

# **From outbound to inbound marketing for a web-development company**

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<b>Report/thesis title</b> From outbound to inbound marketing for a web-development company	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> <b>31</b>
<p>The objective of the thesis is transformation from outbound to inbound marketing of a web-development company based on social media channels. The company is called Tulikipuna and it offers web-development services, coding for web, intelligent websites solutions and software services to all kinds of corporate clients and companies.</p> <p>The theoretical framework was based on defining concept of digital marketing; the difference between outbound and inbound marketing, social media sites and current and future trends of digital marketing.</p> <p>After the theoretical part, there is a chapter about planning the project which covers current digital marketing activities and marketing ideas for the company. The marketing plan includes a strategy for transformation, ways to develop social media accounts and recommended timetable for blogposting and social selling. Besides that, there is a subchapter that explains how blogging helps to raise SEO ratings of the company and overall plays an important role in an inbound marketing strategy.</p> <p>In conclusion, this brief, the abstract is a nutshell overview of the entire thesis. The abstract must form an independent whole that can be understood without reading the actual thesis report.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Inbound marketing, outbound marketing, digital marketing, social media.	

## Table of Contents

1	Introduction .....	1
1.1	Background and Aim.....	1
1.2	The structure of the report.....	2
2	Introduction to digital marketing communications .....	4
2.1	Definition of Digital Marketing.....	4
2.2	Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Marketing.....	5
2.3	Social Media .....	8
2.3.1	Facebook .....	8
2.3.2	WhatsApp .....	10
2.3.3	LinkedIn .....	11
2.3.4	Twitter .....	12
2.3.5	Instagram.....	13
2.3.6	Youtube .....	13
2.4	Other digital marketing issues .....	14
2.4.1	Analytics and SEO tools.....	14
2.4.2	Email marketing .....	14
2.4.3	Blogging.....	14
2.5	Current and Future trends of Digital Marketing.....	15
2.6	Digital marketing plans.....	16
3	Planning project .....	18
3.1	Schedule of the project .....	18
3.1.1	Current Digital Marketing Activities.....	18
3.2	Target group .....	20
3.2.1	Actions to be taken.....	25
3.2.2	SEO .....	27
3.3	Goals and metrics .....	28
4	Summary.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

# 1 Introduction

The digital marketing has evolved remarkably during the past years and now gave us a chance to enjoy such things as the social and digital media. Online experience has been changed from vanishing curiosity to a useful marketing instrument. With the help of digitalization we have created manifold, astonishing platforms for communication between marketers and consumers. To gain peoples' attention and interest the marketers have to provide more information about their products.

The main task of marketers is to spread the word about their products and services in order to get people to purchase them. To accomplish this task, marketers have been using combination of outbound techniques including TV commercials, direct mail, cold calling, radio, e-mail spam, printed brochures etc. to reach potential clients. For the last several years, outbound techniques have become less useful as people are bored and tired of being interrupted with traditional marketing messages. The traditional templates of outbound marketing are losing their efficiency, and new types of inbound marketing are getting popularity by providing value for consumers. People get sick of any marketing that pushes products or services on their faces. Reduction of using outbound marketing is a reaction to a fundamental change in consumer behaviour. Consumers are more in control of what information they receive and how they want to get valuable and newsworthy information instead of cold emails, cold calling, dry TV ads etc. Nowadays, it is vital for companies to move to inbound marketing, which is based on earning people's interest.

While outbound marketing techniques include paying for ads, purchasing email lists and waiting for leads, inbound marketing focuses on creating quality content that helps to achieve goals and pulls people toward the company and its services.

## 1.1 Background and Aim

The commissioner of the thesis is a digital agency Tulikipuna that was found in April 2014 and is located in Helsinki, Finland. Tulikipuna has two different project types; one is doing front-end contractor work to big marketing agencies and the second type is offering digital solutions to small and medium-sized retail companies. Main products are websites, webstores and different social media integrations. The company is inseparably linked with digital media and marketing, therefore it is crucial to formulate a clear digital marketing strategy for Tulikipuna by turning from outbound to inbound marketing strategy. It is a great opportunity to make a research of a defined strategy, which will help Tulikipuna to

ensure its marketing activities are aligned with the business goals, and most importantly, that it is targeting the right audience.

The main objective is transformation of the company's marketing strategy from outbound to inbound. Tulikipuna used outbound marketing by advertising its products and services by presenting information to consumers. Tulikipuna did it via use of direct emails/calls and social media channels. The aim of the thesis is to change marketing method to the more affordable marketing strategy which targets a core audience by providing helpful and remarkable content to entice people into finding out more about products and services. Thus, in essence, Tulikipuna should give something useful to people in order to get them to come to the company. It will include the most helpful and best suitable digital media tools as well as defining the buyer personas of the company and suggested marketing plan based on target audience and current situation in the web development field. The point is to get the company being found by customers, not interrupting them with empty marketing ads and forcing them to buy the services.

Key concept of the thesis is to analyse outbound and inbound marketing forms and use the most suitable inbound channels based on the company's buyer personas. Tulikipuna will start using the schedule describing the days that Tulikipuna will post a blog, images, guides and quotes with valuable content on social media channels. New inbound content will interest, entertain and give relevant information to target audience that they really need and at the end mention of the product/services.

## **1.2 The structure of the report**

The thesis report contains of four chapters, which are introduction, theoretical part, planning the project and conclusion. The first chapter Introduction tells about digital and social media; and it covers company's background and aim of the thesis. The second chapter is called "Introduction to digital marketing communications". The subchapter 2.1 describes digital marketing field, including digital media channels. The subchapter 2.2 "Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Marketing" presents the full picture of outbound and inbound marketing by comparing them. Besides that, this subchapter shows the Inbound Marketing Methodology and provides an explanation of each stage of it. The next subchapter 2.3 covers social media channels, including Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. The subchapter 2.4 includes SEO tools and analytics as well as email marketing and blogging. The subchapter 2.5 tells of current and future digital marketing trends. In order to have a template for the report, there is a subchapter 2.6. which involves the digital marketing model SOSTAC which was a base of the current report.

The chapter 3 is about the project plan. It starts with the project schedule, which shows approximate period of writing process. The next subchapter 3.1.1 presents the table of the current digital marketing activities of Tulikipuna. The subchapter 3.2 is about target group, especially buyer personas and buyer's journey. The next subchapter 3.2.1- 3.2.2 offers the detailed plan of the actions of transformation the marketing strategy to inbound way. The subchapter 3.3 shows the goals and metrics. The last chapter is conclusion which helps to summarize the thesis and writing process.

## **2 Introduction to digital marketing communications**

This chapter is written to create a clear theoretical framework for analysing digital marketing, particularly outbound and inbound marketing for the web-development company in practice. It begins with a consideration of relationship between traditional and digital marketing communications.

