

Corporate social responsibility used in online medias

A look into Finnish companies CSR communication

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<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>Målet med detta arbete var att komma underfund med hur företag från Finland förhåller sig till företagsansvar i deras kommunikation och marknadsföring på internet. Utöver det var målet att se om företagsansvar kan vara hållbart på lång sikt och om det lönar sig för företag att investera i företagsansvar. En kvantitativ forskning gjordes genom att dela in 36 börsnoterade företag i tre grupper på tolv enligt storlek. Författaren forskade sedan i företagens internet medier som t.ex. sociala medier och företagens egna webbsidor för att få en bild av hur företagen sköter sin kommunikation om företagsansvar i internet världen. Två skilda forskningar gjordes för att få en jämförelse mellan hur företag kommunicerar i December jämfört med kommunikationen i Februari. En teoretisk analys gjordes av forskningens resultat och som hjälpmedel användes teorier om till exempel Triple bottom line principen, om hållbar utveckling och om marknadsföring. Resultatet visade att stora företag är involverade och uppmärksammar företagsansvar och de använder också rikligt med online medier för att kommunicera om deras engagemang i företagsansvar. Motsatsen kunde hittas i de tolv små företagen där nästan inga sociala medier var i bruk och företagsansvar inte heller uppmärksammades. Ur analysen kunde man dock dra slutsatsen att företagsansvar betonades mer i December under jultider då konsumenter kanske förväntar sig att företag skall donera t.ex. pengar för att hjälpa i samhället. Frågan om företagsansvar bara är ett marknadsföringstrick lyftes också upp. Å andra sidan så kunde analysen och den teoretiska framhäningen dra slutsatsen att hållbar utveckling och företagsansvar kommer vara stora begrepp inom företagens organisationsutveckling i framtiden eftersom konsumenter är mer miljömedvetna och kräver bättre och grönare produkter och laginstanser så som EU strävar mot mer företagsansvar inom samhället.</p>	
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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>The aim of this work was to find out if and how Finnish listed companies approach the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in their online communication and marketing to external parties. Furthermore, it was also a goal to see if corporate social responsibility can be sustainable and seen as a future investment. The research was done by dividing 36 Finnish listed companies into three groups of twelve according to their size. The author then took a look at their online medias such as social media and company own webpage to get a comprehension of how companies communicate their actions for CSR to their external environment. The research was done twice – once in December and once in February – in order to get a comprehension of the overall situation and also some comparison possibilities. In the quantitative analysis a theoretical approach was used and theories about e.g. the Triple bottom line, sustainability and marketing management were lifted up. The result was that big companies are very involved in CSR activities and they also use social media communication actively to reach out to their external environment. However, it was visible that the communication of CSR decreased significantly from December to February and a question if CSR is only part of a marketing scheme was raised. It was also found that in the small companies there where almost no social media channels found and also no CSR activities either. On the other hand, the analysis also could draw a conclusion that sustainability and also CSR are factors that will be more integrated into company organisations in the near future because consumers are more environmentally aware and legislative parties such as the EU are actively pushing CSR to become a bigger part of the society.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Työn tarkoituksena oli tarkastella miten suomalaiset yritykset käyttävät internetin työkaluja viestittääkseen yritysvastuuseen liittyviä tekojaan. Koska kuluttajat ovat alkaneet vaatia parempi laatuja sekä ympäristöystävällisiä tuotteita, tämän työn tekijä koki tärkeänä selvittää ovatko suomalaiset yritykset tietoisia yritysvastuusta, noudattavatko ne sitä sekä käytetäänkö sitä yhtenä aihepiirinä internet markkinoinnissa sekä viestinnässä. Työssä katsottiin 36:tta suomalaista pörssiyritystä jotka jaettiin kolmeen ryhmään kokonsa perusteella. Yritysten viestintää netissä muun muassa sosiaalisessa mediassa sekä yritysten omilla internetsivuilla tarkasteltiin kahteen otteeseen Joulukuussa sekä Helmikuussa jotta saataisiin vertailukelpoisia tuloksia. Apuna teoreettiseen analysointiin käytettiin kestävän kehityksen, markkinoinnin sekä Triple bottom line teoriaa. Lopputuloksena oli, että analyysin kaksitoista suurinta yritystä olivat tietoisia ja viestittävät yritysvastuustaan sosiaalisessa mediassa. Tämän lisäksi suurimmilla yrityksillä oli paljon tietoa yritysvastuustaan ja kestävän kehityksen malleistaan mutta yritysvastuun viestintä painoittui suurilta osin Joulukuulle, jolloin kuluttajat usein odottavat hyviä tekoja yrityksiltä joulun hengessä. Työ nostikin esiin kysymyksen, jos yritysvastuu onkin vain markkinointiin liittyvää strategiaa eikä yritysvastuuta oteta oikeasti tosissaan. Pienimmillä yrityksillä ei ollut viestintää yritysvastuustaan mutta kokonaisvaltaisen analyysin tuloksena on kuitenkin, että yritysvastuun kehittäminen sekä integrointi organisaatioihin yleistyvät tulevaisuudessa koska positiiviset vaikutukset yrityksen kilpailukykyyn ovat isot ja myös muun muassa EU on aktiivisesti kehittämässä yritysvastuuta osaksi yhteiskuntaa tulevaisuudessa.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In today's fast moving business environment the ability to be better, faster, louder and more convincing than the competitor across the street is essential in surviving. Different kinds of companies are forced to look for new ways to improve and be innovative in the fierce competition for customers and visibility. There are hundreds of different ways to look at the factors that may improve company operations and profit results and in this research paper one possible alternative for getting more attention and competitive advantage is presented; namely corporate social responsibility.

