Expertise
and insight
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How to increase marketing performance with a digital marketing plan

Case study: Kytäjä Golf Oy

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Bachelor of Business Administration

International Business and Logistics

Bachelor's Thesis

04 November 2018

Author Title Number of Pages Date	Eemeli Tani How to increase marketing performance with a digital marketing plan 47 pages 04 November 2018
Degree	Bachelor of Business Administration
Degree Programme	International Business and Logistics
Specialisation option	Digital Marketing
Instructor	John Greene, Lecturer

The aim and purpose of this thesis is to discover how digital marketing can enhance the overall marketing performance of a business, Kytäjä Golf Oy. The objectives were to create a situational analysis and determine where Kytäjä Golf stands in terms of digital marketing activities, create a competitive analysis comparing Kytäjä Golfs digital performance to three key competitors and to drive actionable insights and create concrete examples on how to drive the overall marketing performance with digital marketing.

This thesis carried out by conducting a case study for the company Kytäjä Golf where the managing staff had identified problems with some aspects of the current digital marketing activities, the main one being a clear lack of direction.

In the literature review traditional marketing concepts with the focus however being on digital marketing. Qualitative research was conducted for Kytäjä Golf and its competitors to understand the key problems already existing as well as to determine the actions needed to take to fix those.

From the research, several problems in the current digital marketing activities was found and a digital marketing plan with was done to correct those. The plan also gives information on how to lift the general digital marketing performance. The author advises Kytäjä Golf to start implementing the techniques discussed in the thesis.

Keywords	Digital Marketing, Marketing, Marketing Plan

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1 Introduction

United States Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) will be spending almost 120 billion dollars on digital advertising by 2021 according to a Forrester marketing forecast (Forbes, 2017). Digital marketing, and marketing in general, is bigger than ever and will continue to grow (Gartner, 2017)

Understanding digital marketing and its various processes in modern marketing is key for anyone studying or working in the field of marketing. In this thesis I will focus on the common processes in marketing and applications that modern marketing agencies are using to get the most out of digital channels and data. In the study I first intend to, in the literature review, uncover conventional marketing theories and later further deepen the focus into digital marketing. Based on that research I will craft a digital marketing plan for Kytäjä Golf Oy using the tools and techniques discussed to increase the overall marketing performance of the business.

1.1 Company Introduction

Kytäjä Golf (KyG), located near Hyvinkää city in Kytäjä, is one of the most prestique golf clubs in in Finland and in the Nordic market area. Kytäjä Golf Oy was founded in 1999 and the first course “South East” was opened four years later in 2003. The second course “North West” was opened in 2004. The founder and largest shareholder through his affiliate companies of Kytäjä Golf is Yrjö Laakkonen.

The Kytäjä Golf complex consist of the two 18-hole golf courses, a restaurant (Ravintola Kytäjä), practice areas and range, a pro-shop (golf equipment store), PGA pro learning courses and a villa renting and booking service (Kytäjän kodit). Currently the company employs roughly about 15 people year-round and over 80 seasonal workers during the summer months when the courses are open.

Since 2001 and the launch, Kytäjä Golf courses have won several prizes and awarded the best in Finland on several, both international and domestic rankings (Golf Digest, 2018). For years Kytäjä Golf’s brand image was that of a high quality, high class,

premium golf course. The last few years however, due to unexpected winter conditions and disease in the grass combined with cost savings in the equipment and in the workforce has led to the brand image to steadily decrease (Ravi, 2018). To combat this Kytäjä Golf has begun work on not necessarily brand renewal but rather brand image polishing and reinforcing. Part of that brand work is creating a digital marketing campaign which this thesis is going to lay the groundwork on.

2 Literature review

In order to create an effective digital marketing plan for Kytäjä Golf Oy it is first important to review the theories on marketing and digital marketing. It is also important to have an understanding of the various tools and techniques that are used in marketing and digital marketing and they will also be discussed in this part of the thesis.

2.1 Marketing

Before discussing the more specific areas of marketing and digital marketing, it is first imperative to take a look into the broader scope of marketing in general.

Perhaps the most common definition of marketing cited nowadays is by Kotler and Armstrong (2015) that defines it as the process that companies use to create value and meaningful customer relationships in order to extract value from the customer in return. Uncovering and understanding customer needs and wants is often defined as one of the key criteria's in successful marketing. The products and services that are being developed should, in the modern business world, be dictated by the customer needs and wants. The consumer insights are also used when crafting marketing strategies and tactics (Kotler & Armstrong 2015: 28 - 30).

2.2 Marketing Plan

Having a great product or service is seldom enough for a business to flourish. Without a framework of goals and an action plan to reach these objectives it is easy to become confused and lose effectiveness. Thou realising that every organisation is different and has different ways of operating and Kotler and Armstrong (2015) recommend a

marketing plan to contain the following: an executive summary, current situation, threats and opportunities analysis, objectives and issues, marketing strategy, action programs, budgets and controls. Marketing plans are usually created for set periods, typically annually, bi-annually or quarterly, with changes made as the markets change or there are changes in the organisation.

2.3 Market Research

Market research is defined to be the process of gathering and analysing data about a set market and a product or service to be offered in that market. It is interpreting information about the present and potential future customers, about their characteristics, spending and demographics. It is research into the industry as whole and the competitors the organisation faces (Entrepreneur, 2018).

It is important for businesses to conduct market research to test the potential and viability of its product or service. Market research needs to be conducted at some level to conduct a functional marketing plan.

2.3.1 Situational Analysis

It is important to conduct research and a situational analysis to figure out the current standing of the business and to evaluate the possible opportunities and problems business might face. A relatively common tool that is used in situational analysis is the SWOT -analysis which lists the strengths and weaknesses of a business as well as the opportunities and threats the company faces. SWOT might seem like a fairly simple tool but when done in detail it helps marketers visualize and define the different attributes of a company (Kotler & Armstrong 2015: 79 - 81).

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Internal attributes that may help the company in realising business goals.	Internal limitations that may affect the businesses ability to reach set goals negatively.
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
External factors that may offer the company advantage in the market.	External factors that may affect the company performance with negative impact.

Table 1. SWOT -analysis template

The end goal of SWOT is to match the business's strengths to possible opportunities in the environment while simultaneously balancing out the company's weaknesses and effectively minimizing the threats that may exist in the market.

2.3.2 Segmentation

With the before established SWOT it is important to find the key strengths and focus in on an established set of people. In marketing these sets of people are called segments.

It is widely agreed on that it is impossible for companies to reach all the consumers in the markets and even if it were possible it would be highly inefficient as consumer needs and wants greatly vary between set groups of people. With market segmentation companies can divide large and complex markets into smaller segments where the company may best serve the customer with its product or service.

The buying behaviour and the different needs and wants can be influenced by various different variables that are usually grouped into four different categories; geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioural (Kotler & Armstrong 2015: 213 - 217).

Segmentation group	Examples of variables
Geographic	Countries, cities, population density, climate
Demographic	Age, gender, income level, occupation, education, religion, ethnicity
Psychographic	Lifestyle, personality, interests, social class
Behavioural	Occasions, user status, benefits, customer loyalty status

Table 2. Segmentation groups and examples of the different variables

It is often best no to limit the segmentation analysis to just one or few variables but use an array of multiple segmentation bases in order to identify smaller, clearly defined target groups.

After establishing who we want to talk to, our potential customers, marketers should take a look at their competitors who might be after the same set of people.

2.3.3 Competitor Analysis

In order for a company to plan and execute effective marketing strategies it needs to find out and research all it can from its competitors. It is important to continuously compare the marketing strategies in place, the products, prices, channels and promotions of the close competitors to identify the potential areas of advantage and disadvantage in the market. It includes the analysis and assessment of competitors and selecting which of them to attack and which to avoid.

Table 3. Steps of competitor analysis (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 543).

Firstly, it is necessary to identify the competitors. This is not however always as straight forward as one might think – for example Kodak, who produced camera film, saw other camera film manufacturers as their competitors and failed to recognize the digital camera makers as their competitors. This led to Kodak falling behind in digital technologies and later forcing them to file for bankruptcy.

The second step is assessing the competitors. This includes determining their possible business objectives, identifying the strategies in place and predicting their future actions and possible reactions to the market changes. It is also crucial to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors.

The third step in creating a competitor analysis, is determining which competitors to attack and which ones to steer away from. Generally, competitors can be thought of as strong or weak competitors and as either good competitors that are playing by the rules and conventions of the market or bad competitors that are breaking conventions in the market. It is most common for companies to compete against weak, “good” competitors. Often it is advisable to look for uncontested market space and trying to create products and services that are not in direct competition with existing offering in the market (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 543 – 549).

2.3.4 Positioning

After a company has chosen their target market and conducting a competitor analysis, it is crucial to identify the ideal positioning a company wants to establish. Positioning can be defined as “arranging for a market offering to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers” (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 672). Classic examples of positioning can be found from the car industry: Ferrari and Lamborghini are luxurious and expensive, Volvo is the category king of safety, Mercedes Benz is a German engineered high price, high quality car and Tesla is the premium, high-tech rebel of the car industry. Ultimately however, positioning is something that in is defined by the consumer, but marketers should act to create affirmation on the selected positioning (Kotler & Armstrong ,228 – 232). Tesla’s recent co-op with SpaceX to launch a Tesla Roadster into space is an example on brands strengthening their positioning in the desired dimension as Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX and Tesla

said “Of course, anything boring is terrible, especially companies, so we decided to send something unusual, something that made us feel” (Express, 2018).

2.4 Marketing Mix

After the definition of the target market and the desired positioning one should take a look at one of the modern classics of marketing concepts, “The Marketing Mix”. There are several variations of The Marketing Mix like the extended seven Ps, four As and four Cs but in this thesis we will focus on the most commonly used version of The Marketing Mix – the four Ps. Kotler and Armstrong (2015, 77) define The Marketing Mix as “…set of tactical marketing tools— product, price, place, and promotion— that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market.” This target usually being the capturing of value from the consumer.

