

Digital marketing strategy for Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus

Abstract

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Abstract		
<p>My topic for my thesis is digital marketing strategy for small and medium-sized businesses. The idea and topic for this thesis arose from the need of the Lahti-based company Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus to develop its marketing strategy. With this thesis, I can help both my target company and other companies aiming for modern marketing to get the most out of the marketing tools enabled by modern times.</p> <p>Studying the topic is important because it allows companies to get a clear understanding of the changed marketing and can develop their digital marketing through research. For example, the possibilities of artificial intelligence and social media are countless, and they can help a company take marketing to a whole new level. That's why I want to help companies achieve these opportunities that digital marketing enables.</p> <p>My thesis is intended to help companies use modern marketing in different ways. In my thesis, I survey companies of different sizes and their modern digital marketing. I find out which things work, and which don't. After qualitative research, I will be able to put together a modern marketing strategy for my target company, as well as for other companies that want to achieve results with new marketing opportunities.</p>		
Keywords		
Digital marketing strategy, social media, ai.		

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1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to bring an understanding of digital marketing to the target company and to create a digital marketing strategy based on the research, which can take both the target company and other SME marketing strategies forward. The study considers current issues related to digital marketing, such as artificial intelligence, social media and digital marketing.

Due to the continuous growth and development of digital marketing, a digital marketing strategy was expected to be created for the target company, aiming to elevate its marketing efforts to a new level. The importance of digital marketing has constantly grown, and it grew especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, as the pandemic accelerated the use of social media among different age groups (Narcum, & Mason, 2021.)

The goal of the marketing strategy is to meet the needs and wishes of customers with a competitive and profitable solution. Its development takes place within the framework of the company's corporate strategy, and the strategy is defined as a long-term direction through which the organization achieves benefits through the efficient use of its resources and considering the changing operating environment. (Viardot, 2004).

The digital marketing strategy will be based on the starting point of target company, which will be opened in the situation analysis. After this, a marketing strategy is made with the help of a survey and with the help of answers from other companies of different sizes in the field, how they use digital marketing, what works and what does not, and what they feel should be considered when doing digital marketing. In their book (Kumar et al. 2020), they strongly highlight how social media and marketing on it affect consumers' opinions of products and services, as well as consumer behaviour (Narcum & Mason, 2021).

The goal of research is to help target company and other SMEs take their marketing strategy to the next level to achieve the best possible results in marketing.

On a personal level, the aim of the research is to provide insights that support business development, offering companies ideas and encouragement for their marketing strategies.

2 Marketing

2.1 What is meant by marketing?

Marketing aims to get new customers for the company and to produce added value with the help of new and existing customers. This allows the company to grow and keep new and former customers happy. (Armstrong, 2022.) In addition, marketing is long-term and with it, the company aims to grow the company's marketing culture and improve the company's strategies. It is very important for a company to understand its customer base so that they can create the right kind of marketing strategy. (Fojt, 2005)

Marketing should focus on the following things to make it as effective as possible

1. Understanding customer needs
2. Perception of the competitive situation
3. Marketing to increase the company's value to customers

(Fojt, 2005)

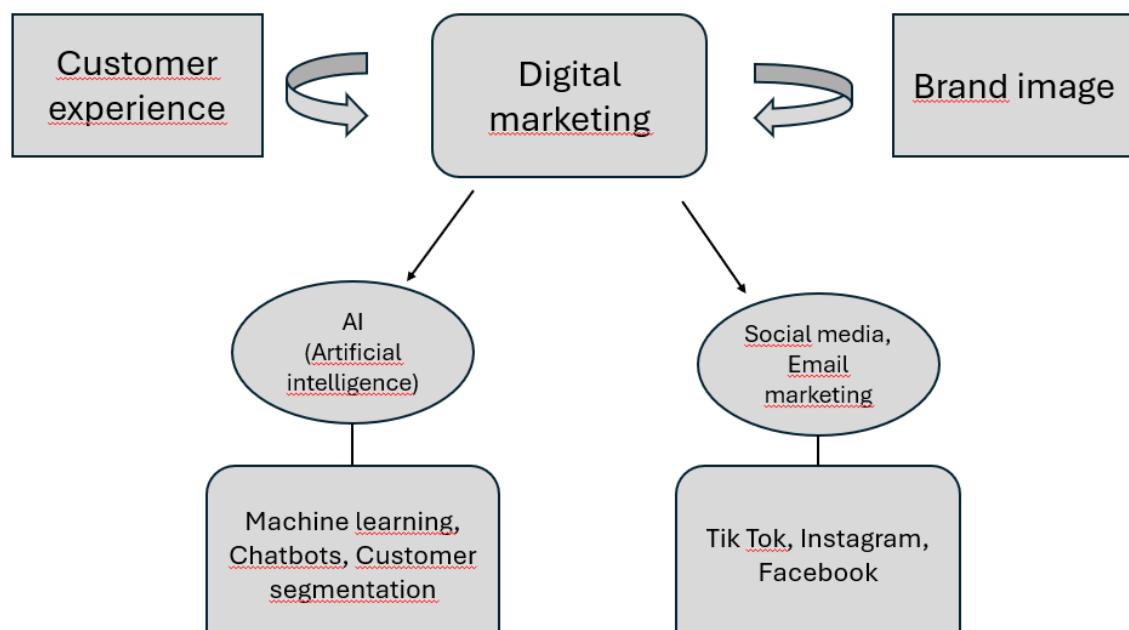


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

According to the outline, the study aims to see the significance of a modern, i.e. digital, marketing strategy for brand visibility and customer experience. Competitiveness will also be considered in the study, although it is not included in the outline. Creating a marketing strategy has always been an important part of successful business marketing and that's why the purpose of this study is to create a comprehensive and actionable digital marketing strategy for the target company. The strategy will emphasize social media and artificial intelligence, utilizing modern digital tools to enhance brand visibility, customer engagement, and overall marketing efficiency.

2.2 Marketing strategy

Strategy is a word that was created back in ancient Greece. At that time, the word was used to lead soldiers, conquer territories and manage resources. The word strategy has come a long way to the present day, when it is used in many different things, but the meaning has remained the same. As in Greece, in today's business, strategy means achieving competitiveness and using resources correctly to be as efficient as possible (Paley, 2007).

