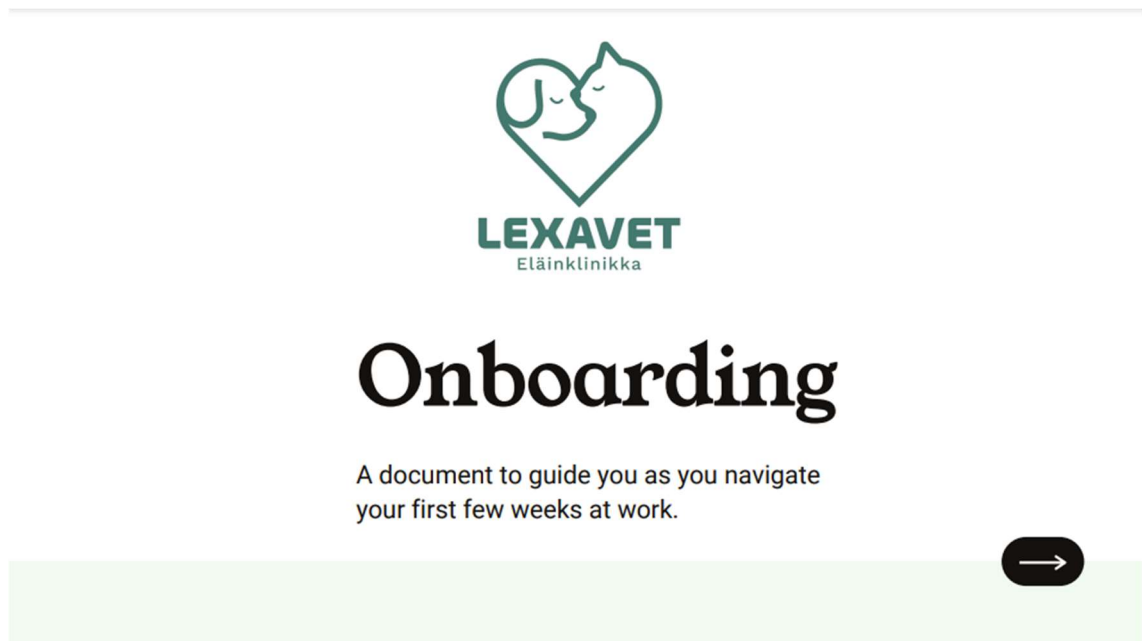
Lexavet is using Metricool to easily post content to their Facebook and Instagram. Their Google accounts and Website is also connected to Metricool to be able to easily keep track of clicks and views. When I worked at Lexavet, most of the social media posting was done through Metricool. This is why I want to pay extra attention to make sure that Metricool is well explained in the user handbook.

## 6 Week 5 – 26.2.2024 – 3.3.2024

My objective for this week is to create an employee marketing handbook based on the information I have gathered over the past few weeks.

### 6.1 The old materials

As mentioned in chapter 4.1, Lexavet's old onboarding materials were a great basis for my handbook. It gave me a clear idea of what the CEO wanted the materials to look like and contained some important company information that I could use in my handbook.



Picture 14: Lexavet's old onboarding materials, front page (Eläinklinikka Lexavet, 2024)

From the old materials I used Lexavet's story, their mission, and values and what is expected of the new recruits. The text on the materials was already quite well written, so I made sure it was clear and contained all the needed information and changed the visual to be more interesting.



Picture 15: Lexavet's new marketing handbook, front page (Rahkonen, 2024).

I kept the brands colors and fonts the same on the new design. As seen in Picture 15, I chose to keep the slides simple but visually interesting with the help of the brands illustrations. A similar theme was carried throughout the handbook.

## 6.2 Creating the handbook

As the old material was targeted towards general onboarding, it didn't contain all of the marketing information, except Lexavet's social media account handles. As the CEO wanted the handbook to include information about the company's marketing strategy and the social media tools they use, I added those from scratch. I tried to keep everything as simple and clear as possible while still giving the new employees as much information as possible. I created slides to

explain the basic functions of Lexavet's most used social media tools to help the hires to get started and included helpful links for extra information.