1.1 Main aim and research questions

As consumers have been getting more aware of environmental issues and demand better, cleaner products, services and operating models, companies are forced to look at their impact and actions towards the environment and society. As at the same time the numbers of social entrepreneurs that aim for solving social problems in the society without focusing only on profits are rising, the traditional and maybe slightly older companies and brands have to keep up in the process of doing good (Savej N. 2014). The keywords for a company to staying environmentally aware and socially active, is therefore corporate social responsibility.

The European Commission defines corporate social responsibility - CSR - as "companies taking responsibility for their impact on society" (European Commission). Furthermore, the Commission also suggests that CSR can increase the competitiveness level and be beneficial for managing customers, company risks and innovations. In this context CSR sounds like a reasonable idea for companies in today's tough competitive environment, and the aim for this thesis work is to look at how CSR can be combined with primarily online marketing to bring even more benefits.

As brands are also facing challenges in sustainability and customer attractiveness in hard financial times, the winner is the brand that can best convince environmentally conscious customers of well-priced, quality products combined with social responsibility. As the European Union is also making new demands on how companies report on CSR, the question is how to benefit of increasing costs and making something good out of it (European Commission 1). The aim for this study therefore comes down to three questions:

- How can CSR be useful in marketing?
- Is CSR used in online marketing in listed companies in Finland?
- Is CSR the future and can it be seen as sustainable?

1.2 Problems in the field

As the consumer market is highly competitive and tough to operate in, companies are looking for ways to differentiate themselves and their brand. The question on how to do this differentiation, and bring an attractive uniqueness to a company is accurate in companies no matter of the size. Another problem is that companies used to only engage in CSR because it sounded good in the ears of consumers (Knowledge@Warton, 2012). However, as consumers become more aware of social and environmental issues, companies need to start taking CSR seriously into account and develop sustainable models for it. This is also why the author of the thesis sees CSR as important and wants to research into the subject; as consumers demand more, companies need to develop new models that are at the same time sustainable, effective and do not threaten the profits. The thesis will try to give one angle to the subject through focusing on the social responsibility of companies and how to make a brand live up for a convincing CRS goal and promoting it in online platforms.

1.3 Research methods and material

The data used for this work is collected from literature about CSR and marketing management. Some additional articles are used for practical examples and a more real view on how companies operate. The data is collected by looking for books and articles that discuss the chosen subject and the material found is gathered and then analysed. Different opinions and views on the necessity of CSR will be lifted up and discussed and this hopefully results in a comprehensive view into the world of CSR in the year of 2015.

The material that is lifted up will contain some basic theory about CSR practices and definitions. Brand management is also discussed but not as in depth as CSR. The theory of these fields is used as a base for an analysis of different ways and situations on how to communicate CSR in marketing situations. The aim is to then have some general guidelines that should be used in successful CSR management and give some suggestions on how companies should develop their CSR goals and communicate these to the customers.

In order to try to avoid errors and a narrow point of view, the author is looking at CSR from as many angles as possible. However, as the focus is on how CSR can be combined with online marketing, the author will focus a lot on the marketing part of CSR. This means that some parts of CSR management will possibly fall out. The author will still try to give a comprehensive view of the benefits of CSR for a company success.