According to Charles (2013), a marketing strategy is created for companies to reach new customers, to discover markets and products, and to gain a competitive advantage. The marketing strategy should be integrated into the company's strategy, so that it supports core competencies, value creation and positioning (Zahay, 2020). A marketing strategy includes many plans that are important for companies and that the company seeks to implement. It is often created for companies, regardless of their size. However, the marketing strategy must consider the company's goals, working capital and profitability when creating it. (Charles, 2013.)

In this study, the marketing strategy target group is an SME, but marketing carried out by large companies and retail chains is also used in the study. The study aims to create a marketing strategy from the perspective of modern marketing.

The target company has used traditional marketing, and they have tried digital marketing, but the strategy has not been considered. Although advertising, direct marketing and sales presentations are all important parts of an organization and its success, when it comes to marketing strategy, the organization should be viewed in the

bigger picture. Marketing strategy highlights problems and solutions to them, i.e. it is not only a matter of making and producing but also developing a direction on how to take marketing forward based on different things, i.e. developing a strategy. (Field, 2012.)

2.3 Digital marketing

In their book, Lahtinen, Pulkka and Karjaluoto (2023) clarify that digital marketing includes all marketing that utilises digital technologies. To be clearer, they consider the following definition of digital marketing:

” Developing and communicating a value proposition in digital media to selected buyer personas based on strategic analysis.” (Lahtinen et al., 2023)

The focus of research is on digital marketing and its integration into the target company. Therefore, it is very important to understand what digital marketing means and how to integrate it into your marketing strategy. (Chaffey, 2022). The digital marketing of the study will focus on social media such as Tik Tok, Instagram and Facebook, as well as the utilisation of artificial intelligence in marketing.

Globally, phones are viewed an average of 150 times a day, which is why traditional business practices are undergoing a change (Schlegelmilch, 2022). So, it can be automatically thought that digitalization will also lead to changes in marketing and the development of new strategies. In his book Schlegelmilch (2022), he highlights how marketing methods must be changed globally to reach and serve customers as efficiently as possible, for example, through social media.

Although digital marketing is growing at a rapid pace, the intention is not to replace traditional marketing, but to integrate digital marketing with traditional marketing (Chaffey, 2022). The purpose of this study is also not to make a marketing strategy that replaces all other marketing, but becomes part of their traditional marketing, i.e. a marketing strategy is developed for the target company, providing a structured approach that enables them to achieve improved marketing results.

When talking about digital marketing, it is good to bring up CRM (Customer Relationship Management). In his book, Zahay (2020) explains that it can be defined as

the process of measuring and managing customer interactions. The study is still in the process of creating a digital marketing strategy, so CRM does not really come up in it yet. Nevertheless, CRM helps to choose the right approaches for the target company's customer base, so this process is important for the company to be able to find its customer base and find the right approach towards that customer base.

2.3.1 Social media marketing

Social media consists of content produced and shared by users. For example, it can be comments on articles on websites, sharing photos online, conversations among friends on social platforms, or blog posts and their comments. This phenomenon empowers everyone to create and evaluate content, making the internet more open and inclusive. (Singh & Diamond, 2020.)

Social media marketing (SMM) is a marketing method that utilizes social media. It allows people to create accessible marketing content using technology such as social networks, blogs, or video blogs (Singh & Diamond, 2020). The most well-known social media applications that are commonly used for marketing are Instagram, Facebook and TikTok, which has gained great popularity in recent years.

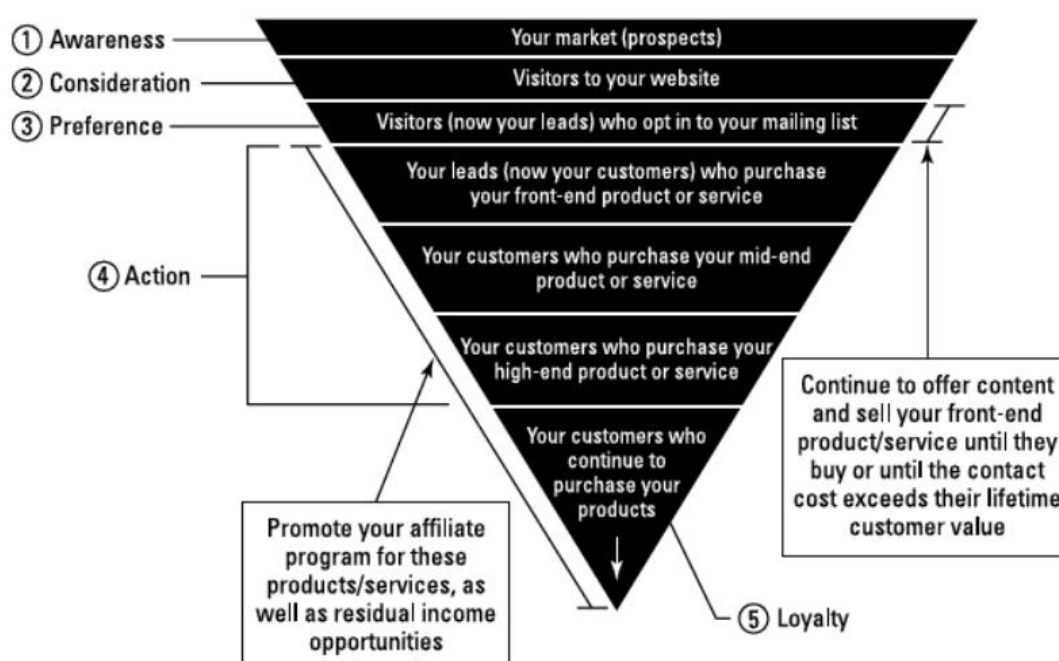


Figure 2. Social media marketing (Singh & Diamond, 2020)

2.3.2 AI marketing

Artificial intelligence can be considered the next stage of digital marketing, and its use in the right way can lead to even better results in a faster way. In their book, Venkatesan & Lecinski (2021) highlight how the accelerating development of technology and the increasing competition in the market lead to artificial intelligence having an even greater impact on the success of companies. Artificial intelligence can be considered an important part of the different stages of the customer relationship, such as customer acquisition, customer retention and the growth of the number of customers of companies. (Venkatesan & Lecinski 2021). When talking about a digital marketing strategy for companies, artificial intelligence and its growing useful use should be highlighted.