Picture 16: Branding - Marketing handbook (Rahkonen, 2024).

I used Canva to create the handbook. I had learned the basics of it in my professional training at Lexavet, so I was happy to be able to continue learning more about the tool. It was easy to set up the company's colors and fonts to Canva and I was happy to notice it even supports embedded videos. Since a big part of my onboarding was video tutorials on the marketing tools the company frequently used, I wanted to be able to incorporate that into the handbook.

All in one social media manager tool

- Analytics
  - Shows you different analytics of your social media platforms
- Inbox
  - Messages from customers from FB, IG and Google profile
- Planning
  - Lets you plan and schedule posts and shows important data about customer activity
- [Link to the full tutorial playlist](#)



Picture 17: Metricool –The new Marketing handbook (Rahkonen, 2024).

The embedded video will not work sadly, if the handbook is converted to a pdf file, but Canva has the option to share the created work with public links. This allows the possibility to watch the first Metricool tutorial video straight from the slide. The handbook works great from pdf as well, since it contains all the important links to any informative pages, the embedded video just brings quick access to the informative video for the new hires.

Overall, I think I achieved all the “C’s” from the 6 C’s framework I set out to address in the handbook. I was not sure if I had the means to be able to create confidence to the new employees with my handbook, but after working on it this week, I am happy to say, that I think I have succeeded in some level. The handbook contains all the most important information the marketing hires need to get started with their work, and the encouraging messages included, the handbook creates the feeling of confidence.

## **7 Week 6 – 4.3.2024 – 10.3.2024**

### 7.1 Final thoughts

I am very happy with the result of my marketing handbook and coming to the final paragraphs of this thesis. I set myself clear objectives for each week and I achieved all of them. In the end, I created a usable marketing handbook for my case company. My research has given me a clear picture of onboarding and the creation of marketing handbooks.

If I would do something different, I would probably choose a simpler topic. Although researching onboarding materials sounds easy in principle, I sometimes still had a hard time figuring out what aspects of the topic to mention in my thesis and how broadly to discuss them. I often found myself wondering if I had stepped out of my scope and if the things I was writing about were relevant enough. But with the help of my thesis supervisor, I think I concluded a well-balanced thesis even with my doubts. I also sometimes struggled with the diary thesis format. It was hard for me to try to keep it formal and professional but still in the diary-like fashion.

What I would suggest for Lexavet's next steps would be to have a look at their onboarding process as a whole and see what areas need work. The onboarding process as a whole is a very important part of the new employees start at any company. When the onboarding process is really investigated and shaped into a way that fits the company, it gives the new employees the possibility to be at their best from the start.

### 7.2 Conclusion

Eläinklinikka Lexavet is a new company and because of this they don't yet have a clear onboarding process. Since I really enjoyed working with the company, I wanted to help them achieve this by researching onboarding materials and creating them a new marketing handbook as my thesis. To achieve this, I

created myself five thesis objectives: research onboarding process, find relevant frameworks, research the case company's marketing tools and existing onboarding materials, create a marketing handbook and reflect on what I have learned. And two research questions: "what is onboarding?" and "why is onboarding important?"

The first objective was to help develop my understanding about onboarding with the help of the two research questions. With my research I found that onboarding is "a process that encompasses everything required when new employees start work. It includes completing paperwork, setting up workstations and computer access, communicating role expectations, and making social introductions they need to succeed with a new company" (Crail and Watts, 2023). The main reason onboarding is such an important part of the hiring process is because it lays down the information new hires need to be able to do their work. With this knowledge it became clear to me that a well-done marketing handbook will be a great part of Lexavet's future onboarding process. With the addition of written materials to the onboarding process, the new marketing hires have an easy tool to reference back to if they need help with their daily tasks. To make this possible, I included all the Lexavet's most used office tools and basic instructions in the handbook. This objective was defiantly one of my most successful ones and I learned a lot about onboarding this week.