For the primary data part, the author will look at 36 Finnish companies and their way of dealing with CSR issues and online communication. As there are studies on that CSR is mostly practiced in big companies, the author will look into 12 big, 12 medium sized and 12 small companies that are listed in the Helsinki stock exchange, NASDAQ OMX Helsinki. The companies are chosen from a list provided by the stock exchange ranked by the size of the company. The companies will then be analysed on if and how they report on CSR, whether CSR principles can be found on webpages, annual reports or public marketing material that can be accessed through internet. If companies use social media channels the author will also look if CSR is mentioned in these channels.

The aim of this analysis of company practices will hopefully lead to statistics on how different sized companies use the possibility of CSR in their channels to the external world. The analysis and the findings will then be reflected on the theory discussed on the thesis to try to see how theory correlates with the real world practices in Finland today.

1.4 Limitations

The final work is about how to manage the image of company social responsibilities in the ever changing environment of competition and marketing. The work includes theories about what CSR is, how to make it a part of a business daily operations and why it should be held as a part daily marketing management. Even though the work is in a big part of the significance of CSR, branding and marketing will also be included. The limitations to this topic are the restricted length and the big amount of material available. As both CSR and marketing management are topics that have been discussed and written about in big depth, some important and essential part is possibly left out. The aim is to leave out data that is not in an important way in connection to the marketing of CSR. This may for example mean that risk management or the ethical factors of why CSR is useful, may fall out or not be deeply discussed.

1.5 Theoretical framework and definitions

The concepts and theory used in the work is all related to corporate social responsibility, brand management and overall marketing. In order to fully understand the discussed work some terms may be good to clarify. As already said, the European Commission defines CSR as “companies taking responsibility for their impact on society” (European Commission). Nicole Fallon agrees in her definition of CSR as companies “participating in initiatives that benefit society” (2014). Both definitions emphasize the society aspect and taking into account the environment in which the company is operating in. However, United Nations add that CSR is not the same as charity work but that it focuses more on company overall strategy and sustainable business model (Unido).

CSR in practice can be seen in companies having for example environmental goals to reduce carbon footprints, work with employees to make the workplace and surroundings more functioning and sponsoring events or actions that make the company external society a better place (Fallon, N. 2014). These definitions and concepts of what CSR is and how it can be seen will be introduced as a base for the whole thesis work. Another essential theory in this thesis is the Triple Bottom Line theory by John Elkington which says that a company should think about CSR on three different levels, “profit, people and planet” (The Economist, 2009).

The other concept that is a base for the whole thesis is brand management. Brand management is a well discussed aspect and shortly defined it is managing “a name, symbol or design, or a combination of these that identifies a maker or a seller of a product or a service” (Kotler P. et al, 2013). The question that is challenging is how to get more visibility, loyal customers and at the same time have a reputation of making quality products and being trustworthy (Porter-Rockwell B. 2010). These challenges combined with brutal competitors are reality today and the thesis will try to give one more competitive edge to brand management with CSR.

In the final thesis work CSR will be intertwined with marketing to get a comprehension of how the concepts work together. The expected final result is a discussion on how the theoretical findings go together with the findings from the primary research. The expectation is also a discussion on the subject of CSR in 2015 and possibly also some suggestions on how to make a better approach to CSR management in Finnish companies.

2 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 Background

Corporate social responsibility has been existing as a thought for a long time - some of the first mentioning's of a form of CSR are from the 19th century - but the idea of helping socially and benefiting economically has certainly been existing even before that (Center of Ethical Business Cultures, 2005). Even though the history of CSR goes a long way back, the modern concept and definition is quite young. It was actually first after the second world war that corporate social responsibility started to form into the concept it is defined as today, and the 1950's can be called the time when modern CSR started to seriously be developed and discussed (Carrol A. 1999).

The fundamental question on how corporate social responsibility started to develop was the ideas around what the essential purpose of a business is. One of the first thoughts for many people is that a business purpose is making money and serving customers (Makovsky K. 2013). As a thought this may be correct and if going even deeper into the purpose of business, some say that it is about creating value for shareholders and the owners of the company. Additionally, this also meant that the only opinions that should be heard when making company strategy plans were the opinions of the owners. For a long time this has also meant that companies haven't taken other interest groups such as the government or company employees into account but this have also started to rapidly change.