The first P of the four in total, stands for “Product”. Product means the goods or service or the combination of the two that the company offers to the market. When defining the Product aspect of the company offering all the variations, qualities, features, the brand name, the packaging should be taken into account and adopted to suit the marketing plan.

The second P is for “Price” which fairly straightforwardly means setting the pricing model for the product or service the company is bringing to the target market. This includes the basic list price, the possible discounts, the payment periods and the credit terms. Pricing can have a large impact on consumer perception of the product as for many it is one of the key factors to consider before purchase. The pricing should also be in line with the desired positioning as typically luxury brands cannot be cheap and vice versa low tier brands can put premium prices without causing a misalignment in the brand perspective.

The third P, “Place” is comprised of the activities a company makes to the adjust product availability to the consumers. For example, the channels selected for retail, the locations, inventory size, transportation options and logistics are all part of the Place P.

The last P stands for “Promotion” and is the dimension that is perhaps the one most familiar to the average consumer when thinking of marketing as a whole. Promotion

includes for example, advertising, sales promotions and public relations (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 77 – 79).

The so-called standard Four P's are elements that the business generally has control over. When shifting to digital marketing however, things do get a bit more complicated as much of the control is turned to the consumer (Elliot, 2006).

After covering the basic marketing theories, the focus of this thesis will focus more onto digital marketing and its characteristics.

2.5 Digital Marketing

Next, after first going through the main principles of marketing in general, it is then time to take a look at digital marketing.

The creation of the internet enabled an extension of traditional marketing, digital marketing to emerge. The web environment created a new platform for brands and businesses to interact with the consumer and thus to practice their marketing strategies on. The digital platforms are still evolving at a rapid pace with new techniques and sub-platforms emerging. Digital marketing has evolved much from its early days of being mostly banner adverts on web pages and direct email marketing into a world of astounding versatility with, to name a few, social media, mobile apps, search engine marketing and optimisation, ecommerce and the integration of artificial intelligence into the systems (Stokes, 2013).

It is important to understand digital marketing as it is bigger than it has ever previously been, and it is something that companies will continue to increase spending on. The forecast of digital advertising spend will be over 120 billion us dollars by 2021 in the United States alone (Forbes, 2017). This is no wonder, as the use of internet and the global accessibility to it has grown radically during the last decade – and with the

developing countries' infrastructure develops we can expect the number of internet users to still grow steadily (Statista, 2018).

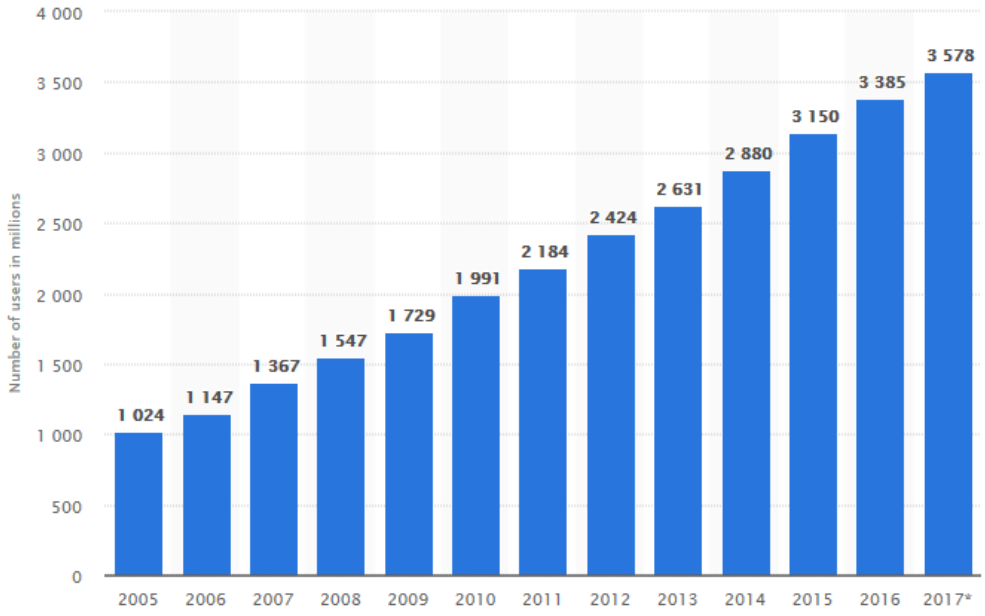


Figure 1: Number of internet users worldwide from 2005 to 2017 (in millions) by Statista 2018

Digital marketing has the same goal as marketing in – keeping customers and creating sales. One of the key differences is however that much of the control is shifted to the consumer as marketers do not have full control over the four Ps in digital platforms (Elliot, 2006). Other differences are that in digital marketing the audience can be segmented extremely accurately with factors like current location or last brand interactions and that almost everything happening in the digital world can be measured and analysed (Stokes 2013, 5).

2.5.1 Data and data driven marketing

There are several definitions of what the term "data" means. In the Merriam-Webster (2018) dictionary data is defined as follows:
"factual information (such as measurements or statistics) used as a basis for reasoning, discussion, or calculation".

From these two definitions, what is worth noticing is that data is simply referred to as information – the type or format of the information is not defined. In other words, "data"

is not limited only to numerical or anything that is divisible into metrics or dimensions but can be anything that is universally perceived as information. For many there is confusion around this and the belief that data is always about numbers and arrays is false.

All marketing, especially digital marketing is to some degree driven by data. Marketers do not, and certainly should not, just haphazardly create strategies or campaigns out of thin air - usually most of the information at hand is taken into consideration and actions are planned accordingly (Semmelroth, 2013). Data driven marketing is where the use of data and information is at the core of any decision. The data used to create the insights and drive decision making can be such as online browsing behaviour, behaviour on social media, reviews on products, customer surveys, cultural events, consumer barometers or any reliable study or statistic published (Financial Times, 2018). Being data driven means constant recording of performance and reflecting on those and pushing towards a more optimised performance. Basically, being data driven means that the answers to any questions are predominantly derived from data.

The strategies and techniques discussed later in this thesis all aim to be as data driven as possible.

2.5.2 Search Engine Optimisation

After establishing the concepts of digital marketing and data one of the best ways to start ramping up a business's digital marketing presence is by taking a look at the company websites and its search engine friendliness.

Every day, there are billions of searches done online while trying to find relevant content from the internet and it makes sense for marketers to want their products or services to be the ones that are found first. What is meant by Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the practice of adjusting the website parameters to perform best as possible and achieve the highest ranking on the search engine results pages. Search engines rank pages with sophisticated algorithms that determine the relevancy of a page versus a search term by using multiple different factors. None of the major search engines, like Google or Bing reveal the exact factors they use. (Stokes, 2013). Having a well optimised site can lead to a higher number of visitors without spending on media.

SEO can be fairly technical and intimidating in its nature, but it can easily be broken into five main categories;

Website structure

When someone conducts a search, a “search engine spider” crawls the pages and tries to link the search with the best possible result. Having a good website structure means having the least number of technical barriers as possible, in order for the search engine to crawl the sites and access all the site content effectively (Cutts, 2012).

Keyword research

Keywords, sometimes referred as key phrases, are at the very core of search and SEO as it is the keywords that the user enters into the search bar that define what is displayed in the results. What keyword research basically is defining what are the search terms that the company wants to be found with and what are the most optimal keywords to be associated with. Common steps in conducting keyword research is to look at search volumes and competition of keywords and creating a list of potential high value keywords. A good tool to conduct keyword research is for example the Google AdWords Keyword Planner.

Optimising content for the selected keywords

Once the keywords are selected it is important for the site content to actually contain the keywords for the site crawlers to find and associate the page with the desired phrases. The keywords should be used for instance in the titles, headers, body content, URLs and the domain name. The keywords should also be used in the names of the media files embedded in the site such as pictures and video files.

Link popularity

The internet is an endless web of links, directing from one page to another and the amount of traffic to a site from links is also taken into the equation when search engine determines the page rank in the search results. Having traffic coming to a site from other well-established sites, work as a sort of signal of trust and help validate relevance. Thus creating and sharing high value content that others want to consume is important in SEO as when people find the site useful they are more likely to link to it.

User insights

Generating user insights is perhaps the most effective way of determining the relevancy and value of a website. For instance, if people arrive to a page only to immediately leave (usually referred as bouncing) it entails that the site that they landed on was not relevant and thus lowering the score the search engines grant the page. Common metrics that are used in determining page relevancy are the bounces, time spent on page, amount of pages loaded per visit and events (for example video views or content downloads) happening per visit (Stokes 2013, 231 – 253).

By conducting research based on these five key categories one can form an action plan for SEO.

2.5.3 Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM), sometimes also referred simply as “Search Advertising” or sometimes as “Pay per click” (PPC) is when marketers pay for ads to run and appear directly to the search engine results page and pay for the click-throughs on their ads (Stokes 2013, 265). SEM is currently one of the largest forms of digital advertising today with SEM spending in the US alone expecting to rise to over $45 billion in 2019 (Marvin, 2017). This is no surprise as when people are looking for products or services online a common place to start looking is a search engine, in the Western world most commonly Google Search. Consumer trust in search engines and that they display the most relevant content at the top of the list of results is high, therefore making it an attractive form of advertising.

Ads on search engines are typically separated from the non-paid, organic, search results, usually located at the top of the list. The basic ads consist of the title, the display URL and the main copy text. Often there are additional, optional, parts in a SEM ad like called “ad extensions”. There are various ad extensions like location extension, call extensions (direct phone call), seller ratings, additional sitelinks, offers and image extensions.