Next, I wanted to find a framework to help me with the creation of the handbook. The most referenced framework for onboarding was clearly "the 6 C's of onboarding". Through my research I identified the C's that were the most important to my handbook (clarification and culture) and used the framework to my advantage in the creation process. I chose these two C's to be my main points of consideration in the handbook because it is important that the handbook materials are well written and easy to understand and knowing the company's norms and values is an important part of marketing. To me, this week was less fruitful than the first one. Even though I think my chosen framework had benefitted my creation process, it didn't provide that much new information. Of course, this is probably since the framework is meant for the full

onboarding process, not just the material part. I am still happy I learned about this framework and hope I can use it in the future.

Third objective was to research Lexavet's marketing tools and current onboarding materials to be able to create a handbook that contains all relevant information and that looks like it belongs to the brand. I already had a good idea of the marketing tools the company used, but through my research I also understood better why these specific tools were chosen by the company. To do this, I researched Lexavet's social media platforms and used the data I had seen while working for the company. Seen in picture 12, it's clear that the channels Lexavet had chosen are working great for them. This week also made it clear for me how important it is to any company, small or big, to have a Google business account. Some starting businesses might not think about this in the beginning, but Google account gives you such a big benefit in both organic and paid advertising.

Next week was reserved for the actual creation process of the marketing handbook. The creation process felt quite easy to me after writing the thesis. I combined the information I had gathered with the CEO's wishes and came up with a clear and informational handbook. I feel like this material will be a good start for Lexavet to create a clearer onboarding process and it gives them a solid and usable handbook to give the new marketing employees.

Since the handbook contains information about the company's culture, media channels and contact information, it's a great combination with the onboarding orientation. Combined with the marketing aspect it gives a great start to the new hires on the learning process of Lexavet's office tools and branding. Good thing about the materials is that everything is written down so the employees can always come back to the materials if they need to.

One thing that didn't cross my mind while creating the handbook was to add section about how to not market in veterinarian industry. While working at Lexavet, I learned that some dog and cat breeds should not be used in any marketing materials. This policy might differ between some clinics but at



Lexavet this was important. A section about these breeds should be added to the handbook.

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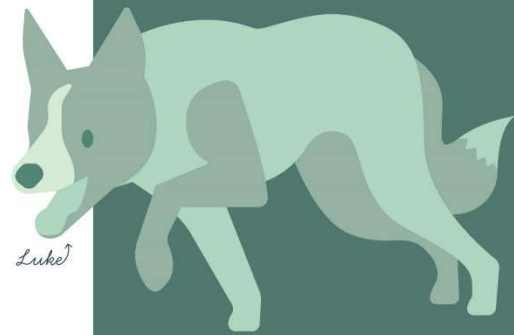
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# Marketing Handbook

Suvi Rahkonen, 2024.



# Marketing Handbook



## Welcome to Lexavet!

We are happy to have you here!



## To get you started

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Meet your teammates
- 3 Your role
- 4 Lexavet as a brand
- 5 Systems and tools