Before the world has become more technically developed and digitalized, marketing campaigns were limited on traditional radio, TV, public relations, sponsorship and direct mail. However, since the rapid and ongoing evolution of digital media, it has created new avenues for marketing communications, which mainly include digital media channels. The new equivalent to the traditional marketing is the digital marketing communication with new digital and online tools. (Kotler, 2014)

### **2.1 Definition of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is a promotion of products, brands and services using digital media channels such as Internet, text-messaging, phone calls, SEM (search engine marketing), SEO (search engine optimization), e-books, guides, blogs, games etc. Digital marketing also extends to mobile apps, electronic billboards and other forms of digital media. (Fill, 2013)

Currently, the world is becoming more digital; people have access to information on a daily basis, any time and any place. Digital marketing is quite important because soon it will replace all other traditional marketing forms in the near future. In any case, companies should acknowledge significance of getting digitalized and adapt marketing communications to new contents. Before the web content development, customers had only data about services/products that companies wanted them to know. (Fill, 2013)

Digital media is a raising source of social interaction, information and news. Now consumers can discover not only what the company lets them to know about the product, but also what media, family and friends think about the brand as well as other consumers' feedback. Most probably, people now trust more the media and product's reviews than just advertising and marketing campaigns. Digital marketing has become a big part in consumers' lives as now they have an easy access to wide variety of information channels consequently they can get more detailed and full perception of the product. Products and services should be reliable and to be adapted to consumers' preferences and needs. (Marketing Plans. How to prepare them, how to use them, 2011)

## 2.2 Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Marketing

Success of any company heavily depends on how effective its marketing campaign is. In outbound (traditional) marketing companies are focused on binding clients. Normally, outbound marketing uses interruptive methods as handprint advertising, junk mail, cold calling and TV commercial. Nevertheless, technology is making these tactics less productive and more costly (call blockers, caller ID and SPAM filters). The conventional way for outbound marketing is easy for marketers because they push content in people's faces even though those potential clients do not want it. The Figure 1 below represents visually the comparison between outbound and inbound marketing. (Ruffolo, 2016)



**Figure 1. Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Marketing** (The Inbound Methodology, 2016)

Traditional marketing is about getting to potential clients to persuade them that they need a product. It includes taking marketing communication to prospective consumers via cold calling, TV ads, cold mail (spamming), billboards, direct emails, events, presentations, printouts and other pushy methods that disturb people in the daily life. Generally, methods of delivery of outbound marketing costs more and brings less than inbound marketing, whereas outbound broadcast to a mass audience, which mostly has no interest in the product. Those people, who have some interest in the company, normally need to see a notification numerous times before they react on it. Outbound marketing model requires pushing plenty of marketing messages out via different courses. (Outbound Marketing - Traditional Isn't Always Best , 2015)

However, daily outbound marketing is getting less effective. If a company implements outbound marketing techniques, it automatically competes with thousands companies that are doing the same thing. Furthermore, inbound companies can generate new ideas to

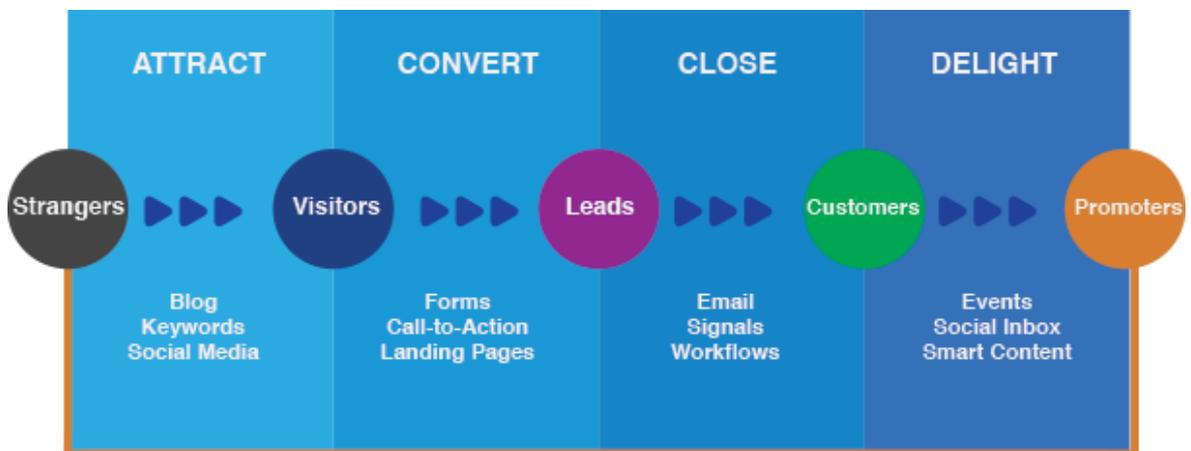
motivate people and figure out profitable and useful ideas for their specific buyer personas. (Halligan, 2014)

Inbound marketing empowers potential customers. Inbound companies make tutorials or make relevant content videos potential clients would want to see, instead of interrupting people with aggressive television ads. Companies can create a business blog that people would look forward to reading, instead of paying for display ads or print publications. Inbound marketing is concentrated on being found by clients; it is focused on customers' needs, not marketers'. (Halligan, 2014)

Inbound marketing is about creating and sharing relevant and helpful content with the world; creating content that specifically designed to attract buyer personas. Inbound marketing includes of a guide that teach people about something they strive to understand, a blog article that refers to an issue someone is having or a problem-solving Ebook that offers solutions to their problems. As inbound marketing communication is free and practicable, the users can interact with a company via blog commenting, emails, forums, and all forms of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc). (Halligan, 2014)

There is an inbound marketing methodology, which consists of four stages- Attract, Convert, Close and Delight. The Figure 2 below presents an inbound marketing methodology and describes its four stages with tools. There are tools and activities for each phase of the inbound course. (Kelly, 2013)

“The inbound methodology is a realistic representation of how people are actually buying today. It moves beyond just demographics and helps marketers truly understand the mental states that buyers go through and align their strategies with them. This methodology is a must for anyone who wants to make a modern marketing impact”. (Ruffolo, 2016)



**Figure 2. Inbound Marketing Methodology** (Inbound Marketing Methodology, 2016)

### *Attract*

During “attract” phase, it requires to build awareness of a brand, target buyer personas, reach new audience and engage new traffic to website. One of the main steps is to define the company’ buyer personas who are ideals of target customers. Buyer personas contain personal and demographic information, in particular, goals, challenges and objections to products/services. (Kelly, 2013)

One of the best tools of the phase is blogging; a company should create helpful and fascinating content that interact with them and helps to achieve their goals. Another tool is usage of relevant keywords. It is vital to pick up appropriate keywords, optimize pages accordingly, create content, and make links about the terms buyer personas search for. Apart from it, the website should be optimized to attract buyer personas and convert the website into a beneficial content to tempt the right visitors. (Wainwright, 2015)

### *Convert*

After the company has attracted website visitors, the next step is to convert them into leads by collecting contact information. One way is to ask visitors to fill out forms to submit their data. The second way is to create call-to-actions buttons/links like “Download an Ebook” or “Attend a webinar”- it helps to create leads and stimulate visitors to take an action. (Kelly, 2013)

### *Close*

It is the phase when a company should turn leads into customers. The first tool is Customer Relationship Management system, which helps to track of all correct information of leads in order to engage more effectively with prospects. Besides, another way is sending out emails focused on relevant content, which can build trust with a potential client. (Kelly, 2013)

### *Delight*

Once a lead has transformed into a customer, it is crucial to maintain relationship fresh and alive in order to promote repeat business, get positive reviews of a product, and referrals to a company. Surveys is an efficient way to get clients’ feedback to assure that a company fulfills consumers’ expectations. Another tool is “smart text” which gives people helpful content customized to their interests and challenges. Likewise, it is efficient to monitor social activities of customers (customer’s questions, likes, dislikes and comments) as it will help to reach them out with tailored content. (The Inbound Methodology , 2016)

Social media is a big part of inbound marketing. Due to huge amount of users and countless possibilities for communication, social media platforms simplify interaction and engagement with target audiences. Many companies have realized its importance and started creating social media profiles and promoting the business through them.