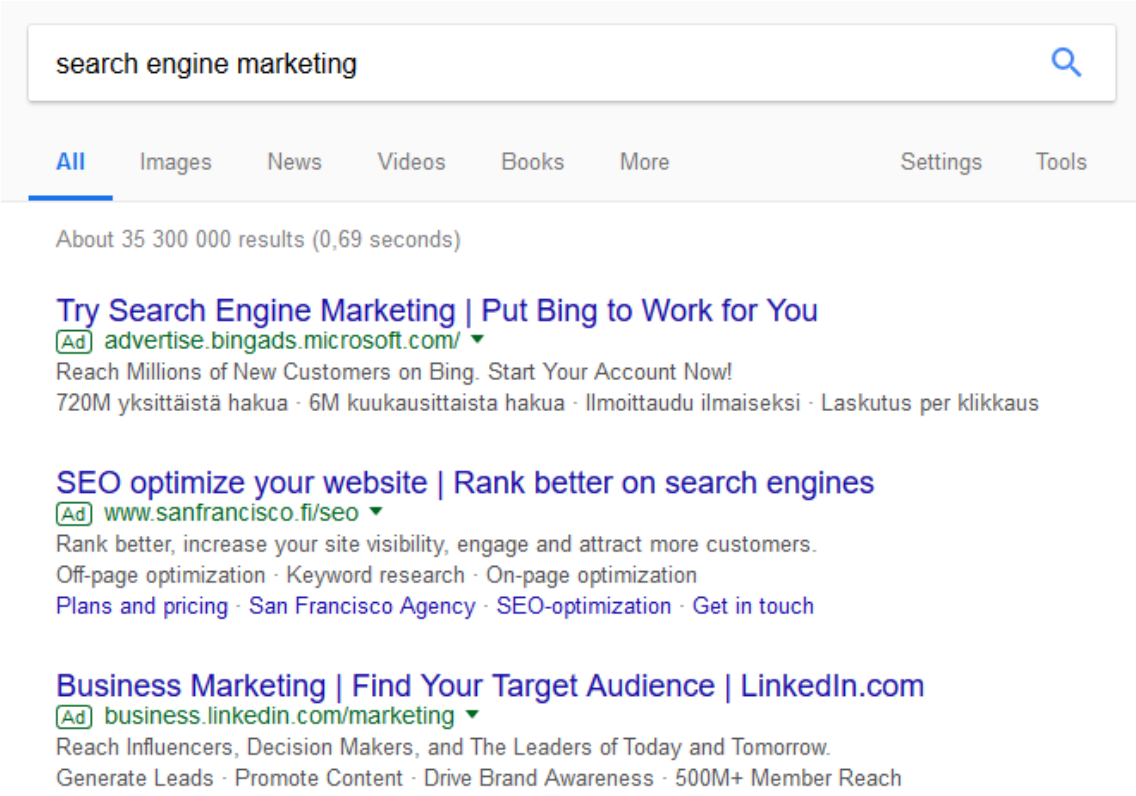


Figure 2: Search engine ads appearing on Google Search for the search query "search engine marketing"

Like when doing Search engine optimisation, it is important to do initial keyword research before creating the search engine adverts as SEM works based on keywords selected by the marketers. Simply put, the advertiser selects under which search terms does they want their advert to show on and what is their maximum price for a click. Based on bidding contest against other advertisers done in milliseconds the order of the results list is defined. However, it is not only the bid that counts as the search engine also takes into account various other metrics an advert has, like the average clickthrough-rate (the percentage of people clicking through the ad that is calculated by dividing the amount of clicks by the amount of ad impressions), the average bounce rate the ad has, the SEO score and other undisclosed metrics (Stokes 2013, 283).

2.5.4 Social media marketing

Social media is a big part of today's consumers everyday life and thus something that modern marketers should be well informed about. According to Statista (2018) there were almost 2.5 billion social media users in the world in 2017 and the number of users

is expected to continue growth reaching over 3 billion users by 2021. According to the 2016 Nielsen Social Media Report adults over the age of 18 spend on average 5,5 hours a week on social media.

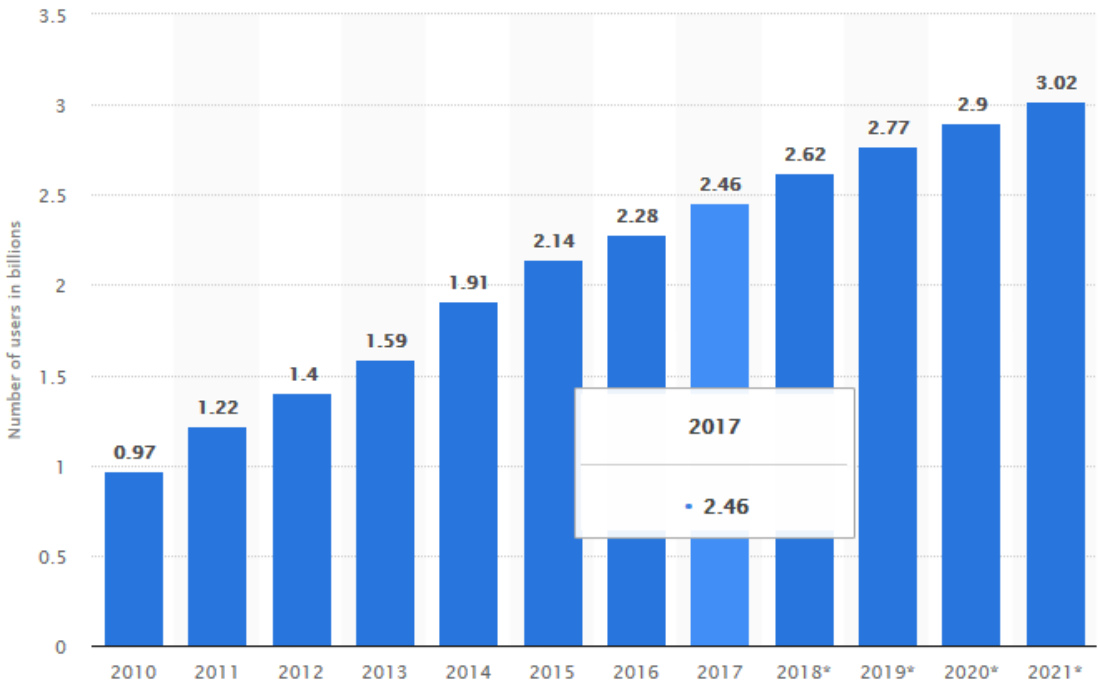


Figure 3: Number of social network users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions). Statista 2018

A social media is a platform allowing people to interact with each other and to share and consume information – basically social media are a communication tool. Common features a social media has are personal user profiles and pages, personalization, a news feed filtered by user interests or behaviour, a way to connect with other users (friends, groups, hashtags, subscriptions), information saving or posting, the possibility to “like” or comment other posts and a way to rate or vote content (Nations 2018). Some of the most commonly known social media platforms in the Western world are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and Snapchat (Statista 2018).

In addition to private people having access to social media and the possibility to create and publish content in the various platforms it also possible for companies to express themselves in many of the social media channels. For example, it is currently possible for companies to have their own profiles in all of the before mentioned most known channels. Social media channels not only allows companies to provide general information about the brand but also to promote their products or services. Nowadays it is common

for companies and organizations to use social media platforms as channels of marketing and to build and strengthen customer relationships (Stokes 2013, 407).

The next chapters will focus on social media channels and the opportunities they have concerning digital marketing and advertising.

2.5.5 Facebook

With over 1.5 billion monthly users (Statista 2018), Facebook is currently the world's largest social media platform. Facebooks mission statement is to "Give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together" (Constantine 2017) and their goal is to help people create and join meaningful social communities online. (Facebook 2018). Facebook is currently the most used social media platform for advertising with almost 40 billion dollars spent in 2017 (Statista 2018).

Cambridge Analytica scandal

In March 2018, documents from a company called Cambridge Analytica was published by The New York Times, together with The Observer of London and The Guardian. The documents proved that the company, where Stephen K. Bannon, Donald Trump's former advisor was a board member, had used Facebook data that was obtained under questionable circumstances to build voter profiles. This lead to a huge PR backslash on Facebook as people feared for further violations of privacy and many users reportedly quit Facebook after the scandal (The New York Times 2018).

Even though the scandal led to several organizations, like Tesla and Mozilla to stop spending on ads and supporting Facebook as they deemed the actions of the company as insulting to the users' privacy (Time 2018) the actual financial dip in ad spending has been low. The growth of Facebook advertising spend is expected to continue despite the scandal, however Facebook has limited the access for user data and ad targeting options considerably to prevent further damage (Engadget 2018).

2.5.6 Instagram

Instagram, launched in 2010 and currently owned by Facebook, is a highly visuals driven platform where the service is mainly revolving around users sharing pictures and videos to which various pre-made photographic filters can be applied. The posts can be labelled with hashtags, user tags and location information. The platform also has a built-in messaging system and a “Stories” -function where the image or video is displayed for a limited 24-hour period (Instagram 2018). Instagram is one of the worlds most used social media platform after Facebook, popular especially with users aged 18 – 34 (Statista 2018).

Instagram has over 8 million business profiles and currently it has over a million active advertisers (Reuters 2017). Advertising in Instagram is done through the same system as Facebook with the same user data available for targeting options (Facebook 2018).

2.5.7 YouTube

YouTube, currently a subsidiary of Google, is the worlds leading video based social media platform with approximately 1.5 billion active users (Statista 2018). YouTube allows users to view, rate, share, comment and add to playlists other users’ videos as well as upload their own videos. Their mission is to give everyone a voice as: “We believe that everyone deserves to have a voice, and that the world is a better place when we listen, share and build community through our stories.” (YouTube 2018).

According to Statista (2018) estimates the advertising revenue of YouTube in the United States alone is 2.9 billion U.S. dollars. Advertising in YouTube is done through Google AdWords or Google AdSense, which are both advertising platforms for Google systems where ads can be targeted to specific segments defined by Google user analysis. Ads can be shown as 6 second un-skippable pre- or mid-roll ads or 30 second skippable pre- or mid-roll ads. Pre-roll ads are always shown before the user video starts and mid-roll ads are shown as commercial breaks during the user video (Google 2018).