## Introduction to Lexavet



## Our story

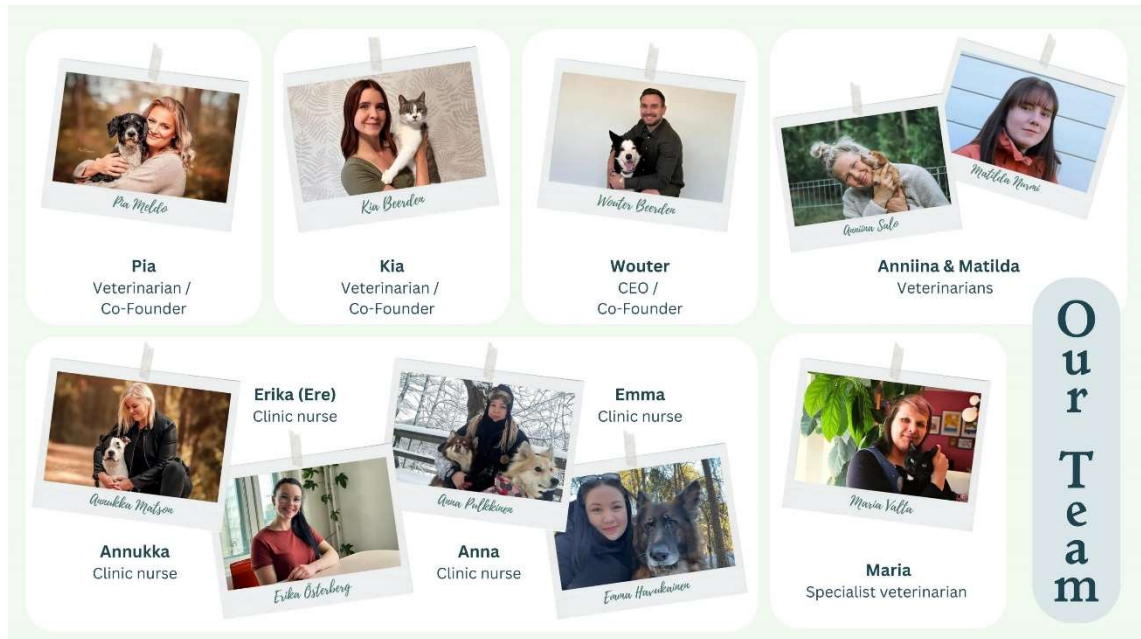


## Our mission and values

Our mission is to help animals live **longer**, **happier** and **healthier** lives while inspiring our team to reach their full personal and professional potential.



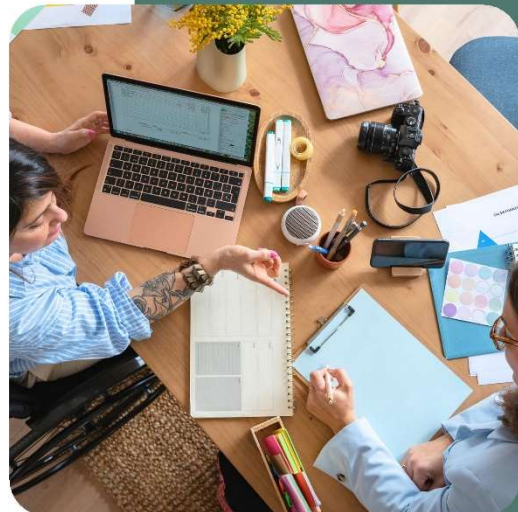




## Your role

Your goals and tasks as a marketing intern:

- Assist with content creation & moderation on social media
- Develop and launch new marketing campaigns
- Identify areas of improvement and make plans to make Lexavet better
- Marketing analytics
- Paid advertising
- Technical aspects of marketing (SEO, Google Analytics...)
- Be active part of the team



## What to expect

From your time at Lexavet

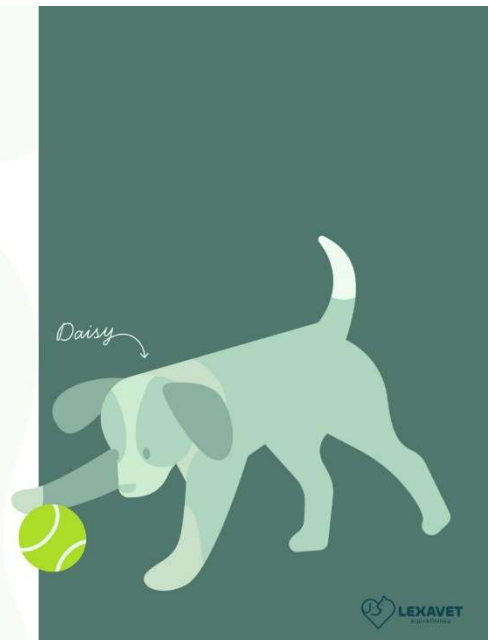
Mostly remote work,  
but also regular in-  
person work sessions

Choose your own  
working hours, as  
long as it fits the  
requirements

We are very flexible,  
and we hope you are  
too!