The AI tools used in marketing must be clear about the problem to be solved, and their use requires human assistance to get the most out of it (King, 2022). Not all responsibility can and should be left to artificial intelligence, but to achieve its full potential, it must be used in the right way and with the help of humans.

So where do you start using AI in marketing? There are a lot of AI tools available, but at first it can seem very unclear how to start using them and be as effective as possible with them. Marketers can leverage artificial intelligence with intelligent predictions and target marketing according to different customer stages. (King, 2022.)

2.4 Digital marketing strategy

When thinking about a digital marketing strategy, it's important to make bold decisions based on data, but these decisions should be in line with the strategy (Lahtinen, Pulkka & Karjaluoto, 2023). When creating a digital marketing strategy for a company, you need to consider the data that can be collected from the surrounding area, but once the strategy has been created, it must be followed and decisions made based on it.

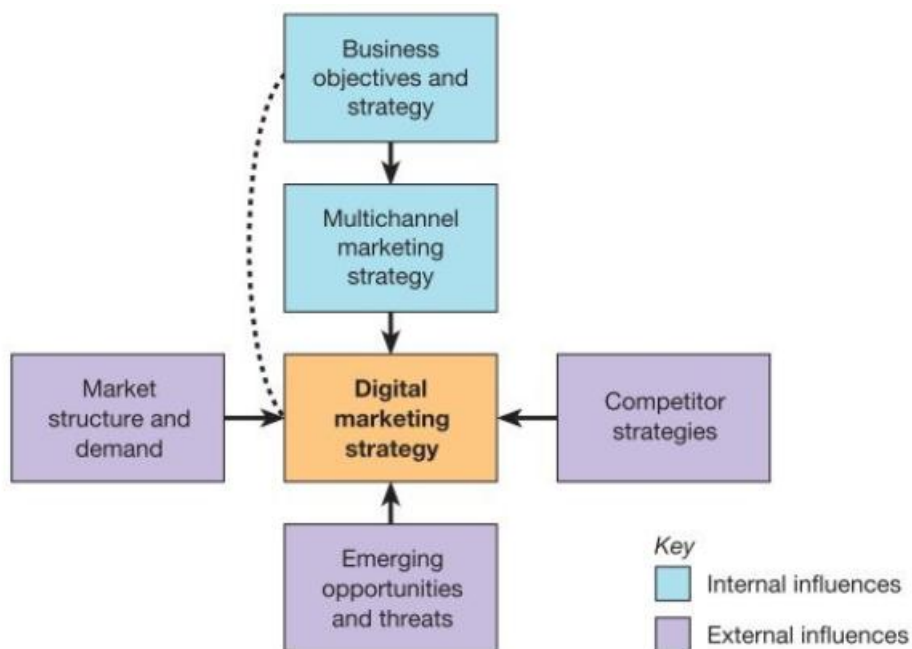


Figure 3. Digital marketing strategy (Chaffey, 2022)

The figure 3 shows a description of the development of a digital marketing strategy, where internal influencers include the organization's goals that influence the marketing strategy of the business. External factors, on the other hand, include the marketing structure, competitors' strategies, and new opportunities such as digital technologies (artificial intelligence, social media, etc.) and marketing tactics. (Chaffey, 2022.)

2.5 International digital marketing

Digital marketing has removed boundaries and thus it is easier to market globally, however, considering the continuous increase in competition in marketing (Katsikeas, Leonidou & Zeriti 2020). Digital marketing has improved the operations of international companies or companies aiming for internationalization (Wang, 2020). Even though the target company has not taken internationalization as a goal for the next few years, the marketing strategy wants to take it into account for the future. The study considers the broader landscape of SME digital marketing, not solely the target company, making it essential to examine the role of internationalization in digital marketing and its impact on competitive positioning.

There are many things to consider in international marketing when marketing aims to reach a larger target group from all over the world. In international marketing, economic factors and possible special factors must be considered. These include, among other things, payment systems and cultural differences, which must be considered in marketing (communication culture). (Tsygankova & Gordieieva, 2023.) Business norms that are standard in a company's home country may vary significantly in international markets, requiring a more adaptable and culturally informed approach to decision-making in digital marketing.

3 Purpose of the study and research questions

A digital marketing strategy aims to create a positive impact on the target company's marketing, competitive situation and interaction with customers. The study aims to create a digital marketing strategy that helps the company learn to use digital marketing alongside traditional marketing and to use the opportunities brought by the new digitalization, such as artificial intelligence, in digital marketing. Digital marketing provides customers with meaningful customer experiences that foster long-lasting customer relationships. (Petersen, et al. 2014.)

The study provides the target company with a starting point that makes it easy for them to start implementing a new kind of digital marketing in social media and to use artificial intelligence in the implementation of marketing. The study wants to strongly highlight the support provided by artificial intelligence for marketing, and the marketing strategy highlights how the target company and other companies can use it.

When starting research, it is important to focus on the research question, because it allows us to conduct research and lead it in the right direction. Digital marketing research questions aim to help companies understand the importance of modern marketing and map out the idea of its challenges and the stress it creates for businesses. (Li, Larimo & Leonidou, 2021.)

Main research question:

Q1: How does integrating digital channels into traditional marketing strategy affect the company's competitiveness and customer relations?

It is also a good idea to include so-called sub-questions in the study, because usually the research question is so broad that it is difficult to answer it directly so that these sub-questions can be used to better open the main research question of the study.

Research sub-questions are:

SQ1: How does digital marketing affect company visibility and brand awareness in the market?

SQ2: What digital marketing approaches are most effective for companies entering new markets?

4 Research and Data Analysis

This chapter justifies the research methods selected for the study (4.1, 4.2), after that the collection of data and the limitations related to the study are discussed (4.3). Finally, the study examines the methodology used for data analysis to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the results and derive meaningful insights for strategic decision-making (4.4).

4.1 Qualitative research method

When defining qualitative research, it is important to observe the differences in meaning between different studies. For this reason, not every researcher should often have the same definition of qualitative research, but it depends on each person's individual research, which, like all research, should initially be viewed critically in the definition of research. Everyone conducting qualitative research should define it according to what their own research is based on. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018.)

Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) point out that when considering the qualitative research method, it is more a question of the importance of theory than of defining qualitative research as accurately as possible. By the importance of theory, they refer to a frame of reference, i.e. a theory that includes research. With the help of theory, we can show the overall picture of the thing being studied or created through research.