2.5.8 Twitter

Twitter, founded in 2006, is a social networking service with approximately 330 million active users (Statista 2018). In Twitter, users interact with posts known as "tweets", short messages limited to currently 280 characters that may include pictures or video attachments. It is common to group posts by using some relevant hashtags or by tagging another user to the tweet. Users can choose to follow other users whose tweets can be liked, commented and shared, more commonly referred to as “retweeting”.

Twitter is a highly conversational social channel and thus it provides a fast and direct channel for businesses to interact with customers. Urgent notifications and information for customers are often published in Twitter (Stokes 2013, 365 – 367). Twitter is also a popular advertising platform for brands and its advertising revenue is expected land around 4 billion U.S. dollars in 2018 (Statista 2018).

2.5.9 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a networking platform designed for working professionals and companies. The service was established in 2003 and acquired by Microsoft in December 2016. The platform has steadily grown since then and currently has over 300 million active users per month (Statista 2018). The platform is unique in its focus on business and industry contacts. By individuals LinkedIn is commonly used to find job listings, expand and enhance their connections in the business field and to share ideas and opinions on business matters. Companies can use LinkedIn to post job vacancies and to hunt talents to fill those positions. Companies also commonly communicate their core values and business proposal though a “posting” system similar to that of Facebook (LinkedIn 2018).

LinkedIn also has a very sophisticated advertising system (LinkedIn Ads) integrated into the platform with an advanced targeting system with arguably the best capabilities to reach professionals in all the social media platforms (Stokes 2013, 307). LinkedIn Ads allows marketers to advertise on the user’s home page, on “the feed” and with direct messages (LinkedIn 2018). The targeting options include industry, job title and function, company name and size, geography, age, level of education and gender (Stokes 2013, 307).

2.5.10 Email marketing

Email marketing, one of the oldest digital marketing tactics is, simply put, a form of direct marketing that is mainly used for customer relationship management. Despite being one of the first digital marketing activities done at large it still remains to be extremely potent and done right can deliver one of the highest returns on investment out of the other digital marketing actions. The main reasons for its power are that it is cost effective due to the low costs per contact, it can be highly targeted, the messaging can be easily customized at scale and it is entirely measurable (Stokes, 2013, 439 – 457).

The first step a marketer should take concerning email marketing is to start growing a database of genuine opt-in contacts. Opt-in meaning that the contacts in the database have by their own choice agreed to be included in the mailing list of the particular business. Having a database consisting of users who have not opted-in is not only less effective but can also be illegal in cases. In Europe, on the 25th of May 2018 when the general data protection regulation (GDPR) was implemented, the reasons to hold a database with personal information were tightened extremely. Having an easy unsubscribe option in every mail that is sent out is also necessary to have due to GDPR.

After securing a database it is time to plan an email campaign which starts with figuring out the type of content that is shared. Most often email campaigns can be roughly divided into two categories, offers and deals and content marketing. The first fairly obviously providing value to the customer through discounts and other offers and the latter one being more content focused with, depending on the industry, providing value through tips and tricks, information on events or other valuable information. Offers and deals is usually used by commerce and ecommerce focused businesses and generally drive more sales than content marketing which is more focused on raising appreciation of the given brand.

One of the strengths of email marketing is its high measurability. Most of the mailing platforms, such as MailChimp or Apsis come with a built in analytics system that displays the number of emails sent, bounces (undelivered mails), mail opens, link clicks, geolocation of recipients and other useful metrics. From these metrics various insights on which links or mail templates work better than others or if there is a time or day that the recipients are more likely to open the emails. By gathering insights on the email

performance and executing by them the overall marketing performance can be improved (Stokes, 2013, 439 – 457).

2.5.11 Monitoring and key performance indicators

Market research was first developed in the United States during the golden age of radio in the 1920s. Marketers that were advertising on radio began understanding the differences in demographics by how different radio shows were sponsored. After, companies would dispatch interviewers on the streets to question people about the various publications that they read and whether they recognize any adverts that were shown in those magazines or newspapers. The data that was collected from the interviews was then cross referenced with the circulation of the publication to give an estimation on the effectiveness of the ads in question.

One of the differentiating factors of digital marketing is that compared to the so-called traditional medias like print, television or out-of-home (out-of-home meaning print ads that can be found on bus stops, shopping malls, etc. Example in picture 1) is that it is highly measurable. Marketing data can be gathered from a multitude of sources including social media platforms, search engines, emailing platforms and company owned websites.

Picture 1: Helsingin Sanomat "out-of-home" ad exposure is harder to measure compared to many digital formats.

With the grown amount of data to be handled it is important to decide which metrics to pay most attention to and define them as key performance indicators (KPI's). It is also important to determine how to monitor the data for example is there a need for a KPI dashboard where different data is pooled in and visualized centrally or is monitoring done through the various different platforms.

Picture 2: A KPI Dashboard template in Google Data Studio

In the next part of the thesis, after the basic theory on marketing and digital marketing has been discussed, the research methods and credibility of the digital marketing plan will be explored.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Types

In order to make the best possible decision on short term tactical decision as well as accurate strategic decision in the long term, marketers need information and insights from the market. Information on the competitors, the business itself and the consumers is needed when creating marketing plans, be it for a new product launch or to grow the brand in general. It is particularly important to stay up to date with the changes in the digital landscape as it can change sometimes rapidly (Kotler & Keller 2016).

What research basically is, is according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2018) “a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding.”

There are three main types of research objectives all differing slightly. The first method is called “exploratory research” and its objective is to gather preliminary information on the set area of investigation. It is commonly used as a starting point when information is limited and to arrive to the first hypothesis. The second type of research is called “descriptive research” which basically aims to answer a certain problem or describe

situations. In marketing this would mean for example market research on demographics, market potential or customer attitudes towards a brand. The third and final objective type is “causal research”. Its goal is to test the cause-and-effect relationships of a hypothesis. In marketing this would mean for example how does lowering the price of a product affect sales and would the sales increase offset the reduced sales margin for a higher yield (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 130 – 131).

In this thesis the main types of research objectives that will be used are the exploratory research and the descriptive research. In the latter part of this thesis they will be used in tandem to both firstly gain information on the different digital platforms and then to describe the situation and market that Kytäjä Golf is in. Causal research is not used in this thesis as the strategies and techniques were not implemented during the time of writing this study.

3.2 Research reliability and validity

Reliability is basically the term used to describe the repeatability of a study or research over time. It is required of research and studies conducted must be designed this in mind, the research must be transparent and clear so that the methods can be used by others and produce similar results. At minimum the methods used must be clear enough to instil enough confidence that the results have not been tampered with in any way (Greener 2008, 36). Research validity contemplates on the question of is the study and measurement actually measuring the thing it intends to.

To ensure reliability in this thesis only open source data and tools that everyone has access to were used. Also, the referenced material used were all from credible sources with a reference lists available. Validity is ensured by answering the question of “How to improve marketing performance with a digital marketing plan” and delivering actionable insights. However, with qualitative research that this thesis mainly revolves around it is important to remember that when the research heavily relies on critical thinking and logic it may sometimes be hard to prove absolute validity.

The limitations of this research are mostly limitations on the data available from competitors’ figures. They are all estimates based on third party tools that may show skewed data and the exact origin of the data cannot be verified.

4 Digital Marketing Plan

4.1 Situational analysis

As stated before in the literature review (chapter 2.3.1.) when starting the creation process of a marketing plan it is good to first figure out the current situation the business is in. The first thing to be done in order to evaluate the status of Kytäjä Golf (KyG) is a SWOT -analysis starting from S, the strengths. In this report, the main focus of the SWOT, especially for the opportunities and threats, is in the digital field.

Strengths

One of the definite and clear strengths that KyG has is the recognition it's been given since the opening of the first course. The multiple awards that both of the courses have, is something that cannot be taken away and they can be used as a strong message in communicating. "The most awarded golf course in Finland" and "the only golf course in Finland in the European top 50 golf courses" are statements that are inarguable, thus extremely potent in communication.

The physical location where KyG is located in is a strength in itself. Located relatively close to the capital region and the airport (< 1-hour car drive) it is highly accessible but still has a very much "countryside like" atmosphere. Both the courses appear grand and spacious as there were little geological limitations when the courses were designed and built. In terms of communications the physical location with its vast nature and lakeside views also open up unique opportunities from a visual point of view, compared to many of the golf clubs located in more densely populated areas (such as Helsinki Golf Club or Vuosaari Golf).

Picture 3: Despite the close proximity to the capital area the Kytäjä Golf course is extremely spacious.

The third strength, even thou slightly weakened in the past few years due to problems in the greenkeeping, is the high general appreciation of the Kytäjä Golf brand. The course is still regarded as a top tier, high class, premium golf course. People are willing to pay a premium for a round of golf for either of the two courses at KyG. High expectations can also manifest as a threat will be discussed more shortly.

Weaknesses

After taking a look at the strengths of KyG it is important to reflect on the negatives as well.

In terms of weaknesses and weaknesses in marketing especially, the lack of direction and clear goals is apparent. Evident from the discussions had with KyG management there are little tactics or objectives in place when concerning the marketing of the business. Currently there is no clear direction that the brand and other marketing activities should be directed to. The lack of a plan often leads the management into ignoring marketing altogether thus failing to realize possible opportunities.

Tied to the previous point, there is weakness in the overall presentation and cohesion on the KyG assets. Some of the materials, mostly the print material is high quality and reflects the premium, high class image of the KyG brand. There is however, massive

dissonance in some of the digital materials and especially in social media presentation which we will go in to further detail in chapter 4.4.3.

The lack of infrastructure, namely public transport in the area, makes having junior programs much harder than at a golf course located near a city with easy access with either bicycles or public transport. At KyG the junior programs are heavily reliant on the parents or other adults driving the kids to the practices. The same problem of transport exists to players without a driver's license or a suitable vehicle. Therefore, while the slightly remote location can be a strength it also presents a weakness.

After dealing with the strengths and weaknesses the opportunities and threats are discussed next.

Opportunities

The digital channels present new, effective ways of gathering contacts and leads, as well as new opportunities to drive the brand image to the desired direction. Digital marketing can be very cost effective when compared to for example having stands at a fair or doing so called "traditional advertising" in television or out-of-home outdoor ads.