## **2.3 Social Media**

Social media is a huge and constantly increasing part of the digital media. Over 200 million people actively use Twitter every month, and more than 1 billion people use Facebook. Customers expect to find products/brands on social media sites, thus it is a big deal to be a part of social media presence. Social media consists of social channels, electronic applications or tools that let create, share and exchange data (news, information, ideas, photos, videos in virtual groups/ communities and networks). Furthermore, social media is based on mobile and web technologies which helps to get and share information almost immediately. Social media combine variety of online platforms for interaction and networking including forums, blogs, microblogs, business networks, photo editing/sharing apps, social networks, virtual worlds etc. (Strauss, 2012)

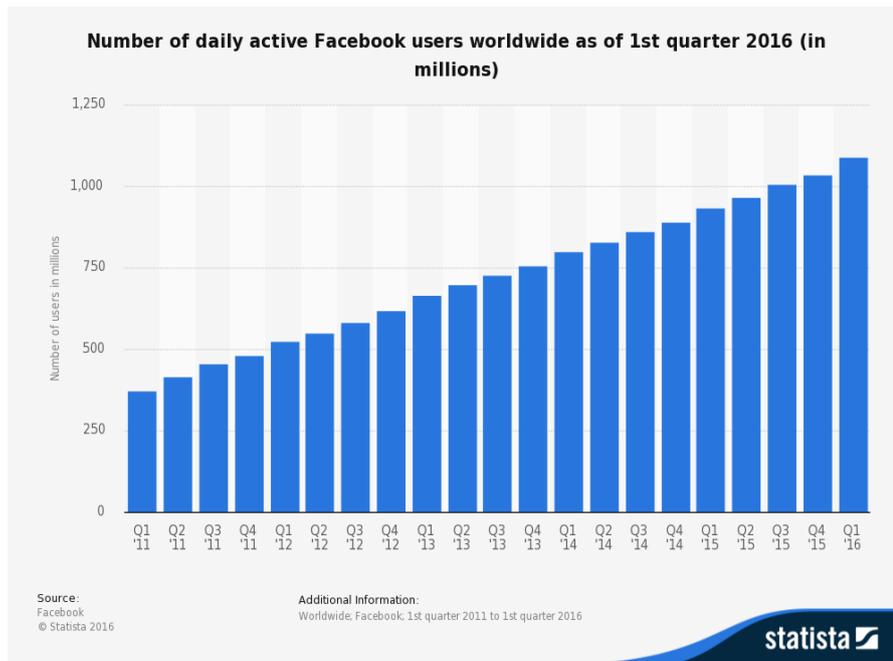
Let us consider most popular and effective social media channels more closely.

### **2.3.1 Facebook**

Facebook is an online social networking tool. It was launched on February 4, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with his school roommates from Harvard College. The website's membership was first limited only to the Harvard students, after that the access was expanded to the colleges in Boston area, Stanford University and Ivy League. Then since 2006, the website has become accessible for users who are at least 13 years old. (Facebook review, 2013)

The site requires registration and after that a user can create a profile, exchange messages, post status updates, add other users as your "friends", share pictures and videos, check news feed and get the notifications when other users update their data. Besides that, users can create a group or join any kind of interest groups regarding to school, work, hobby etc. According to the social media sites survey, Facebook is the most used and popular social network. (Facebook Basics, 2016)

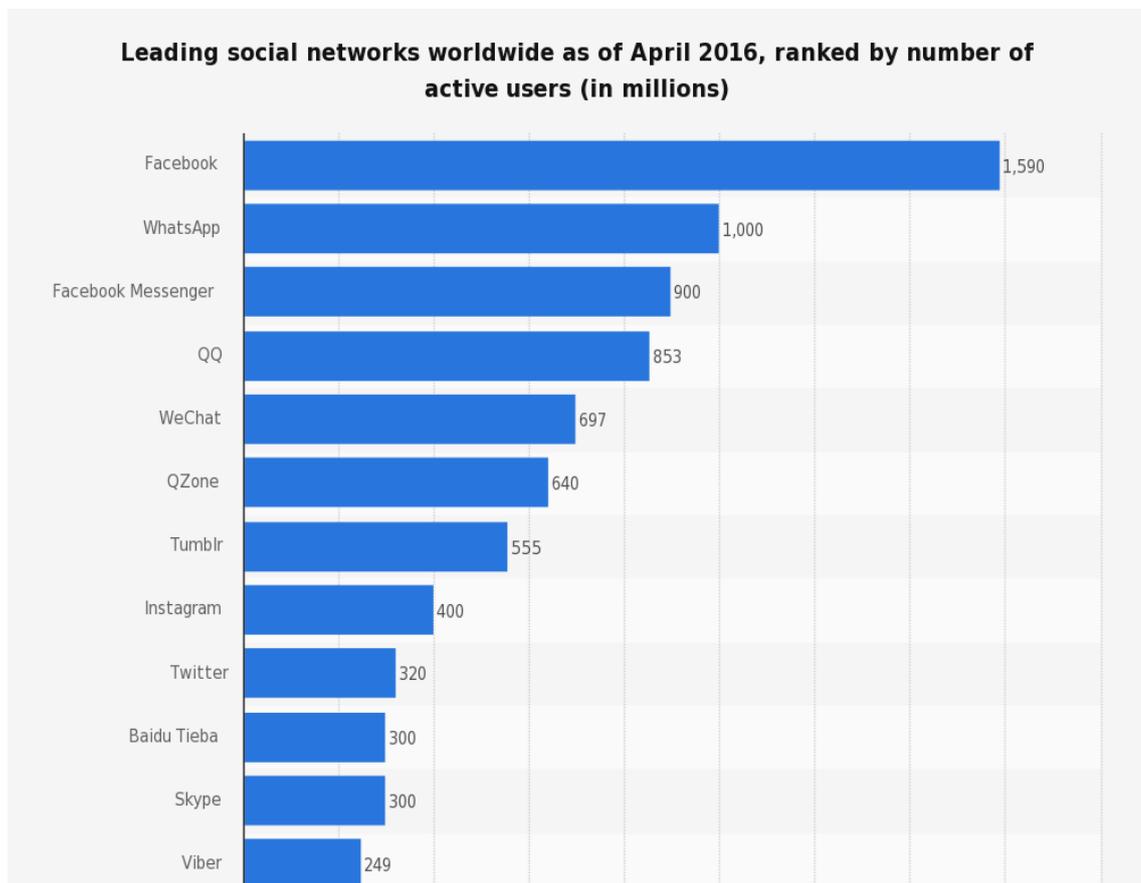
Based on the Statista Portal statistics website, which has carried out a survey of the number of monthly active users of Facebook worldwide from 2008- 2016.