This study is carried out as a qualitative research method. With the right kind of research, a digital marketing strategy can be developed for the target company and help other companies to utilize new and innovative marketing methods. The study ended up with a qualitative research method, because it allows data to be collected, analysed and utilised quickly. Qualitative research can also produce meaningful results with a small but carefully selected group of respondents.

4.2 Survey as a research method

The survey can be considered a multi-purpose method that is suitable for many different purposes in connection with both qualitative and quantitative research. It can be considered particularly useful in data collection. (Kalaja, Alanen & Dufva, 2011.) Alanen (2011) describes the survey as one of the most used methods for collecting empirical, experience-based information. The survey serves especially as a tool designed by the researcher, which can be used to collect essential information on the research topic. The responses received through the survey form the research material and provide a deep understanding of the topic.

Surveys can be considered one of the least time-consuming, but at the same time cost-effective research methods. Surveys maintain scientific accuracy in the study and the research can be considered correct. (Lund, 2023.)

Alanen (2011) emphasises that when planning a survey, it is essential to consider the target group and the purpose of the survey. According to her, the questions should be such that it is possible to collect information on the respondents' experiences and views that is relevant to the research questions. In addition, Alanen (2011) points out that both open-ended and closed-ended questions, or combinations of these, can be used in surveys. Since this study was carried out qualitatively, the questionnaire contained largely open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was implemented with the help of a Google Forms, which included open questions and a few closed questions. With the help of these questions, it was possible to map the digital marketing of other companies and their use of artificial intelligence as a marketing aid. This research guaranteed identity protection for the companies and individuals that responded to the questionnaire, and for this reason, the study does not highlight individual companies except for my target company. A second questionnaire was also created for the target company, which was used to map out a baseline analysis for them.

4.3 Data collection and delimitations

In this research, the data needed for a digital marketing strategy consists of responses obtained through a survey. The survey was conducted using questionnaire in Google Forms, which had 12 questions. The questions were multiple-choice and open-ended questions, and these questions could be used to find out the digital marketing behaviour of different organizations/companies.

The survey collects data from respondents responsible for marketing. The respondents will all be asked the same questions, which the respondents can answer in their own way. Data is collected from all questionnaire responses, which is compared and applied to the target company. Data is used to create a digital marketing strategy for the target company and other potential companies.

The study also collects a lot of information from scientific articles and various books that are included in the research topic. The books and articles focus on digital marketing and its strategy creation, as well as the use of artificial intelligence to aid marketing. Also, the study considers previous studies on the subject, which are used to understand what information has already been studied on the topic and what has been overlooked in previous studies. The data used in the study, such as sources, was limited to at least the 2000s, and most of the sources were intended to be published after the 2020s, as this is a rapidly changing and growing research topic. In addition, data was collected from many different sources to strengthen reliability.

The study did not limit the companies by location or size, but the size was considered in the analysis of the survey responses. When creating the digital marketing strategy, the aim was to focus on the big picture, based on which the aim was to build a functional strategy for the target company. For this reason, the research was limited as little as possible when it was carried out.

Research will be limited to focus on digital marketing. The goal is to keep both B2C and B2B target groups in research, i.e. not to limit marketing to only one part of

them. Although the research is more limited to digital marketing, it also aims to consider other types of marketing. The study considers the inclusion of digital marketing in traditional marketing and the impact of digital marketing on companies' marketing.

The research focused more on mobile marketing/visible marketing and excluded marketing in digital magazines. Of course, many applications support both mobile and other technological tools, but the importance of marketing and the direction of the marketing strategy focused on applications created for phones. Mobile advertising now accounts for about half of the revenue generated from online advertising, although in 2010 it was still almost non-existent. (Aric Rindfleisch, & Alan J. Malter. 2019.)

4.4 Data analysis

The purpose of the research material is to describe the phenomenon under study and, with the help of analysis, to modify the material so that it can be condensed, organized and structured, thus increasing its informational value. Content analysis is one of the most common methods for analysing qualitative research data. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) emphasize that the goal of this analysis method is to provide a description of the studied phenomenon in a systematic, condensed and general form.

The goal of content analysis is to shape the material into a clear and concise whole, while preserving the information it contains. The analysis of qualitative data aims to increase the informational value of the data by organising fragmented data into a coherent and easily understandable whole picture. However, it is important to note that content analysis serves as a tool for structuring the data to make it possible to draw conclusions. This was also considered in the implementation of this study when the analysis of the data began. Content analysis can be carried out in different ways, such as by classifying or theming the material. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018)

Companies use data analysis in different parts of their operations The information received will also be analysed, and a functional digital marketing strategy will be

developed for the target company. Through analytics, an effort is made to understand how digital marketing can be used to increase the company's visibility and improve customer experience. (Baška, Pondel & Dudycz, 2019.)

“Generally speaking, the task of advanced data analysis is to process data in order to better understand and use it in decision-making processes.” (Baška, Pondel & Dudycz, 2019).

In this research, the analysis of the data was carried out by first going through the answers received to the questionnaire. The responses were divided according to their similarities and then compared with the responses and materials received from the target company. Similar thoughts on the importance of digital marketing, the importance and growth of artificial intelligence, and the similarity in the use of social media emerged. In addition, a second Google Forms form was sent to the target company, which provided the data for the situation analysis.

4.5 SOSTAC model

At Sostac, researchers conduct a situation analysis that includes both external and internal factors. It uses strategic planning to guide the company's marketing goals in line with the company's general goals. Sostac includes goals, tactics, and finally, an action plan according to which the company should proceed. (Strong, 2014).



Figure 4. Sostac (Strong, 2014).