One of the opportunities for KyG is that the digital field is still not utilized much in the field and the potential to stand out from the competition is high. There are no direct competitors with high visibility in the social channels, very little unique content is produced.

A fairly broad email contact list consisting mostly of existing members of the club which can work as a starting point for a more comprehensive email marketing campaign. The systems are already in place thus making the setup and planning phase shorter. The eligibility of these email databases should however be confirmed.

Digital formats are highly measurable and can provide valuable information on what type of contents and formats work best. Combining the insights from digital to other marketing activities can lead to a better performance overall.

Threats

A threat that exists with digital marketing is the quick changes that happen in the platforms and channels. The digital world is still evolving so new features are added and

older ones deleted constantly. Having a plan that does not take the possible shifts in the field into account may suffer from unexpected changes.

A large threat that always exists is the volatility in the actual condition of the golf course. Having the course in a rough shape and the marketing communications saying contradicting messages can lead to customer expectations being underwhelming. Careful consideration on the type of communication should be exercised if the condition of the course is below standard. With a golf course that has high overall valuation the risk of under delivering in terms of the actual experience can be high and should tried to be avoided by all costs.

While the new legislations on data ownership, like the recent GDPR might benefit the internet user they do possess a threat to marketers. The risk of losing the right to use an existing email database or the tightened targeting option in social medias are there and could cause additional costs to fix the ongoing actions to meet the updated standards. Not complying with new legislation, intentional or not, may lead to heavy sanctions and legal proceedings.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
Two top class golf courses with undeniable success in awards and recognition.	Lack of direction and planning in marketing activities.
Good geographic location.	Lack of coherent brand look and feel.
High general appreciation and brand preference.	Lack of supporting infrastructure (public transport).

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Digital channels bring opportunities. Unsaturated field in digital presence. Existing email database and platform. Insights from digital channels can be implemented in other marketing activities.	Quick changes occur in the digital channels repeatedly. The somewhat unpredictable condition of the physical golf course may affect the experience negatively. Data ownership legislation and limited targeting options.

All in all, there are plenty of strengths and opportunities on top of which a solid plan can be built. There are however, apparent weaknesses and threats and focus on toppling those should also be a priority. A successful plan takes all four dimensions into account by playing into the strengths while actively being on the lookout for the threats and having preventing measures ready.

The next portion of this thesis will focus on analysing the current competitive landscape with key focus on three main direct competitors of KyG.

4.2 Competitive analysis

Looking at competitors is important as there is usually much that can be learned from analysing the different marketing activities that different businesses have. After the analysis there should be points on both what to do and what mistakes to avoid.

In this thesis we will not focus on indirect competitors but instead will analyse the three biggest direct competitors established with KyG management team. The key competitors selected were Linna Golf, Pickala Golf and Tapiola Golf. They all share a common trait with KyG that being a focus on B2B. Next comes a brief description of the key competitors.

Linna Golf

Linna Golf, located in Hämeenlinna, is the golf club that is fighting for the number one spot in Finland. Linna Golf has one full length course designed by Tim Lobb. Brand-wise,

KyG's closest competitor in the same style of premium experience is definitely Linna Golf. With the Hotel Vanajanlinna located at the premises of the golf course Linna has an advantage as they can sell packaged deals (complete experience, golf and hotel).

Pickala Golf

Located in Siuntio the location is fairly similar to KyG, roughly a 40 minute drive from Helsinki makes Pickala a very reasonable pick for golfers coming from the capital region. Pickala Golf has three different, full lengt 18 holes courses which is one of they stronger suits as there tends not to be much congestion on the courses.

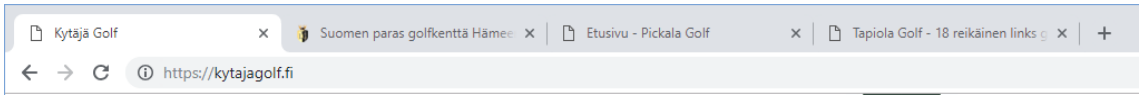
Tapiola Golf

Tapiola Golf is located in Espoo's Tapiola, so right in the capital region with a good public transport system. Tapiola Golf has a single full-length course.

Following, analysis of the different businesses presence in the digital environment will be done, starting with website optimisation and traffic.

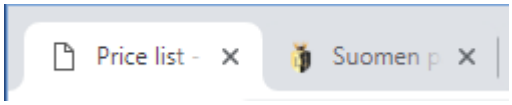
Website optimization and traffic

Right off the bat when opening the different home pages, it can be seen that Linna Golf is the only one with a favicon, the small logo icon next to the tab header. Not having a favicon looks unprofessional and the site unpolished. One of the key reasons to have a favicon is when bookmarking a page, it will have a recognizable icon.



Picture 4: Linna Golf is the only website with a favicon.

Also, with several tabs open having a favicon helps differencing between sites. In the example below (picture 5) it is rather impossible to know which of the golf clubs is open in the first tab (reading "Price list –") but the second tab is immediately recognized as the Linna Golf site, even with no mention on the brand.



Picture 5: Having a favicon helps identify which brand a website tab is for.

Next, attention will be directed to the website traffic and sources of the different parties. The following data and graphs are based on estimates from SimilarWeb.

From figure 4 (below) it is apparent that Pickala is estimated to have the biggest amount of traffic to their site, almost double the amount that KyG has. Traffic, in itself is not valuable but it does tell about a higher general interest.

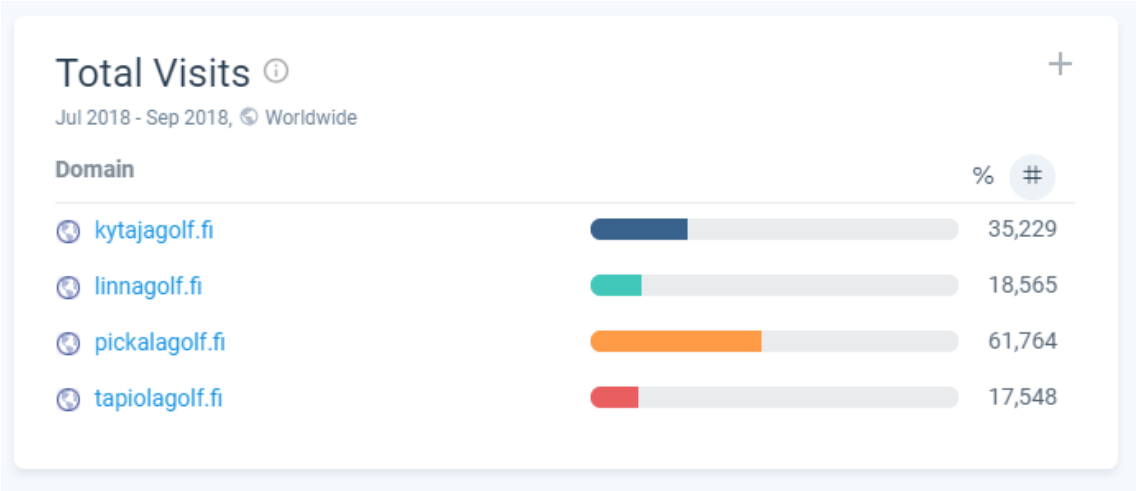


Figure 4: Data from SimilarWeb. Pickala Golf has most estimated traffic from the four parties. Accessed Oct. 18th 2018.

From below, in figure 5 we can see that the inbound traffic to the different sites is fairly similar. No business has any other significant sources for traffic than direct (typing the web address directly into the address bar) and organic search (landing to the page via search engines not-paid search result). The only slight differentiations is that KyG has a 4.77% of its traffic coming from social (direct links from social media sources) and Tapiola Golf having 9.67% of its traffic coming from paid search (landing from search engines paid ad search results). This is valuable information as we can determine that like KyG, the competitors are not active digital marketers either as they have little to no traffic from paid sources.

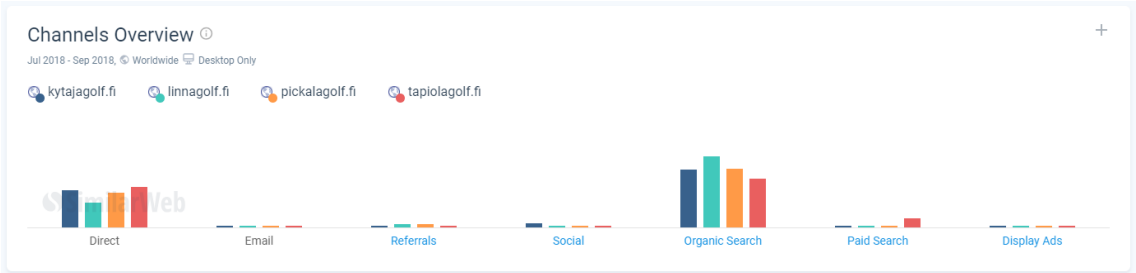
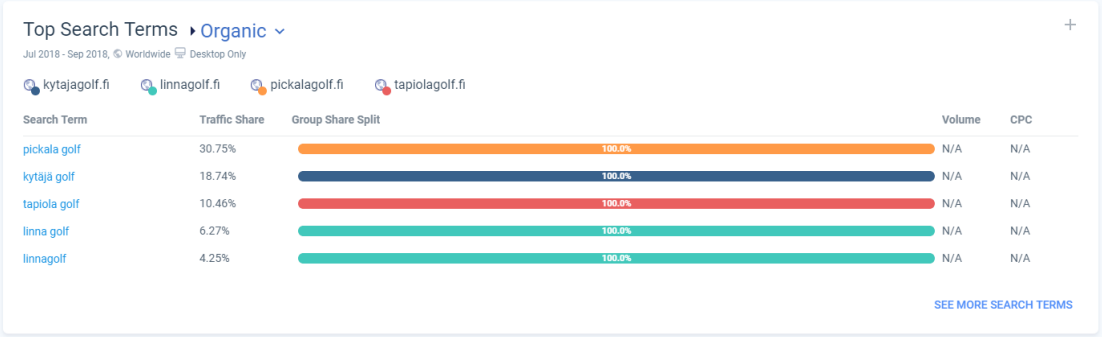


Figure 5: Data from SimilarWeb. The inbound traffic channels overview. Accessed Oct. 18th 2018.