**Figure 3. Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 1st quarter 2016 (in millions) (Statista, 2016)**

The Figure 3 describes the statistics made by Statista which says that in 2012 Facebook had 1 billion active users and it raised to 1.56 billion to the first quarter of 2016. The platform is also the most popular social network worldwide. Based on the statistics of April 2016, Facebook is a market leader which has 1.59 billion monthly active users. Messaging app WhatsApp is the second with 1 billion active users. (Social Media & User-Generated Content, 2016)

Facebook was the first social network that exceeded 1 billion active users. Facebook is mostly orientated on community: family and friends interaction through features like messaging, joining groups and sharing photos. As for the Twitter, Tumblr and LinkedIn, they are more about fast communication and microblogs. (Fill, 2013)



**Figure 4. Leading social networks worldwide as of April 2016, ranked by number of active users (in millions)** (Statista, Social Media & User-Generated Content, 2016)

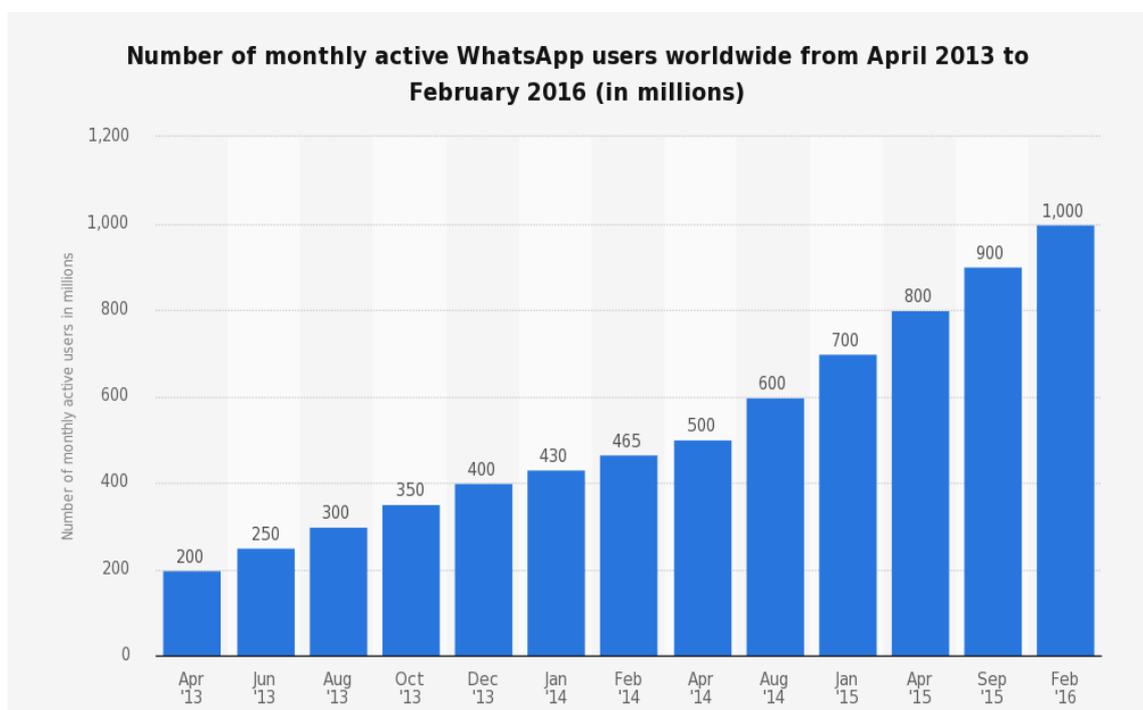
According to the statistics made by Statista, (Figure 4) Facebook is the worldwide used social network, which all the companies should use for marketing its services and products. Through Facebook, it is possible to reach the particular target audience who are most likely to become clients. Before posting updates, pictures, videos, quotes etc, it is important to determine what specifically target group finds interesting. (Facebook as social media tool, 2016)

### 2.3.2 WhatsApp

WhatsApp is one of the most used mobile messaging platforms. Its number of active users is almost similar to Facebook family. The app uses internet for instant messaging, sending photos, videos and audio messages. WhatsApp was launched in 2009 by former Yahoo employees Brian Acton and Jan Koum. Facebook purchased the app for approximately 16 million dollars. WhatsApp CEO Jan Koum announced that WhatsApp has got 800 million active users monthly compared to LinkedIn which has around 260 million active users and Instagram- 400 million. In 2013 WhatsApp released “broadcasting” feature which allows users to send messages to a group of people instantly, without show-

ing the recipients to one another. WhatsApp is being used mostly for personal communications. However, it can be used for business communications using the broadcasting feature as well. (Evans, 2012)

There are several ways WhatsApp can be used for business purposes. Firstly, WhatsApp can be used for customer support. It is beneficial for a company to have a direct phone number that consumers can call or text to get assistance regarding the product/service. WhatsApp can be a great alternative way for people to contact a company instead of calling a helpdesk number. Secondly, WhatsApp is a good application for internal communication between team members regarding to any company's issues. Thirdly, Whatsapp can be helpful for marketing and promotion purposes. (Olson, 2016)



**Figure 5. Number of monthly active WhatsApp users worldwide from April 2013 to February 2016** (Statista, Mobile Internet & Apps, 2016)

The Figure 5 represents the Statista Portal diagram which shows that WhatsApp has been experiencing significant growth in its number of active users worldwide since April 2013. The app is one of the most popular mobile application in the world.

### 2.3.3 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an online social network for business professionals. It is an opposite channel to Facebook and Twitter due to its professional business networking aim – getting connec-

tions with potential employers/business partners, finding a job and participating in different business-related discussions. LinkedIn was founded in December 2002 and launched on May 5, 2003. The platform is available in 24 languages including Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Italian, German, French, English, Chinese, Arabic, Swedish, Danish, Russian, Romanian, Turkish, Japanese, Czech, Polish, Korean, Malay, Indonesian and Tagalog. (LinkedIn Corporation, 2015)

LinkedIn is one of the fastest-growing online social networking platforms in the world. In order to start using LinkedIn, it requires to register and create a profile account. Profile page consists of the basic contact information: education history, skills, certificates, previous work experience, current job title, name of employer, industry of interest, a short description of job duties etc. Due to basic information of education and employment, LinkedIn shows all past and present classmates and work colleagues who are users of LinkedIn. There is an advanced search that allows to search for specific LinkedIn users using following criteria: name, title, location, company and industry. The first step is to search out and make connections on LinkedIn. Making connections means asking other users to join your network. LinkedIn profile page is simplified and clean which displays the platform focused on professional target. (DeMers, 2015)