PR Smith's SOSTAC template provides marketers with a simple and structured structure for a marketing plan. It is important to understand the types of decisions carefully and to make sure that all the necessary information is available. The

SOSTAC model is seen as an important part of the basis of this digital marketing strategy for the company. (Strong, 2014)

5 Research results

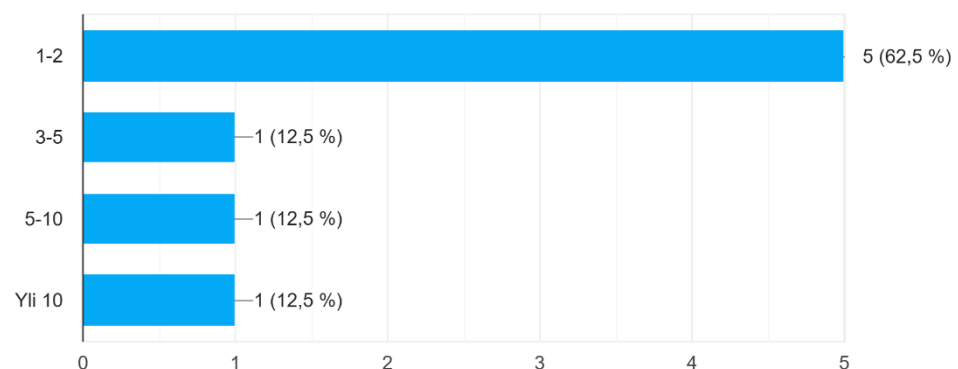
In this section, the results of the survey questionnaires are reviewed, which are utilized in the digital marketing strategy developed for the target company.

The questionnaire, which was sent to seven other companies in addition to the target company, contained 14 questions. The companies to which the form was sent were companies operating in Lahti.

The questionnaire was first used to map the size of the marketing teams of the participating companies. This allows us to get a better understanding of the scale of the company's operations and can recommend the target company the size of the marketing team according to their goals.

How many people are responsible for the organization's marketing/how large is your marketing team?

8 vastausta

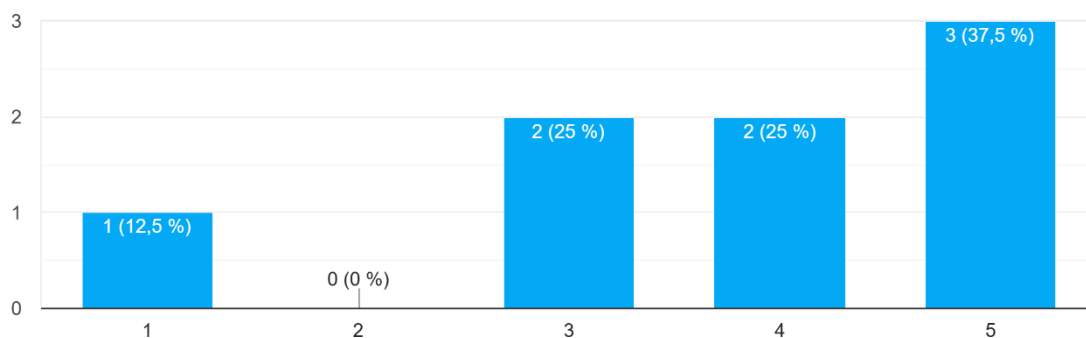


Next, information was received from companies about what they think about the digital marketing strategy and how they feel it affects the company's profitability and visibility. Almost all companies highlight the systematic nature of their marketing strategy, but it is a strategy that requires a strong plan before implementation. Digital channels to which marketing is targeted were also highlighted. Digital marketing strategy is quickly combined with social media channels, for example, so this did not come as a big surprise in the research results. Companies had similar answers to profitability and visibility in terms of its positive position in these matters. One of the respondents added that he has often heard it said, "If the company is not on social

media, it does not exist". Even though direct lending does not fully cover digital marketing, the respondents and the quote are still agreed with.

Following this, information was gathered from the companies participating in the survey regarding their perception of digital marketing as part of their overall marketing. The responses leaned towards the importance of digital marketing, but it is noticeable that companies also do a lot of non-digital marketing. By determining the importance of digital marketing within overall marketing, the significance of creating a marketing strategy for businesses can be created.

How big a part do you consider digital marketing to be of your overall marketing? 1=not at all, 5=completely
8 vastausta



The survey also sought to find out which digital marketing channels companies use and which social media channels, for example, they feel are currently trending the most. With this, certain digital marketing channels and social media channels can be recommended directly to the target company, where the company's marketing should be increased. Instagram and Facebook stood out the most strongly in the responses, which is completely understandable considering their high marketing value and how easy Meta has made marketing on these marketing channels. The lack of Tik Tok in the responses was surprising, because Tik Tok is one of the most trending marketing channels at the moment.

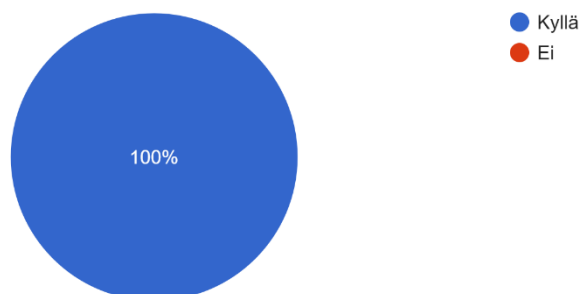
The questionnaire respondents also sent answers related to challenges and things to consider related to digital marketing. These can be used to prevent unnecessary mistakes in the marketing of target company. In the responses, the importance of

choosing a target group, goal-orientation and versatility were particularly highlighted. All these things should be carefully considered when creating a marketing strategy for a target company. The respondents felt that the biggest challenges were competition, differentiation and complexity. With the help of this marketing strategy, the aim is to get the target company to advance digital marketing that stands out from the competition with as clear a marketing strategy as possible. With the abundance of digital marketing offerings, standing out is becoming more challenging these days. That is why we invest in regularity and strategic marketing to achieve better visibility and impact.

At the end of the survey, artificial intelligence was also reviewed, and the respondents were asked about its use and how much they believe its use will increase. More than half of the respondents either use or have considered using artificial intelligence to support marketing. All respondents, on the other hand, believed the importance of artificial intelligence will increase in marketing soon.

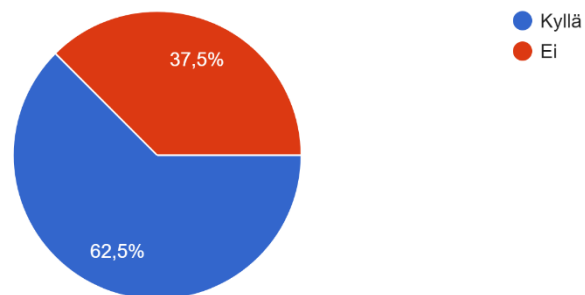
Do you think that the importance of artificial intelligence in digital marketing will increase in the coming years?