Top Search Terms ▸ Organic

Jul 2018 - Sep 2018, Worldwide Desktop Only

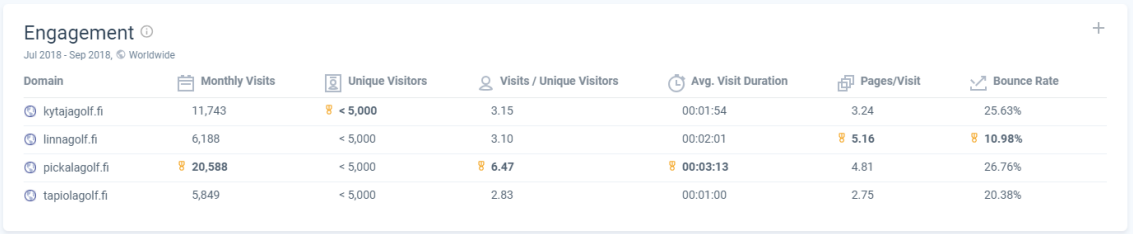
kytajagolf.fi linnagolf.fi pickalagolf.fi tapiolagolf.fi

Search Term	Traffic Share	Group Share Split	Volume	CPC
pickala golf	30.75%	100.0%	N/A	N/A
kytäjä golf	18.74%	100.0%	N/A	N/A
tapiola golf	10.46%	100.0%	N/A	N/A
linna golf	6.27%	100.0%	N/A	N/A
linnagolf	4.25%	100.0%	N/A	N/A

SEE MORE SEARCH TERMS

Figure 6: Data from SimilarWeb. The top organic search terms used by incoming visitors. Accessed Oct. 18th 2018.

From table 1 (below) we can see that regarding website engagement, Pickala Golf is again in the lead. They have the most visits per unique visitor, meaning the number of returning users is the highest. Their average visit duration is also the longest by far, long visit durations are usually due to interesting content hosted on the page, for example blog text or video content. Linna Golf has the most pages viewed per visit as well as the lowest bounce rate. Linna has a lower amount of visitors but it seems like those who do end up at Linna Golf website are highly interested as the bounce rate of 10.98% extremely low when compared to the other sites. Linna Golfs biggest source of traffic is from organic search where the correlation with low bounce rates makes sense as the incoming users have actively searched for “Linna Golf” signaling high interest.



Engagement

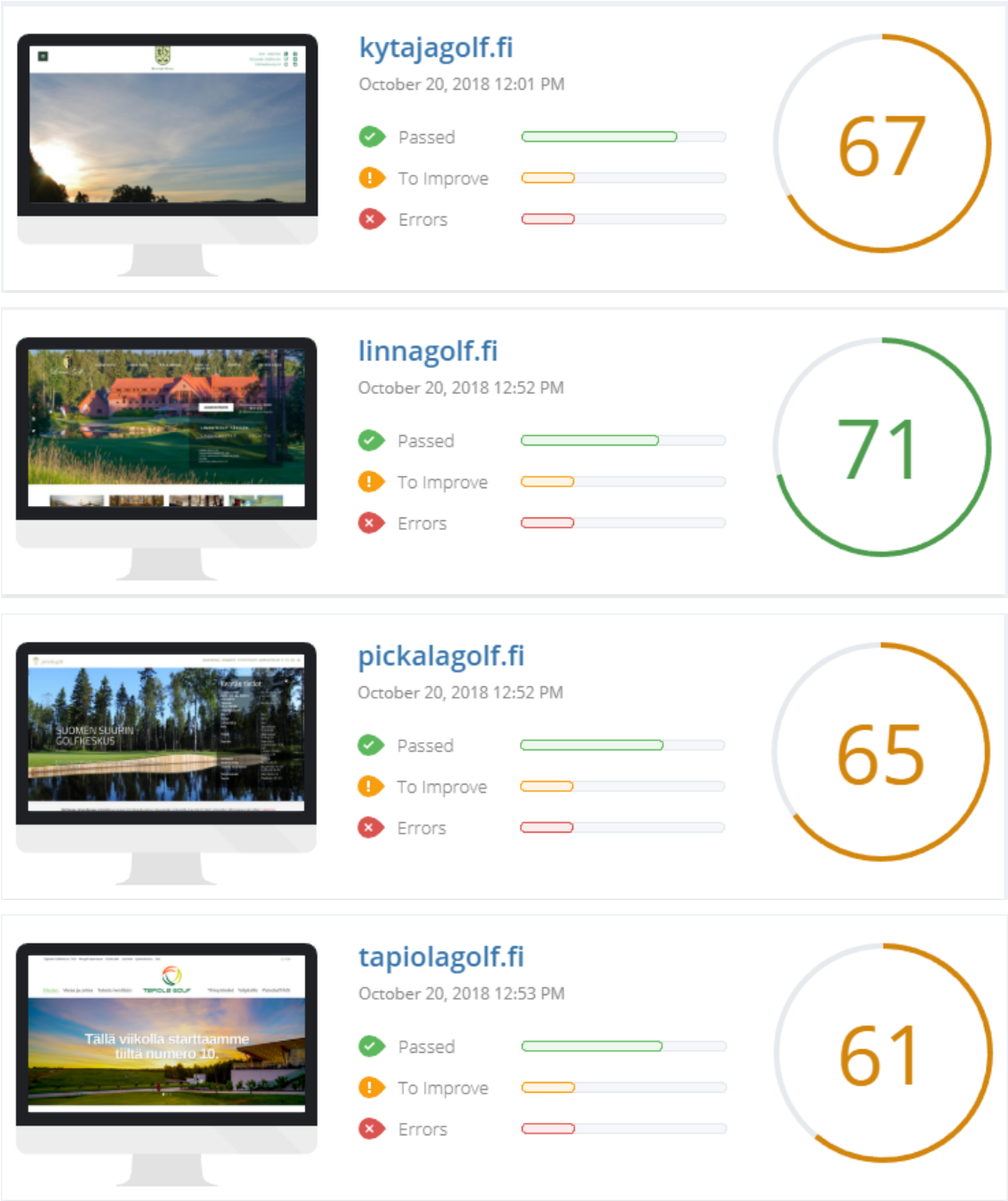
Jul 2018 - Sep 2018, Worldwide

Domain	Monthly Visits	Unique Visitors	Visits / Unique Visitors	Avg. Visit Duration	Pages/Visit	Bounce Rate
kytajagolf.fi	11,743	**< 5,000**	3.15	00:01:54	3.24	25.63%
linnagolf.fi	6,188	< 5,000	3.10	00:02:01	**5.16**	**10.98%**
pickalagolf.fi	**20,588**	< 5,000	**6.47**	**00:03:13**	4.81	26.76%
tapiolagolf.fi	5,849	< 5,000	2.83	00:01:00	2.75	20.38%

Table 1: Data from SimilarWeb. The website engagement metrics. Accessed Oct. 18th 2018.

All in all, the website statistics are mighty similar between the four businesses. The main takeaway and insight from the analysis to be made is the fact that the key competitors are not advertising much on the digital channels. This presents KyG with a clear opportunity to have great visibility compared to the competitors.

Search Engine Optimization SEO



Picture 6: The SEO scores by Woorank. Accessed Oct. 18th 2018.

Again, the scores between the sites are similar. A key problem all four sites have is that they are all missing the site meta descriptions.

The only site over the score 70 is Linna Golf. The key difference between Linna Golf and KyG's scores is the fact that KyG's "blog" section (*finnish: "ajankohtaista"*) of the page is not structured correctly and the web crawlers are not able to identify a content platform.

Further insights on how to tackle this problem will be explored in a later chapter 4.4.1. “Search Engine Optimization”.

After investigating the websites and SEO of the competitors, the next step is to analyse the different social medias and the presence in them.

Social Media

After looking at the competitors’ websites and SEO next up is the social media presence the competitors have. It is good to understand the type of content the competitors are releasing and where they are with their follower bases to get a sense of what type of content generally works best. We will be focusing on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn with a small analysis done on each of the channels.

Facebook

	Number of fans	Post interaction
Kytäjä Golf - KyG	1.2k	2.1%
Linna Golf	1.6k	2.5%
Pickala Golf	1.9k	4.6%
Tapiola Golf	1.4k	1.3%
Average values	1.5k	2.6%

Table 2: Facebook followers and average post interaction percentage of competitors (6/1/2018 - 10/20/2018). Data from FanPageKarma.

Out of the competitors KyG has the fewest fans in Facebook. The average post interaction percentage (number of fans divided by fans, not real engagement rate as the exact reach of the competitors posts is unknown) is also lower than the average of the four.

Instagram

	Follower	Post Interaction	Posts per day
Kytäjä Golf	534	9.0%	0.2
Linna Golf	919	6.6%	0.3
Pickala Golf	695	0%	0.07
Average values	716	5.2%	0.2

Table 3: The amount of Instagram followers, average post interaction percentage and average number of posts per day (6/1/2018 - 10/20/2018). Data from FanPageKarma.

Displayed above in table 3 are the competitors Instagram statistics. Tapiola Golf does not have an Instagram account and is therefore missing. Compared to the two other golf clubs KyG has the lowest amount of followers but the highest average post interaction percentage (post engagements divided by the amount of followers). Pickala Golfs Instagram channel has 695 followers but is basically left unused with only one post during the time period from June 1st 2018 to October 20th 2018. Linna Golf is slightly more active with their account with 0.3 posts per day versus KyG's 0.2 posts per day.

LinkedIn

Out of the four golf clubs Kytäjä Golf is the only one with a LinkedIn page. However, KyGs LinkedIn is very fresh and only has 25 followers (October 20th 2018) and no organic posts what's so ever. KyG has done light advertising of their B2B services on LinkedIn – something that the other golf clubs still haven't done at all.