LinkedIn is more focused on the individuals and their achievements, while Facebook is a group-based platform. LinkedIn gives a chance its users to reconnect with past classmates co-workers and turn these networks into action. LinkedIn encourages its users to get down to business networking when other social networking sites are more about entertainment. LinkedIn is very modern for those who are actively looking for a job and taking part in professional networking conversations. (Shea, 2016)

#### **2.3.4 Twitter**

Twitter is a social networking platform that lets users to send and read quite short 140 character messages called "tweets". Unregistered Twitter users can only read the tweets but not post them. Twitter was created in July, 2006 and it quickly obtained global popularity with more than 100 million users who posted 340 million tweets every day in 2012. One of the ways is to retweet the posts where clients/fans share positive impression about the service. Asking a question in the post is a good way to engage more followers/readers. (Mueller, 2016)

There are some advantages of using Twitter for business:

- Twitter helps to follow target group ( potential customers)

- Company can tweet various images, photos and images and create discussions around them
- Every tweet appears in company's followers' news feed

### **2.3.5 Instagram**

Instagram is a mobile social networking that allows its users sharing photos and videos. It was launched in October 2010 as a free mobile application. Users of Instagram can take photos and record videos, edit them by changing the shape and applying digital filters as well as share them not only on Instagram but also on different social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr. The maximum duration of Instagram videos is 15 seconds. (Simmonds, 2013)

Instagram is a great visual tool, which is growing as marketing tool in many companies internationally. The app is mainly used on mobile devices as Iphone, Android, Microsoft etc. Success of Instagram is primarily referred to easy access from mobile phones which gives it more prospects to get more and more users. Today, internet is moving towards visual tendency where images are more important than text. As an example, there is an interesting Instagram account of a Finnair airline pilot and blogger ("finnartommi") who is sharing photos from different destinations he has been travelling. It is a brilliant way from Finnair to generate a lot of exciting content regarding their brand but at the same time not hiring a new person to do it. Besides that, there is a link to the blogger's blog on the Finnair official website. (LePage, 2015)

Instagram is a big possibility for small and middle-sized companies as it can help to show the company's story, background and remarkable content of images, quotes or even short videos. Instagram can visually present the content of the company and post daily company's news and marketing campaigns. (LePage, 2015)

### **2.3.6 Youtube**

YouTube is a video-sharing site. It was created by three former PayPal employees in 2005. Google bought YouTube in November. Users of Youtube can upload, watch and share videos, while unregistered users can only watch videos. Posting a video on the company's channel on YouTube helps to distribute the message widely online among huge amount of audience. Videos is a very popular tool due to its strong connection with consumers. In modern world, videos are more interesting than dry text or TV ads. Tutori-

als or instructional videos have a huge benefit of assisting consumers who have some issues with the product/services. (King, 2014)

## **2.4 Other digital marketing issues**

### **2.4.1 Analytics and SEO tools**

Search engine optimization (SEO) includes achieving the highest position or ranking. In general, the higher ranked on the search results page and more often a page shows up in the search results list, the more visitors it will get from the search engine's users. SEO can target various types of search, in particular local, image, video, academic, industry and news search. (Fill, 2013)

Most of web traffic is managed by the main commercial search engines- Google, Yahoo and Bing. Search engines are crucial for the companies as they give targeted traffic that people are looking for. If search engines cannot locate the website or insert the content to their databases, the company loosing incredible chances to drive traffic to the website. (Fill, 2013)

### **2.4.2 Email marketing**

Email marketing is direct marketing including commercial message. Email provides the most straightforward line of communication between marketer and consumer as it helps to show that it is not empty, self-promoting spam email. Email marketing can be applied even though there is anything special to market, but as a tool to hold consumer engagement, add credibility to the company and enhance product perception. However, email marketing is not as effective as it is used to be due to huge flow of cold email (spam). (Strauss, 2012)

### **2.4.3 Blogging**

The blog has become an important tool in the business marketing, in particular in inbound marketing. Blogs help to reach out consumers by interest them with remarkable content and make connections by getting people coming back to the blog. Based on inbound marketing methods, a blog can give a company recognized originality and a "voice" of a company. Blogs let to write about interesting and helpful content regarding any topic but at the end carefully mention of the product/services. A blog as well as all inbound marketing tools work good for innovative and creative professionals because they can create ex-

traordinary content that helps consumers and appeal them to the company.. It requires consistent and constant attention and time. (Wainwright, Why Blog? The Benefits of Blogging for Business and Marketing, 2015)

There are ways the company can benefit from a blog: (Allen, 2015)

- A blog is a personal tool; the blog posts can be written in informal way, so it gives a company more human and individual face. It allows to insert much more of individual personality into the blog than company's website does.
- A blog is an excellent content management system due to its automatic archive feature. A blog should be regularly updated, well written and has unique content, then it will help to grow as reliable source for readers. Besides, a blog can provide tutorials, how-to-do articles, product updates, company news and other relevant content to target group. Potential clients will be inspired by the company's commitment to a good customer service.
- Blog posts can improve traffic level and boost the company in the search engine rankings. A blog brings in new visitors that company can forward to the main website through links and special campaigns.

A well-made blog must contain relevant information to the target market. A blog should be consisted of industry's articles, product updates, interviews, links to important topics etc. The blog should be written in own style. Creating the blog is the same way for posting information as for example on forum where people can post topics of current interests. If company's aim to keep people on the website, the company should update the blog regularly. Blog posts also help to stay on high ranks in searching engines. Company should use unique keywords in each post, so more spectators will come to the website and read blogs. Picking up keywords will make it easier to find the company by the search engines and make the content more "colourful". (Wainwright, What Is Business Blogging?, 2013)

## **2.5 Current and Future trends of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is continually making progress. In 2015, marketers have to evolve quickly in technology trends to help consumers get the required information in easy comfortable way. There is so much data out there and consumers are expecting a message "on demand" via various phone applications and other communication devices, which means it is important to make receptive and relevant brand experience digitally. (Waterworth, 2016)