8 vastausta



Do you use artificial intelligence in digital marketing or have you considered using artificial intelligence in marketing?

8 vastausta



The survey respondents were also asked in the Google Forms how they had used artificial intelligence and whether they had experienced any challenges or benefits from it. These answers were considered in the Sostac phase of the study.

6 Digital marketing strategy

6.1 Situation analysis

In this phase of the research, the target company is reviewed to get a clear picture of who the digital marketing strategy is being created for. The analysis will comprehensively go through the target company, and it will be subjected to a SWOT analysis and a competitor's analysis.

6.1.1 SWOT analysis

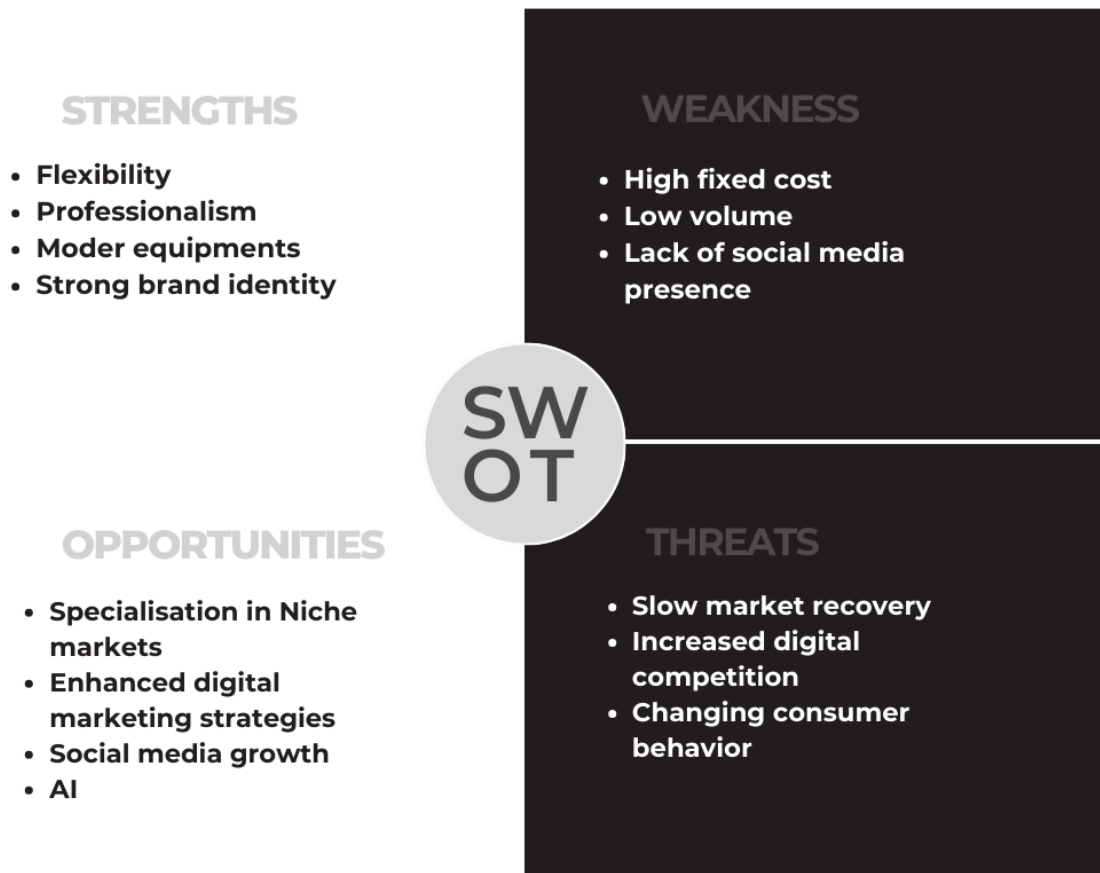
SWOT analysis can be considered an important part of strategic planning. It provides a better understanding of the business-related environment to support strategic decisions. In a SWOT analysis, the operating environment is divided into four parts, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. (Phadermrod, Crowder & Wills, 2019.)

- Strengths & Weaknesses are internal factors that the company can manage.
- Opportunities & Threats are external uncontrollable factors.

With the help of these four areas of expertise, the company can see their areas of expertise and they can be used to develop the company's decision-making and strategic construction. Its biggest advantage can be seen in its simple and clear use. Because of this, it has been one of the most used strategic tools in companies for a long time. (Phadermrod, Crowder & Wills, 2019.)

With the help of a SWOT analysis, an idea of the internal and external factors of the target company is obtained. By doing a SWOT analysis, we get a better understanding of the company and can make a more personalized and better strategy for them. The data collected for the SWOT analysis has been collected from the responses given to the Google Forms form by Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus.

Swot analysis of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus



Strengths

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus operates in an industry where strong brand identity, flexibility, professionalism and modern machinery are key success factors. A company's recognizable brand increases credibility and customer trust, standing out from competitors with clear marketing communications.

Flexibility is especially important in floor coating services, as market requirements can change quickly. The ability to adapt to customer needs and provide customized solutions, gives the company a competitive advantage. Professional skills are another key resource. Experienced specialists ensure high-quality work that meets even the most demanding standards and customer expectations.

Modern machinery, on the other hand, supports efficiency, precision and productivity. Investments in the latest technology ensure that Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus can offer the best solutions on the market competition.

A digital marketing strategy can help further strengthen these strengths. Better content marketing can improve a company's online visibility and making it easier for potential customers to find services. In addition, the active use of social media creates an opportunity to engage customers and emphasize the company's expertise and quality. Strategically implemented digital marketing can help Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus stand out from its competitors and protect their long-term growth.

Weaknesses

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus has a strong position in its field, but like all companies, it also has challenges that can affect profitability and growth opportunities. One of the most significant weaknesses is the high fixed costs, which can be bad for the cash flow and reduce financial flexibility. Floor coating requires high-quality materials, special equipment and skilled workers, which increases the company's cost structure and requires careful resource management.

Another key challenge is low volume, which can limit the company's growth opportunities. Smaller-scale operations may make scaling more difficult and lead to the company not being able to take advantage of the benefits of large production volumes. This can put pressure on price optimization and customer acquisition to keep the demand for services at a sufficiently high level.