Lexavet as a  
**brand**



## Brand & customer experience guidelines

### Why this is important:

- To have a uniform experience for our customers.
- To make people understand what we stand for.
- To Lexavet to stand out from the competition.
- To create customer loyalty and enhance word-to-mouth advertising.



## How we want people to experience our clinic

- Friendly, welcoming and professional.
- People should **not** get the feeling that we are “just another clinic”. We are here to be a part of their and their pet’s life.
- A brand they can trust with every interaction being positive one.



## Social media appearance

- When answering comments & messages, always address people with their first name. At the end of the comment or message, write the name of the replier.
- Always write in positive manner.
- Keep the posts true to the brand.



## Asking for feedback

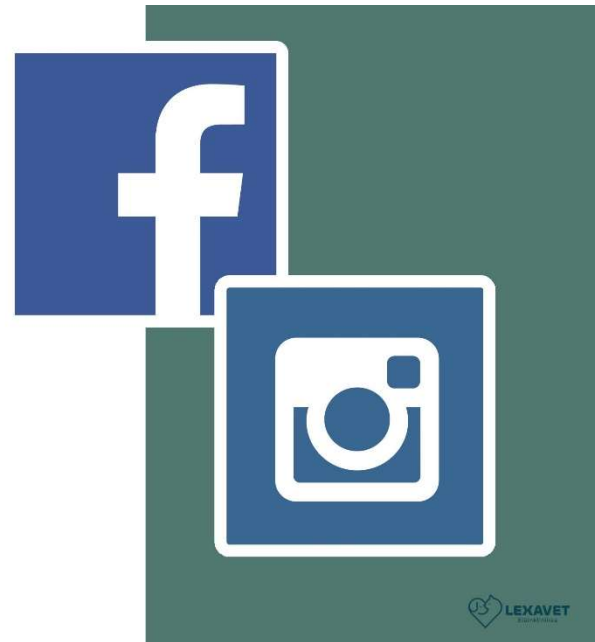
Receiving feedback from customers is very important for several reasons:

- Google displays businesses in search results based on
  - Relevance of the search term
  - Location of the customer
  - Information provided on the Google Business Profile
  - Amount and quality of reviews
  - How business responds to reviews
- All these things combined give every business a score. The higher the score, the higher Lexavet ranks in the search results.

We don't need to be No.1 search result on Google, but trying doesn't hurt! ;)



## Systems and marketing tools



<p><b>Email Address</b>            firstname.lastname@lexavet.fi  <i>password</i></p>	<p><b>Google Drive</b>            Marketing folder</p>
<p><b>Metricool</b>            Social media management            Facebook + Instagram</p>	<p><b>Website</b>            Done with Wordpress            Lexavet.fi</p>
<p><b>WhatsApp Group</b>            Communication            Don't hesitate to ask questions :)</p>	

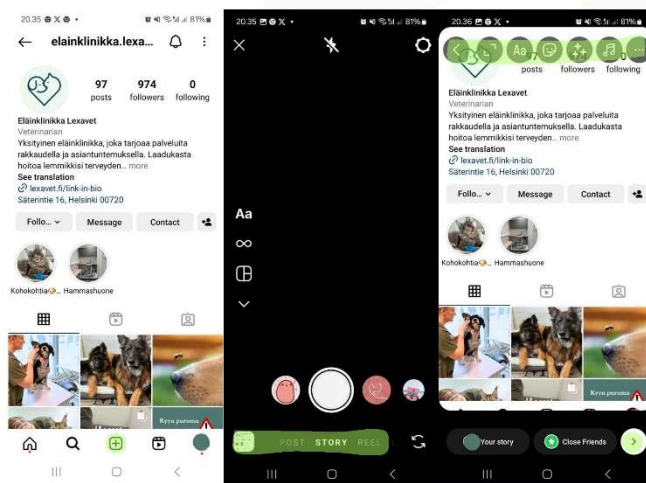
## Lexavet's social media platforms

Lexavet's main platforms:

- Facebook:
  - Posts 3-4 times/week
  - Facebook Messenger
- Instagram:
  - Posts 3-4 times/week
  - Stories as often as possible
- Website:
  - Important information
  - Blog posts
- Metricool:
  - Combines social media analytics and helps with post planning



## Instagram stories



Instagram stories can be edited best with phone

- You can choose what kind of post you want to create with the “+” button at the bottom bar
- Choose story from the options and either take a picture/video or choose one from your phone's folder
- After choosing your picture/video you can add text or graphics from the top and post your story!