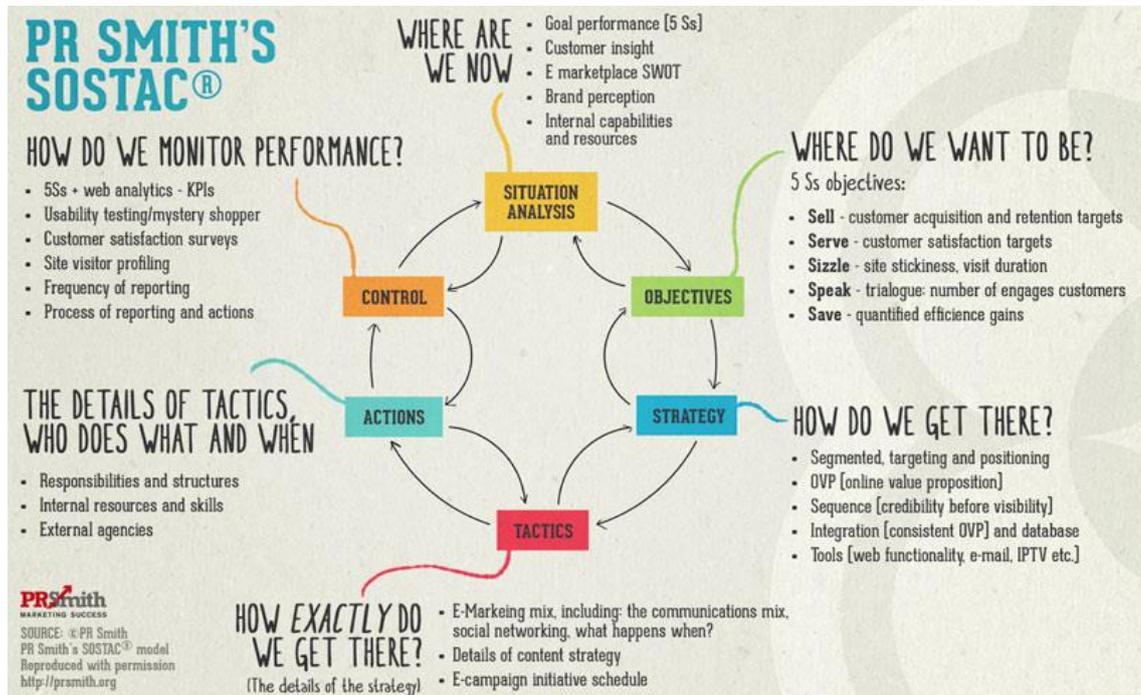
Here is a list of what 2015 has in the sense of digital marketing and what for the biggest trends to appear for a year ahead: (Gavril, 2015)

- Technology is persistently proceeding to connect more and more people. By using technology, people can interact and become closer with other people across the world. Consumers are not expecting a dry marketing message which created for the crowd and smart marketers understand it. The main goal is to make every product interaction specific and deliver it in individual way to every consumer based on preferences and hobbies, including social media, general behaviour, hobbies, family, tastes and lifestyle.
- Interactive content becomes a significant way to assist businesses appeal, acquire and involve clients.
- Storytelling is the only strategy, which can be implemented without wasting money but only creativity and imagination. People always remember stories; they rarely forget feelings they had of the story. Content marketing is now becoming one of the top marketing strategies among companies. The main reason why the marketers use that strategy is to make people share each other stories that are somehow connected to companies` products.

## **2.6 Digital marketing plans**

In order to be successful, it is important to use a digital marketing plan as a template. There is a SOSTAC planning model which is used as a base of the current thesis. The plan consists of six elements:

- Situation Analysis- Where is a company?
- Objectives- Where does a company want to go?
- Strategy- Sum up tools how to achieve goals
- Tactics- Details of the strategy
- Action- Implementation of the strategy
- Control- Measurement, reviewing, monitoring, modifying



**Figure 6. The SOSTAC digital marketing model (Bordley, 2015)**

The Figure 6 above represents SOSTAC model as infographics. The current report contains few of the SOSTAC model's stages, including situation analysis, objectives, strategy, tactics and actions. The report describes the current digital marketing activities which is an alternative stage to situation analysis. The stage of Objectives is referred to the part, which describes the buyer personas of the company. The Strategy, Tactics and Actions parts are similar to the chapter called Planning the project. The Planning project part describes the strategy and its tools in order to move the marketing methods to inbound way. Besides, there is a detailed schedule of marketing activities that the company should take in order to be succeeded.

The SOSTAC marketing model has been helpful for a base for planning the digital marketing plan due to its simple stages from the beginning to actions.

### **3 Planning project**

#### **3.1 Schedule of the project**

Writing process has started in autumn 2015. Before it, during the summer I made a research of outbound and inbound marketing. Besides, I had meeting with the company's founder to find out the background, current marketing activities and plans for near future of Tulikipuna. In autumn 2015, I continued the research and at the same time started planning the project plan. In spring 2016 I interviewed the company's current clients by phone regarding to Tulikipuna's target group, digital channels the company has been using and expectations of the digital marketing strategy. In the end of the research, I have started writing the detailed plan, including the table of buyer personas of the company and full schedule of marketing activities weekly.

##### **3.1.1 Current Digital Marketing Activities**

In order to get a full picture of the current digital marketing situation of Tulikipuna, I had to go through all the social media tools the company had been using and see how active it was. Besides that, I asked few questions from the company's founder and its current clients regarding to the company's target audience, digital channels and expectations of the digital marketing tools.

There is a list of main points of the questions:

- Could you tell briefly about the company?
- How does the company gets clients?
- What is the success rate of the clients?
- Have you lost any client? Why?
- What are the company's competitors?
- What digital marketing channels does the company use?
- What channels would you like to use?
- What expectations do you have for the digital marketing plan of Tulikipuna?
- Who/What is your ideal client?

In order to visualize the current digital marketing situation, I have created the table of the channels and its use of the company. In the left column there is a channel and in the right column I have described how Tulikipuna has been using it.

**Table 1. The table of channels which have been using by Tulikipuna**

Channel	How Tulikipuna has used it
Company's webpage	The company has had a website with contact information, basic theme, no content and short description of company's services
Facebook	The Facebook account was used rarely, it has the contact information and during 2 years period the company has posted only several articles, quotes and blog posts.
Instagram	Not created
YouTube	Created but not used
LinkedIn	Created but not used

To sum up the answers of Tulikipuna's founder and its clients, the company had very basic site structure with only contact information: it included only contact information and primitive, short description of company's services. According to the customers' answers, it did not have detailed description of the company's services, which made it hard for the potential clients to find out more about the agency. The home page had no central reference points for navigating the content. Overall, the website did not have enough interactive content so customers could not get it through.

As for the social media, Tulikipuna did not use LinkedIn as social media tool before. However, after analysing the target audience, competitors and the company's content structure, it was decided not to include LinkedIn into the digital marketing plan. The company had Twitter account but did not actively use it. Twitter was not used by the company at all. Tulikipuna had the Facebook account but it was not used effectively due to lack of regular posts, interactive content (cool completion/exclusive offer) etc. Undoubtedly, Facebook was one of the most important social media tools included into the marketing strategy. As a result, of inactivity on Facebook, Tulikipuna's Facebook page had extremely low number of followers.

YouTube and video sharing was not a big part of the company's marketing plan. The company did not make any video advertising or YouTube tutorials. However, after the interviewing the company's founder and few clients, it was clear that the company should start making YouTube tutorials and interesting video advertising and sharing them on the website and Facebook page particularly.

### 3.2 Target group

Firstly, before starting inbound marketing, it is critical to make a clear strategy for upcoming transformation. The first step is designing company's buyer personas. The buyer persona is a wide range of demographic and behavioural data as well as preferences for content consumption and content discovery. Defining buyer personas help to understand what each client prefers and cares. It helps to create more relevant content that inspires consumers to purchase the product and share the content with other people. In Tulikipuna's case there are three main buyer personas for whom all the marketing is going to be.