Now that analysis on the KyG and the three main competitors has been done a good grasp of where we stand compared to the competition is formed. All four golf clubs' level of digital marketing activities are actually very similar. All four businesses are performing at a fairly low level of digital marketing, focusing only on having the essentials like webpages and some functionality there, like direct access to online platforms where tee-times can be booked. The website traffic analysis however tells that there is very little advertising or redirecting done to the sites. All four golf clubs also have a similar, fairly small number of followers and activity in general on the various social media channels.

4.3 Objectives

After taking a look at the competitive field and learning about the key competitors it is important to determine the objectives and goals of KyG.

The key objective of KyGs future digital marketing activities is mainly to raise awareness in the golfing community and increasing the brand preference. The ultimate goal naturally being the intention of driving more sales in the long run. One of the key areas identified to have potential for extra sales is the B2B services (business events that KyGs clients organize for their clients) and thus it should be selected as one of the offerings communicated. One separate segmentation should also be constructed solely for the B2B offering.

Setting smart goals means that they have to be measurable, otherwise performance analysis and self-assessment cannot be made, and the marketing activities cannot be evaluated accurately. The reason the key objective for KyGs digital marketing activities is creating awareness is precisely the capability to measure (Stokes, 2013, 503 - 505). Currently there is no easy way to measure the sales created through digital marketing as the sales are done either though calling, emailing or visiting the physical location, thus breaking the digital funnel and preventing the measurement of the transaction from start to finish. Therefore, the recommended objectives for KyG are as follows:

Website traffic

A good way to measure the exposure and more importantly the quality of it is measuring the amount of website traffic generated by the different channels. As is, the amount of website traffic other than direct traffic and organic search engine traffic accounts only for 15,7% of the total amount of sessions. The amount of sessions caused by an interest generated by KyG (versus direct or organic search where the user has already decided that they want to browse the KyG webpages) could be significantly higher.

The objective for 2019 is to raise the amount of KyG marketing activation inspired sessions to account for at least 30 percent of the total sessions.

Default Channel Grouping	Hankinta		
	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
	36 648 % kokonaismäärästä: 100,00 % (36 648)	34 961 % kokonaismäärästä: 100,21 % (34 888)	94 770 % kokonaismäärästä: 100,00 % (94 770)
Users / New Users / Sessions			
1. Organic Search	**19 084** (48,40 %)	16 337 (46,73 %)	51 676 (54,53 %)
2. Direct	**11 481** (29,12 %)	11 023 (31,53 %)	28 128 (29,68 %)
3. Paid Search	**3 599** (9,13 %)	3 013 (8,62 %)	6 138 (6,48 %)
4. Display	**3 462** (8,78 %)	3 366 (9,63 %)	4 187 (4,42 %)
5. Referral	**1 304** (3,31 %)	904 (2,59 %)	3 490 (3,68 %)
6. Social	**500** (1,27 %)	318 (0,91 %)	1 151 (1,21 %)

Table 4: The traffic amounts by the Google Analytics Default Channel Grouping (06/01/2018 - 10/20/2018).

An additional objective for the website activities is the implementation of virtual goals in Google Analytics. Currently there is very little data being collected on what the users actually do while on the page. In order to evaluate the visit quality there should be additional goals to measure (Stokes, 2013, 503 - 505).

SEO

For SEO optimization the goal is to be within the top three search results in Google search for “golf” (in a browser with primary language set for Finnish language). Currently KyG does not rank anywhere in the top 10 of search results.

Social Media

The actual, numerical objective in creating awareness in the social media is not an easy task as there is little to benchmark against. A simple, yet effective objective could be for example to aim to double the amount of exposure (impressions per month) generated in Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. The numerical values for 50% growth are displayed below in table 5 below.

Platform	Avg. Impressions per month	
	Benchmark (6/1/2018 - 10/30/2018)	Objective for 2019 (+50% growth)
Facebook + Instagram	216356	324534
LinkedIn	6057	9085

Table 5: The target for average impressions per month. Data retrieved from the social media channels proprietary analytics modules.

After defining the objectives, the strategies and tactics KyG can deploy to hope to achieve them will be discussed.

4.4 Strategy and tactics

The fourth part of this thesis will focus on the specific strategy and tactics KyG can deploy to increase the digital marketing performance. Having a clear vision of the different tactics and plans is important. The aim is to give practical and doable guidelines for KyG to implement to reach the established marketing objectives.

4.4.1 Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

To reach the objective of reaching the top three organic result in Google there are a few easy steps to be taken to increase the search engine friendliness of the kytajagolf.fi - page those are to be discussed next.

The SEO score given to kytajagolf.fi by Woorank is 64 points (picture 6 on page 30). There are three key areas that need improvement: the “blog” section, missing meta descriptions and internal links missing the secure “https://” parameters. In this section the problems are explained, and solutions are given.

Missing blog stucture

The first problem is with the missing structure on the content section, the blog like site “ajankohtaista”. As one of the search index scores metrics is the amount of quality content on a page, which blogs and the like are to rank high it is important to have a clear structure for those. The problem is that currently KyG URL-structure for blog-like texts is:

https://kytajagolf.fi/article-name-1

https://kytajagolf.fi/article-name-2

…

There is no subdirectory for the articles, such as “/ajankohtaista/”, thus the crawlers are unable to define a clear pattern in the URL-structure.

For crawlers to identify the blog content the URL-structure should have a subdirectory for it, for example:

https://kytajagolf.fi/ajankohtaista/article-name-1

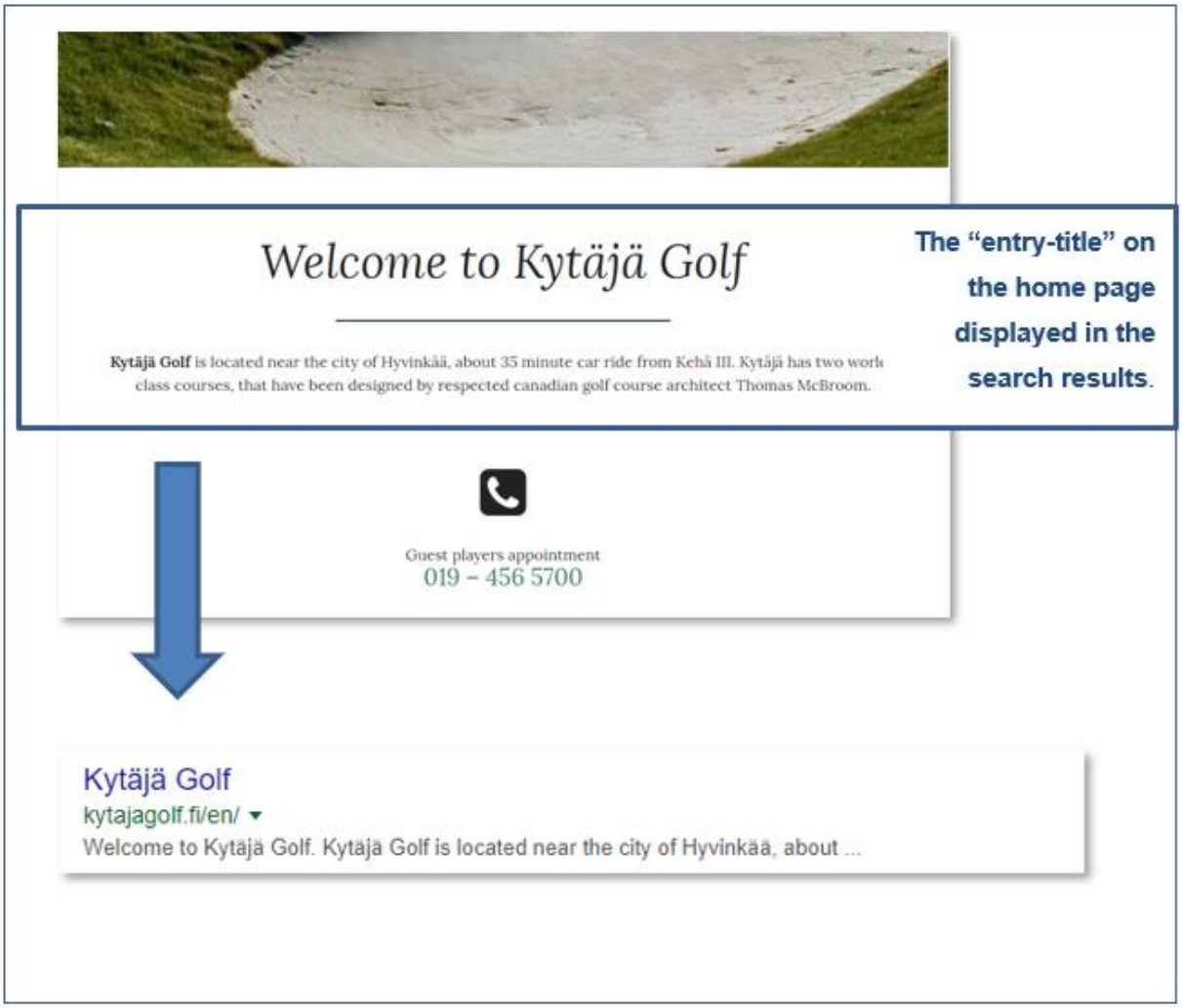
https://kytajagolf.fi/ajankohtaista/article-name-2

…

The URL subdirectory already exists for “/ajankohtaista/” already exists but is for some reason not used for the individual articles. Correcting this should not be a major task and as a result of the possible change the SEO ranking would most definitely go up.

Missing meta description

Something all the competitors are also missing are the meta descriptions. Having a set meta description with an inviting copytext can help market the page organically. As is, the description in search engines for KyG pages is generated directly from the <h1> main title text from the home page (KyG example shown below in picture 10).



Picture 7: No meta description leads to the search results showing the first text on the website.