In addition, a company's poor digital visibility can make it difficult to acquire customers and strengthen its market position. Without comprehensive digital marketing, Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus may face challenges in reaching potential customers, as an increasing number of business decisions and service provider selection take place online. Strategically leveraging content marketing and social media could help a business strengthen its digital presence and stand out from the competition.

Opportunities

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus have significant opportunities to develop and expand their business. One of the key opportunities is specialisation in markets where competition is lower. By focusing on specific flooring solutions, such as industrial flooring or eco-friendly coating materials, the company can establish a strong position in the market and attract customers with special needs.

Digital marketing and artificial intelligence offer new ways for a company's growth and visibility. Strategically utilizing social media can improve customer interactions and brand awareness. AI can be used to analyse customer data and identify the most effective marketing strategies that will improve the reach of the target audience.

A company's competitiveness can also be strengthened by utilising technological developments, for example with the help of new coating methods and digital tools. AI-based systems can help optimize processes, improve the customer experience, and manage resources more efficiently. Automated processes and innovative solutions can improve productivity and ensure high-quality results.

Taking advantage of these opportunities can help Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus to expand its market position, strengthen its competitiveness and develop even more efficient ways of serving customers.

Threats

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus has some threats that may affect its business and competitiveness. One significant challenge is the slow recovery of the market situation, which may affect to cash flow and reduce investment opportunities. Changes in demand in the construction and renovation industry have a direct impact on flooring services, and if the market recovery is delayed, it could slow down the company's growth and profitability.

Digital marketing brings with it both opportunities and challenges. Growing digital competition makes it difficult to stand out online, as more and more companies are investing in their digital visibility. Without targeted and strategic marketing, it can be challenging to reach new customers effectively and build a credible online brand.

Artificial intelligence is also changing marketing and customer acquisition, but at the same time it brings with it new risks. The rapid development of AI and the risks of its misuses can affect wrongly to marketing strategy. Changes in algorithms and the dependence on AI-based solutions can pose challenges if the company does not keep up with the development.

6.1.2 Competitors analysis

Competitors analysis is an important part of operational management. It can be used to monitor the company's market position and to get an idea of the competitive situation. In marketing, it is important to understand your competitors to develop the right kind of operational strategies. (Guo, Sharma, Yin, Lu & Rong, 2017)

Competition in the B2B market has intensified significantly as more and more new service providers have entered the industry. This development has led to a decrease in prices, which has reduced margins to almost nothing. It is becoming increasingly difficult for companies to differentiate themselves on price alone, and competition requires a more strategic approach.

In this situation, digital marketing offers an opportunity to create added value and strengthen customer relationships. A distinctive brand and expert content marketing can help a company stand out from competition based on price alone. In addition, targeted digital advertising and analytics enable efficient customer acquisition and long-term customer experience development, which can help improve profitability despite price pressures.

6.2 Objective

The goal of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus is to establish itself as a leading player in the industry while growing its customer base and business. This requires an effective combination of strategic marketing, service development and the utilisation of digital solutions.

The company's strengths include professionalism and modern machinery, but these elements must be brought to the fore more visibly than before. The goal is to build

a stronger brand that emphasizes the company's quality, reliability and special expertise. Brand communication should emphasize the factors that distinguish a company from its competitors and strengthen its position in the market.

Digital channels play a key role in marketing strategy. Social media content production is being developed to be more targeted so that the company can reach the right audience and engage them at different stages of the customer journey. The goal is to increase the company's social media visibility and strengthen customer relationships through continuous interaction.

Due to the slow recovery of the market situation, the company must ensure that resources are used efficiently. The goal is to minimize unnecessary costs and focus on solutions that produce long-term benefits. Leveraging digital tools, such as automation in marketing, can help a business target campaign correctly and ensure maximum return on investment (ROI).

In the current market situation, environmental friendliness and responsibility are increasingly important competitive factors. Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus can take advantage of this trend by strengthening its communication on sustainable coating solutions and ecological materials. Customers increasingly value companies that take the environment into account in their operations, and this can become an important factor in the market.

6.3 Strategy

The strategy of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus focuses on strengthening the company's position in the market, improving digital visibility and utilizing new technologies to develop competitiveness.

Search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, and social media strategy are key elements in strengthening your digital presence. The company focuses on improving its online visibility and guiding customers towards services by optimizing its website for search engines and producing expert content. Social media channels, such as Instagram and Facebook, would be actively used to increase customer interaction and increase brand awareness.

More should be invested in strengthening customer relationships. Targeted offers, tailored services and a smooth customer journey improve customer satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases. For example, artificial intelligence can be used to analyse customer behaviour, predict needs, and optimize marketing precisely according to the target group.

In addition to these, the company should prepare for changes in the market situation by analysing the trends and developments in the industry. A proactive approach ensures that a company can adapt to changing circumstances and remain competitive. Investments in technology, digital marketing and service development will support long-term growth.

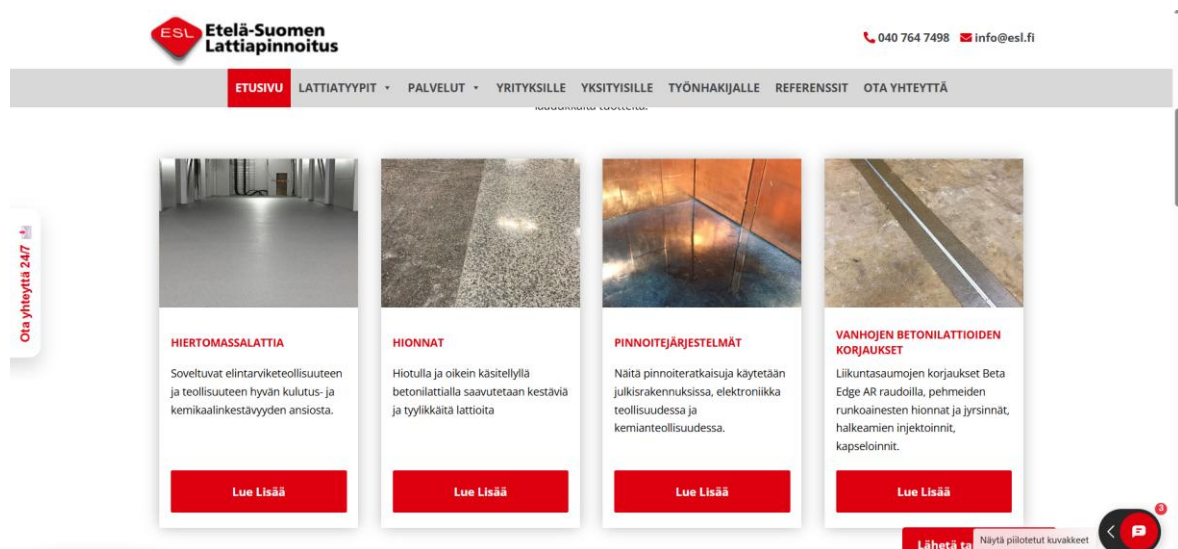
7 Summary and recommendations

7.1 Tactics

In this section, we will go through in more detail the strategies with which the target company can achieve better digital marketing results. The tactics have considered the answers to the questionnaire regarding the observations and challenges related to digital marketing.