**Table 2. The table of buyer personas**

Name	1. CEO Timo
Background and demographics	Found the mid-sized company; worked in the same industry for 5 years, married and two children, around 45 years old
Goals	Boost the company's income from digitalization; take care of the company's daily management
Challenges	Getting everything done with limited number of staff without technical skills; bring the company to internet market.
Possibilities for Tulikipuna	Build intelligent websites that will help to bring the company to digital world and serve customers better and sell more services online

I have created a table of three buyer personas for Tulikipuna's sales and marketing based on the company's background, current industry situation and target audience. The table 2 presents the first buyer persona- CEO Timo. It is invented that CEO Timo is around 45 years old, married and has two children. He worked in the web-development industry for five years and found a mid-sized company.

As for the goals, CEO Timo has aim to increase the company's income from digitalization and pay attention on company's daily management. There can be a few challenges during the work process, including issues to finish the work with limited number of workers without technical skills. Besides, it is hard to take the company to the internet market. Moreo-

ver, the main possibility for Tulikipuna is buiding intelligent websites which help to bring Tilikipuna to digital world and offer better customer service.

**Table 3. The table of buyer personas**

Name	2. CTO Simo
Background and demographics	Worked in different marketing agencies for past 6 years; interested in new technologies
Goals	Create and design digital solutions for companies
Challenges	Small coding team in the marketing agency; low budget and limited time
Possibilities for Tulikipuna	Provide contractor deals for building digital solutions

The table 3 shows the second buyer persona CTO Simo. CTO Simo is interested in new technologies and worked in different marketing companies for last six years. The purpose is to create and design digital solutions for companies. The challenge is low budget, limited time and small size of the coding team in the marketing agency. Opportunities for Tulikipuna is to provide contractor deals for building digital solutions.

**Table 4. The table of buyer personas**

Name	3. CEO Katja
Background and demographics	Worked in different marketing companies for past 15 years; started own company last year
Goals	Grow and develop the company with help of internet; keep company functional
Challenges	Starting the business online with lowbudget; how to increase sales
Possibilities for Tulikipuna	Provide web-development and web-store

The table number 3 is based on the third invented buyer persona- CEO Katja. She worked in diverse marketing companies for 15 years and started own company last year. The goal is to develop the company with help of internet and keep the company functional. One of

the main challenge is starting the business online with low-budget. The only chance is to provide web-development and web-store.

The methodology of inbound marketing involves engaging strangers to a product, converting them into leads and close leads into customers. The next step is defining the target group who the content is being created for. This target audience is your buyer personas. After creating buyer personas, it is time to create buyer's journey.

Buyer's journey is a map of each buyer personas behaviour stage. There are three main stages that help to understand the buyer's behaviour. The Figure 7 describes the buyer's journey scheme:



**The Figure 7. The buyer's journey stages (Sales Force)**

The first stage describes buyers who have a need or problem and they search for solution on the Internet. The job of a marketer is to create awareness of a company or product so the buyers find out of the product, understand what the company does and how it can resolve their problem. The second phase is Consideration, which mean buyers have exactly defined their needs or problems, and they research deeper on the internet as well as company's offers. The last stage is Decision that describes the moment when buyers have reviewed all company's offerings and now they need to choose a vendor and make a purchase. As for the marketers at this point, they should show prospects the positive experience of current clients as well as what customers have achieved by choosing the particular company.

**Table 5. The table of buyer's journey CEO Timo**

Personas	Stage	Content
CEO Timo	Awareness	Blog: "From static websites to intelligent online services" Guide: "From visitors to development"
	Consideration	Blog: "Data based on web-development will change the customer service and help the sales" Guide: "Future of web-development: Intelligent websites"
	Decision	Guide: "How to buy intelligent web-development" Contact for demo Blog: "How to study customers' needs when building website"

Tulikipuna will start creating different content on different stages of buyer's journey. According to the defined buyer personas, Tulikipuna will start producing the useful content for the personas' needs and problems. In the Table 5, I will list Tulikipuna's upcoming marketing activities and content based on the buyer personas and buyer's journey.

The Table 5 shows represents CEO Timo and different marketing activities in each stage of buyer's journey. As you can see, it is recommended to use a blog and guide as inbound marketing tools. Besides, the table offers the content for each tool. Overall, the content is based on web-development field, including creating intelligent websites and customer management.

**Table 6. The table of buyer's journey CTO Simo**

Personas	Stage	Content
CTO Simo	Awareness	Blog: "Technologies that will change the web development 2016" Guide: "Future of web-development: Intelligent websites"
	Consideration	Blog: "Data based on web-development will change the customer service" Webinar: "Better results with better data"
	Decision	Blog: "How to save time and money when using Contractor in web-development"

The Table 6 describes the content of a blog and guide for each stage of buyer's journey. The main topic is trends in technology in 2016, intelligent websites and customer service.

**Table 7. The table of buyer's journey CEO Katja**

Personas	Stage	Content
CEO Katja	Awareness	Blog: "5 tips for starting successful online market"
	Consideration	Blog: "What is intelligent website" Guide: "Future of web-development: Intelligent websites"
	Decision	Guide: "How to buy intelligent web-development"

All stages will include a guide, webinar session or blog that is behind contact form, so Tulikipuna can collect leads and move the prospect in their customers journey and in the end set up meeting if prospect is ready to make a purchase.

### 3.2.1 Actions to be taken

Most common opinion that social media advertising is the opposite of inbound marketing. However, correctly done social media advertising can supplement current inbound marketing.

As Tulikipuna is implementing an inbound marketing strategy, it requires spending plenty of time developing the social media accounts. Facebook Ads are the best online advertising tool. The company can reach a great deal of people in the web-development industry.

There are two ways to develop Tulikipuna's Facebook account:

- Behavioural Targeting of Facebook

The design and abilities of Facebook allow other users to see the detailed information about every person registered on it and company can use that tool to get new customers, looking at their information for example:: "Digitalization", Digital marketing", or "Business". As B2B marketing is also H2H it is very important for buyer to see Tulikipuna on news feed. Thereby they can easily connect with potential customer by using their hobby-, and interest-information. It is very important to be in the right place on right time.

- Interest Targeting of Facebook

The second way is to find people who are already interested in web-development or software development or content related to that kind of things. Moreover, by looking at users' interests company as well are able to find prospect customers. That is how the company can get specific group of people interested in their products and services.

Furthermore, recently Facebook made advertising on Instagram available, a way for Facebook users to advertise on Instagram. As Tulikipuna has already Facebook page, it should have an Instagram account.

It is possible to do ads on Instagram without having an Instagram account; the company can connect the ads simply to a Facebook page. However, I believe having an Instagram account for Tulikipuna is useful because it gives additional benefits to company's ads, by giving users the capability to become Tulikipuna's followers and discover more about the agency and business.

Firstly, the company should post business photos related to the company's meetings and events with partners, clients and colleagues (the Figure 7). Tulikiuna's Instagram account should demonstrate the company's active social networking as well as business culture within the company. Secondly, the company should create irresistible content that is wor-

thy of being shared by random visitors or followers. Besides posting business pictures of regular company's networking, it should include just fascinating images that tell a story or elicit emotion. The image should consist of interesting and compelling content/background outside of images of own products and services, but it also elicits emotion and therefore drives engagement from the followers. Furthermore, the company should beware of copyright issues; if the image is not own, it requires permission to use it.