All in one social media manager tool

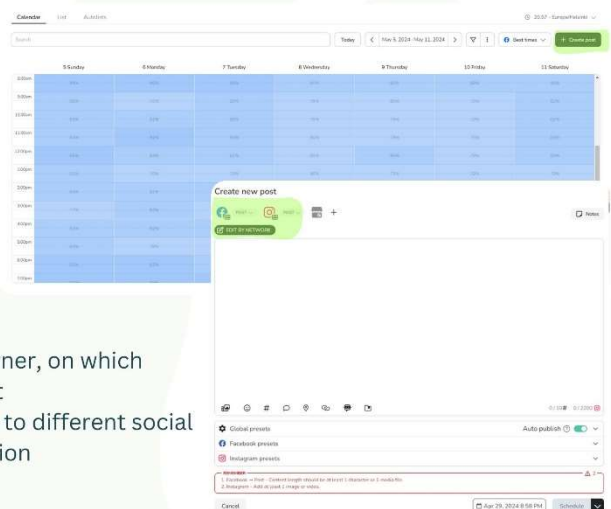
- Analytics
  - Shows you different analytics of your social media platforms
- Inbox
  - Messages from customers from FB, IG and Google profile
- Planning
  - Lets you plan and schedule posts and shows important data about customer activity
- [Link to the full tutorial playlist](#)

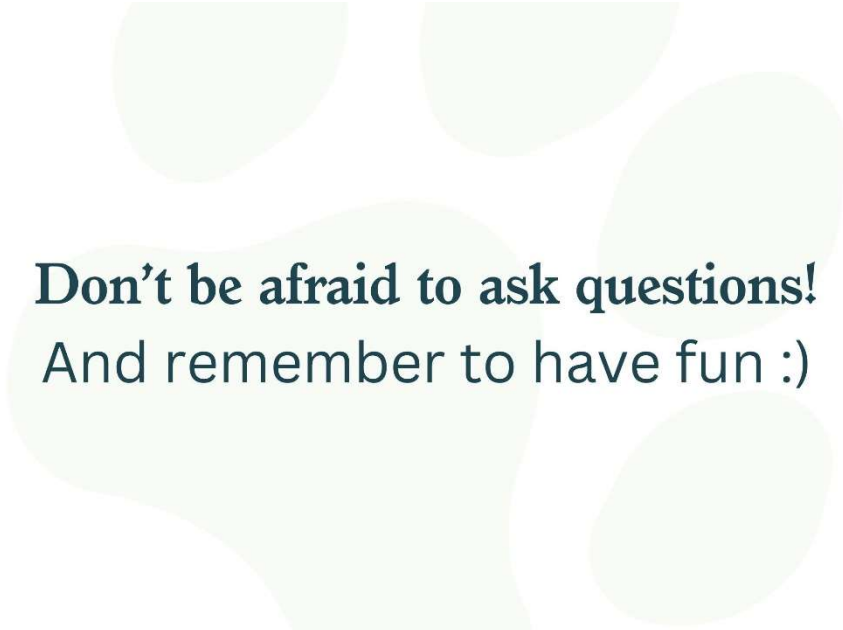


## Creating new post in Metricool

Creating and scheduling posts is done in the “Planning” tab

- In the calendar view you can see already scheduled posts, edit them and see when your customers are most active.
- Create new post with **“+Create post”** button
- This opens new window where you can design, edit and schedule your post
- You can choose from the top left corner, on which platform you want to create the post
- You can edit posts to be more fitting to different social medias with **“Edit by network”** function





**Don't be afraid to ask questions!**  
And remember to have fun :)