Tactic 1: Clear and visually appealing communication

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus must invest in a visual brand image that makes the content easily recognizable and attractive. This means using clear brand colours and keeping clear communication in the posts. From the picture below on their website, this has been considered, and the company's colours are clearly visible. The development targets could be more Facebook and Instagram and make them even more like the company. For example, Instagram highlights could be clarified, and more brand colours could be used.



Tactic 2: Target group-oriented content and raffles

Visibility is not the only thing, but the company strives to achieve in marketing. The company also strives to get customers to commit to the publications posted by the company. This can be done in the following ways, for example:

With the help of questions and raffles. In its publications, a company can ask, for example, what is important to customers when choosing a floor covering? An example of a raffle could be by following an Instagram account and commenting on a friend, you are entered into a raffle where a coating covering a certain area is drawn. These are just indicative examples of a solution for which there are a huge number of different options for implementation.

Interactive content can also act as an engagement factor, so surveys, polls and possible live videos organized by the company can bring the bond between the company and their customers closer.

All of this could be based on AI-based analytics, which helps the company see the solutions that best bind customers.

Tactic 3: Search engine optimization and advertising

Since there is so much content these days, SEO and strategic advertising should be considered. SEO helps a business to get better search results when customers search for services. In addition to SEO, targeted Google Ads campaigns could be imported, and advertising could also be used on Meta platforms. The company wants to be the first to come up when the customer even starts considering a new floor coating.

Tactic 4: Social Media development

Social media offers a huge number of opportunities for customer acquisition, but it must be systematic to achieve it in the best possible way. A few ways to make social media marketing more systematic would be to create a publishing plan to ensure that the company achieves consistent visibility.

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus could experiment with different formats in social media, such as customer stories, videos or live, and use social media analytics to map out the most effective ways to get people interested in the company's publications.

Social media also offers the opportunity to utilise AI-based tools that can be used to identify current trends or write publication texts that appeal to customers.

7.2 Action

The development of the digital marketing of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus requires measures that support the strengthening of the company's brand, customer acquisition and increasing visibility.

Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus should initially make their website and social media channels equal in terms of brand colouring, clarity and brand image, and start regular publishing in different applications. This can be facilitated, for example, with the help of a publication calendar. As the questionnaire showed, 1–2 people are responsible for the target company's marketing, and that is enough if you can still spend enough time on marketing. Artificial intelligence can also be used to speed up the creation of posts and, for example, to write ready-made publication texts.

SEO should be optimized with important keywords to make it easier to find the company in search results. In addition, the company could consider using Google Ads and paid marketing in Meta's subordinate applications (Facebook, Instagram). These would increase the visibility of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus and customer acquisition.

After customer acquisition, social media campaigns, raffles, and surveys can be planned. The company must go through these parts in terms of what is interesting enough, for example, a raffle, that its company is ready to draw lots, but also in such a way that its value reaches the interest of people. The company could schedule campaigns more moderately at times when the company feels urgent and more sensitive to quiet times.

As before, social media can be used to schedule posts more accurately and make them more engaging, which can be done by encouraging people to comment and ask questions in the post. Targeted advertising could also be increased on social media, for example, to support b2b sales. All interaction on social media should be monitored from analytics and based on that, advice for future digital marketing should be obtained with the help of artificial intelligence.

7.3 Control

To ensure the effectiveness of Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinoitus digital marketing strategy, monitoring is a key part of the process. Monitoring the results helps to assess how well the set goals are being achieved and which measures produce the best results. This includes looking at website traffic, search engine visibility, social media engagement, and ad campaign conversions, among other things.

Leveraging analytics tools like Google Analytics and Meta allows for real-time tracking. This allows the company to adapt its strategy quickly, which improves the cost-effectiveness and targeting of marketing. The use of AI in analytics can help identify trends and customer behaviour, allowing for better optimization of communication.

Monitoring competitors is a crucial aspect of performance evaluation, helping businesses refine their strategies and stay ahead in the market. It's important to analyse what strategies your competitors are using and learn from their successes and mistakes. This will help Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinoitus to stand out in the market and develop its own communications to be more competitive.

Continuous monitoring and adjustment of strategy ensure that marketing stays up-to-date and responds effectively to market changes. This helps the company achieve long-term growth and ensure its competitive advantage.

8 Summary

This thesis presents a digital marketing strategy for Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus, a company seeking to modernize its marketing efforts and enhance its competitive advantage. The research focuses on the integration of digital tools such as social media, artificial intelligence, and search engine optimization (SEO) to improve customer engagement and increase brand visibility.

The study is built on a SOSTAC model, which includes a situation analysis (with a SWOT analysis and competitor analysis), clearly defined objectives, strategic planning, actionable tactics, and a control mechanism for tracking performance. The SWOT analysis highlights the company's strengths, including its professional expertise and modern equipment, as well as its weaknesses, such as high fixed costs and limited digital presence. Opportunities include specialization in markets and the use of digital marketing, while threats include increasing competition and the challenges posed by evolving technology.

The strategy outlines ways for Etelä-Suomen Lattiapinnoitus to optimize its digital presence, including leveraging SEO, paid digital advertising, and social media marketing. The action plan suggests practical steps such as creating a consistent brand identity, implementing content marketing, and utilizing data-driven insights for decision-making. Furthermore, the control section emphasizes ongoing monitoring, competitive benchmarking, and data analysis to refine marketing efforts continuously.

This research aims to provide a structured, actionable digital marketing strategy that will not only benefit the target company but also serve as a model for other SMEs looking to enhance their marketing effectiveness in today's digital landscape.

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