**Figure 8. Example of business photos of a company related to the meetings and events** (FreeDigitalPhotos, 2016)

In addition, informative text can draw interest more than an image. The company's founder should post a text from a convincing question to a powerful, motivational quote under any image or photo. The strong image can be a nice background picture with text on it. For instance, there is an app called WORDSWAG, which helps to create a stunning visual using text.

**Table 8. The table of social media schedule**

Monday	Blog on Facebook
Tuesday	Image/Quote on Instagram
Wednesday	Guide on Facebook
Thursday	Quote / Image/infographics on Facebook
Friday	Blog on Facebook
Saturday	
Sunday	

The inbound marketing plan for Tulikipuna includes the specific calendar describing the days when the company should post blogs posts, images etc. Mondays and Fridays for posting blog posts and guides on Facebook. Tuesday can be good for Instagram; posting

images and business related photos. Wednesday is the day for guides on Facebook page. Tulikipuna should have one day for posting interesting quotes, images and infographics on Facebook on Thursdays.

First, it was suggested to use some paid ads on Facebook, however, due to low marketing budget, the agency is not able to afford it now. Meanwhile, as the option to paid Facebook ads, the marketing plan offers social selling. The company should start being active and building relationships with target audience, especially, buyer personas. It is important to start being involved in discussions, forums and group conversations on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. It is time to be active on social media sites, reading the news, posting comments, taking part in the group discussions, sharing the images commenting on forums, asking the followers and updating the status. As Tulikipuna has identified buyer personas, the company's owner should begin to engage with them in social media regularly. Besides that, it can be useful to start a conversation, find a common topic (web-development) and use it an entry point to initiate dialogue and establish a connection.

### **3.2.2 SEO**

Start posting blog posts will help Tulikipuna engage visitors to build the trust among the clients, sharing news and interesting ideas with people, and most importantly to solve the customers' problems. In addition, blogging will boost the company's SEO rankings.

Firstly, the company's founder should think of asking someone else to write blogs for Tulikipuna; it can be the company's partner, colleague or any reputable writer who is expert in the web-development industry. Guest blogs can bring fresh content and view to the company's blog and engage new flow of followers to the blog. Before making a guest blog, the company's owner should research the person background, read the previous notes/blog posts in order to make sure about unique content of the guest blog. As a result, guest blog from a well-known source will bring Tulikipuna tremendous traffic and boost search engine rankings.

Secondly, as search engines select fresh content, the agency should update the website page (if it is possible) and update blog steadily with new information weekly. As the target audience of Tulikipuna mostly use search engines and social media to find solutions for their problems, the constantly updated blog will raise the company's SEO.

Thirdly, the main thing is not just to choose specific keywords and repeat them over and over, but to choose long-tail keywords and phrases that searches may use. Instead of focusing on keyword placement and making sure include unique words a certain number of times, it is more effective to concentrate on simply answering questions. The most important thing of inbound marketing, especially blogging, is to share helpful and relevant content/knowledge to people and help to solve their problems.

Moreover, including images and videos will give Tulikipuna more dynamic content, for instance, images should be named according to the search terms or keywords, and add alt-text while coding to describe what is in the image for those who is not able to see image on their computer screen. As for videos( YouTube tutorials or webinars), it requires to tag videos with appropriate search terms to make it easy for readers to find the content in a search. As the final step of successful SEO results due to blogging, it is necessary to connect Tulikipuna's blog to Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn profile.

Keywords example: web-development, inbound SEO, web-stores, intelligent websites

### **3.3 Goals and metrics**

Tulikipuna will start measuring how much visitors website and blog is getting by using Google Analytics. The goal is to have 500 new organic visitors every month. The company will also research from which channels the traffic comes so they can plan some paid-ads for the future goals. The second important metric is conversion rates. Tulikipuna will use Google Analytics for conversion rates to measure how many visitors end up downloading guide from the website or leave contact information. The website and blog will include call-to-actions as guide-download and blog-subscription. The next metric for inbound marketing is referral traffic. Tulikipuna should start measuring number of referrals on Facebook, LinkedIn or Instagram so it will tell the effectiveness of the blog posts and overall social engagement. When referrals will come to Tulikipuna's website, it gives a great opportunity to take the contact information of visitors and turn them into leads for conversion.

One of the best ways to measure social media and blogging for Tulikipuna is by number of email addresses recorded once someone visit the website. Tulikipuna should start using social media platforms and a useful content strategy and as a result, it will help to build database of emails. The company should collect a list of emails and send quality information to them within the company's inbound marketing campaign.

## 4 Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to make a plan for web-development company to transform outbound to inbound marketing. The objective was also to study theory of both marketing communications, suggest which tools Tulikipuna should start using in an inbound way and implement afterwards. The report is made to show to Tulikipuna all possible advantages of new inbound marketing communication and what it can bring to the agency instead of traditional (outbound) ways of marketing.

The report presents the company's background and objectives of the report. It gives a wide theory part, which helps to understand the main difference between outbound and inbound marketing. The planning part describes the current company's marketing activities and target group, including buyer personas and buyer's journey, which leads to the part about necessary actions, which the company should take to achieve all the goals. Overall, the main goal has been achieved- presenting suggested plan of transformation from outbound to inbound marketing, which Tulikipuna's founder has approved and agreed to implement in the near future. Even though Tulikipuna did not have time to implement the recommendations within this short timeframe but the report will be of assistance for Tulikiuna when it will start following the provided plan smoothly.

Process of writing the thesis was quite interesting and challenging as it required to do a lot of research about digital marketing in total, outbound and inbound marketing communications, social media, buyer personas and buyer's journey. In today's digital world best way to do fascinating and efficient marketing is to move the company towards inbound marketing strategy as outbound is losing its effectiveness. Inbound marketing strategy has made me believe it is becoming the biggest marketing trend in future. As for the old disruptive marketing way, it will fade away bit by bit as people will decline any random pushing and dry ads from digital channels.

The founder of the company was very easy to work with, as he was open-minded and active regarding the topic discussions and new ways and ideas, which were proposed. The company's owner will be in touch with me as when the transformation begins, I would assist and help with content creation. In total, the founder of Tulikipuna was pleased with my efforts and ideas to upgrade the company's marketing strategy and turn it to new effective inbound marketing way.

During the research of theoretical data, HubSpot has been an extremely helpful source of getting full information on outbound and inbound marketing. I have learnt a lot through

HubSpot video tutorials, articles and periodicals. There is a HubSpot academy and blogs, which explained the current situation in marketing world as well as the difference between outbound and inbound.

As for the challenges, there was only one occurred regarding to inbound plan for a small-sized company which did not use actively any social media channels. It was quite challenging to create the content (topics for blogs, guides and webinars) as the marketing budget was low so it did not allow to use paid apps and ads.

To sum up, the thesis gave the company's founder a good start point to change the marketing strategy and start following the last digital marketing trends based on the company's needs. The idea of transformation to inbound marketing way has proven to the company's owner to be sufficient and essential. The main point is to start creating relevant and unique content based on Tulikipuna's buyer personas and follow the detailed instructions provided in the current thesis.

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