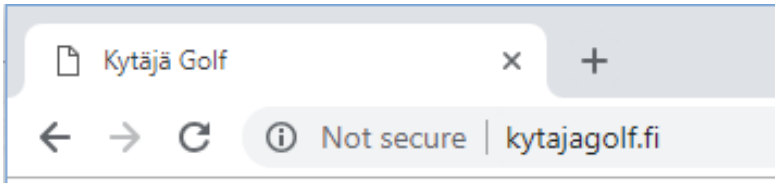
The kytajagolf.fi page is built on top of the WordPress platform and according to the source code of the page the site already has a Plugin implemented called Yoast SEO Plugin for WordPress. According to the WordPress plugins page (2018) one of the key features of the Yoast plugin is having the option to manage meta descriptions easily. There are no real reasons not to make the meta descriptions have the key marketing messages in them.

Missing HTTPS -prefix

The problem of internal links missing the HTTPS -prefix is a small but significant problem. As is, at least most of the links in the main drop-down menu are just "kytajagolf.fi/page" which will result in landing on a page with only HTTP -coding. This thesis will not discuss the differences or the pros and cons of HTTP versus HTTPS in detail but will rather cover the very basic theory behind them.

HTTPS, short for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure is basically the secure version of HTTP (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol). In HTTPS all of the traffic between the server where the website data is stored and the user browsing, is encrypted on an individual level. Using a secured and encrypted version of the site is crucial when the user inputs personal information as the data transfer cannot be intercepted (Stokes 2013, 551).

KyG already has the SSL certification that is needed for HTTPS sites but is simply missing the prefix from their internal links. Not having the links risks the leakage of for example the passwords of the users logging in to GolfBox (an online reservation system) from the site. If a user is using the unsecured version of the page the address bar will also state “Not secure” which does not look professional and is not reassuring for the users (see below in picture 11). The problem should be fixed by simply adding the prefix “https://” into every internal link.



Picture 8: Not having the "https://" prefix in the link shows as "Not secure" in the browser address bar.

By fixing these three problems with the current webpage architecture should boost the organic ranking of kytajagolf.fi in search engines, and consequentially most likely raising the amount of website visitors.

4.4.2 Search Engine Marketing

Search engine marketing is, as discussed in chapter 2.5.3 an effective method of digital marketing in increasing the amount of traffic to a business’s website. It is cost effective and by selecting the right keywords the users have a high probability of being interested as they are already seeking for information on golf in this instance.

The selected platform for KyG is Google Ads simply for the effectiveness – compared for example to Bing, the volumes are much higher in Google (Statista, 2018). KyG is able to capture more value with the Google platform with the same amount of time spent on setup and optimizing.

Next, displayed below in table 6, a light analysis on the possible keywords that might be used for KyG is done. The searches are limited only to those that happen in Finland but with all browser languages are included in the analysis.

The biggest keyword by the average searches per month is just “golf” with approximately 9900 searched done per month. The total combined number of searches with these keywords is averages at 11360 searches per month. Due to the low competition for the keywords we can estimate the potential number of impressions is also roughly around 11360 with the exclusion of those users that use ad blockers and assuming the budget is not exhausted ahead of time.

The approximate clicks per month is generated by multiplying the approximate searches by 2.5% which can be held as a benchmark click through rate (CTR). CTR is calculated by dividing the number of clicks by the number of impressions. The CTR of 2.5% could also be regarded as an additional KPI for the SEM campaigns. This estimate is based in the Industry Standard Benchmark study by Growth Point Solutions, 2018.

The approximate media budget for a campaign with the keywords selected below in Table 6 would be €176 per month.

Keyword	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Aprox. Clicks per Month	Aprox. Budget per Month
golf	9,900	Low	€0.57	247.5	€141.08
golfkentät	880	Low	€1.10	22	€24.20
golf helsinki	170	Low	€0.95	4.25	€4.04
golf espoo	210	Low	€0.64	5.25	€3.36
golf vantaa	90	Low	€0.84	2.25	€1.89
golf uusimaa	40	Low	€0.50	1	€0.50
golf hyvinkää	30	Low	€0.50	0.75	€0.38
parhaat golfkentät	20	Low	€0.50	0.5	€0.25
golf etelä suomi	10	Low	€0.50	0.25	€0.13
paras golfkenttä	10	Low	€0.50	0.25	€0.13
TOTAL	11,360	Low	–	284	€175.94

Table 6: A keyword analysis on "golf" related keywording. Data from Google Ads Keyword planner.

After tackling SEO and SEM it is time to move to social media, namely to Facebook and Instagram.

4.4.3 Facebook and Instagram

In this chapter we will mostly talk about Facebook and Instagram as one due to the core issues with the two channels being similar.

As is, the activity in both Facebook and Instagram is fairly small and the content is very loosely themed. To get the full advantage of social media there should be a structure and a clear message resonating through all the content published (Stokes 2013, 418 – 419). With KyG this is not the case as the posts are random both in content and visual identity. In addition, they are extremely close to the style of the competitors without any clear, distinguishable characteristics. By creating a unified branded experience, the business can prevent itself from just generating “noise” in the platforms (Stokes 2013, 84 – 85). Effective social media campaigns, paid or organic, should focus on communicating the brand or campaign message, rather than chase for likes or comments (Kotler & Armstrong 2015, 523 – 525).

The first step in fixing this issue of not having a clear vision on the content and what the content should drive the users to do is making a content plan. A good way to start is by creating two to four content pillars – strong unique themes that communicate brand attributes or valuable content for the user. For KyG these could, for example be:

- excellency in greenkeeping (highlights from the courses)
- upcoming competitions
- news from the head greenkeeper (coming repairs etc. useful info)
- stories of Kytäjä Golf (short, mini-introductions to regular players at KyG)

Whatever the pillars may be, it is important to have a clear message and a common nominator across the posts done under the “pillars” both in the context and visually (Stokes 2013, 84 – 85, 418 – 419).

The next step after defining the content pillars is creating a posting calendar. Unless reacting to something unexpected every post should be planned beforehand. Thus, creating a calendar where all the public events, dates and anniversaries as well as the events already planned by the business that may be relevant to your community are

mapped out and marked up. After this, selecting when and what is posted under which pillar is made much easier. For example, if we know that the “Vappu-kisa” (International Workers' Days Golf competition) is had every year at the 1st of May we can plan the content around the pillar “upcoming competitions” way ahead of time, thus having time to ensure that the message and visuals match with the predefined rules of the content pillar. Every post does not have to be tied to a cultural event, but it is still always a good idea to have the individual posts planned ahead of time. These rules apply to both organic posting and advertising (Stokes 2013. 84 – 85, 418 – 419).

Facebook and Instagram not only serve as platforms to share content and advertise but they can be important clues to a potential customer about the overall image of the company. If KyG wants to have the image of a high class, premium golf club then all the elements of marketing should communicate those attributes – digital and social included. Currently that cannot be said about the content and there are clear areas of improvement.

4.4.4 LinkedIn

With one of the key areas where KyG’s management has seen growth opportunities is the B2B services. LinkedIn is a fantastic platform to accurately reach a specific segment. Compared to the other social media channels LinkedIn has the advertising targeting options based on user profession and seniority making it an effective platform when wanting to reach a specific group of professionals.

KyG should most definitely embrace LinkedIn as one of their main social media platforms as growth in the platform (increased amount of company followers) could potentially mean more awareness of the KyG brand in the Finnish business decision makers.

To increase the followers so that KyG does not need to rely solely on advertising on the platform to gain awareness the following things would need to happen:

- Start posting organic content. Without organic content on the company page the users visiting the page have no reason to start following. As if the page is empty with zero content there is no incentive to follow – there is no “I don’t want to miss their content” idea popping up on the users’ head.

- Continue advertising on the platform. The quickest way to increase the follower base is to advertise as with very little organic followers the amount of impressions is also very low. By advertising the company page can reach users that previously had no idea that KyG even had a LinkedIn page and convince them with quality content.

Contentwise, the same rules apply for LinkedIn as for Facebook and Instagram that was discussed earlier.

4.4.5 Email Marketing

Due to the heavy regulatory changes in May 2018 with the GDPR coming into effect it is at this point unadvisable to continue the existing email campaigns without first making sure that the existing database of contacts is GDPR compliant. Creating whole new database can be tremendous effort and if that would be the case then a new plan would need to be done. To prevent this the preliminary plan for KyGs email marketing activities is to make sure the existing databases comply with GDPR.

4.4.6 Monitoring

The final part of this chapter revolves around monitoring as one can do digital marketing tricks and advertising but without monitoring the consequences it is extremely hard to firstly justify the investment ("I guess it worked alright" is rarely a solid description of marketing performance) and develop the various digital activities. Optimizing accurately without the proper data and understanding of what has worked and what not is virtually impossible.

Learning to dig data and insights from the various different platforms can be long and a tedious task. For that reason, it is recommended to create a centralized reporting dashboard where all the relevant data is pooled into and just the metrics that have been set as objectives or KPI's are displayed. The overwhelming amount of data that is available from for example Google Data studio can be just that, overwhelming. Having a simple and streamlined view on all the key activities is a good practice when there is limited time

and resources to spend on tracking and optimizing. However, building a centralized dashboard system is not something an unexperienced digital marketer just does as it can be complicated. Understanding the need for one is still key and using a third party to construct one may be the way for many businesses, KyG included.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis was drawn up with the intention to firstly identify challenges and opportunities in digital marketing and secondly to provide concrete, actionable insights for Kytäjä Golf. In order to do that it was first essential to cover some of the basic marketing theories and practices and from there shifting the focus to digital marketing. After establishing the core concepts and platforms of digital marketing a situational analysis on Kytäjä Golf and its three key competitors was done. The final part of the thesis was to take the insights gained from the theory and analysis and create a plan on the strategies and techniques to be used.

There certainly are multiple areas that Kytäjä Golf can improve on their digital marketing activities and the recommendation for the management team of Kytäjä Golf is to start implementing the techniques discussed in the thesis. Due to the volatile nature of the digital platforms and shifts in the market in general, it is important to review and be ready adjust the strategies used accordingly.

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