During the 1950's and after that, the thought about creating value only in a monetary and revenue sense started to be questioned. In a book about businessmen's social responsibilities written in 1953, Howard R. Bowen writes that as companies have a lot of power and influence in the society, they should also carry some of the responsibility about developing it further (Carrol A. 1999). The thoughts about social responsibility started to grow in the society, and as the beginning steps towards the European Union we have today were found by agreements about coal and steel businesses, the cooperation also build a base for bigger actions in social responsibility (European Union 1). Big steps in social responsibility and equality were then taken in the beginning of the 1960's when the EU of that time decided to control food production so that everyone would have something to eat, that farmers got enough money for their products and they also started helping countries in Africa with financial aid (European Union 2). As also thoughts about equal rights and no discrimination at e.g. work or public places were passed in the United States in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the foundation for establishing social rules and including companies in the responsibility taking as well, was laid (jfklibrary.com)

In the 1970's a lot of emphasis was put on defining what social responsibility was about and how responsible businesses should be run. One opinion that was largely discussed in the 70's was Milton Friedman's text that said that corporations can't be held responsible, only people can be responsible for their actions, and therefore the owners and businessmen of the company are the ones that need to change attitudes (1970). Furthermore, Friedman wrote that it is the owners and managers who need to follow rules, regulations and ethical agreements; a company is not a living thing without the people to run it and therefore it cannot be charged of unethical behaviour. Even though there was a lot of agreement to Friedman's thoughts about the responsibility of individual businessmen, he also questioned why profitable businessmen should care about social responsibility and socially good actions in a free working economy (Friedman M. 1970).

Even though Milton Friedman criticized the concept of CSR, one can still see a pattern of social development in especially Europe and United States after his opinions were published. Laws about human rights issues, acts against corruption, value movements and redefining ethical cultures in business were topics of the end of 1970's throughout the whole decade of the 80's (ethics.org, 2009). During this time there were also growing concerns about that still developing countries in e.g. Asia ignored the wellbeing of employees in order to try to quickly catch up with development in western countries in Europe and North America (Ferrel O.C. et al.). The issues about fast development and on the same time using up scarce resources brought forward the "Bruntland report" in 1987, which stated the principles for sustainable development that is also a big part of modern CSR; "development that meets the need of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UN).

The highlight for the first steps towards active sustainable development thoughts was in 1992 as the United Nations accepted the Bruntland report, and stated the importance of each governments own actions in sustainable environmental, social, and economic development (UN). Even though a lot of nations started to take sustainable development into account and pressure companies and other actors in their country to implement sustainable development procedures, the progress has been slow. On one hand the US attention on fighting terrorism in Middle East and on the other the non-existing law legislation on individual companies to implement CSR ideas has slowed the progress. However, as United Nations among some influential NGO's continued to stress the importance of sustainable development, social ethics and flexible business styles, more and more businesses, governments and individuals have started to take development without only reaching for higher profits on the cost of employees and na-

ture seriously. As also the European Union continued to implement laws on how to treat employees, how to develop society and follow social, ethical rules, the steps towards bigger CSR implementations were taken (European Union 3).

When coming to the 21st century there has been an ongoing discussion about the environmental damage humans cause and more organisations, businesses and individuals have started to react towards carbon footprints, environmental damage and the responsibility of the big players in the society. This has led to pressure on companies to perform better, more sustainably and with not only profits and revenue streams in mind. With the lead of big organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation which implemented social responsibility in their business strategies, also other businesses have started to follow the lead (UN). The results can also be seen: companies committing to sustainable development goals, ethical employee regulations and supporting a big variety of different important matters, values and development goals and issues in the surrounding society. All of these actions combined and even more is why CSR has been gaining attention and being emphasized in strategy planning. Therefore it is time to take a look at how companies target CSR issues and what the benefits really can be.

2.2 Definitions

As corporate social responsibility has been getting more attention and consumers are more aware, one would think that there would be a commonly accepted definition for CSR. The truth, however, is that there is not one generally accepted definition of the exact meaning of CSR, but the major aspect is the acts that companies perform on a socially beneficial level in society (Slack N. et al, 2013).

Even though there are many different opinions of the corporate social responsibility concept, the common thing of these definitions are that companies are aware of the environment they operate in, they implement sustainable development tools in their operations and they respect the wants of important company stakeholders such as the employees, owners of the company, customers and the governments (Slack N. et al, 2013). The European Commission defines CSR as “companies taking responsibility for their impact on society” and the Commission continues with emphasising human rights, ethical values and companies being aware of consumer concerns, which shows why the social word is part of CSR (European Commission 1).

The definition of CSR may sound like a basic thing, but there are millions of ways to actually perform CSR actions. Companies may give away products to people who need them, invest in better and cleaner machines and production technology or donate money directly to a charity organisation (Smith J. 2012). One example on how a company that also has been getting a lot of negative comments about their operation, has managed to tackle CSR is from H&M and their efforts to collect old pieces of clothing that customers no longer need (h&m.com). The clothes are brought to an H&M store and in the end made to new products for e.g. the auto industry or if in bad condition burned and used as an energy resource instead of ending up in landfills. H&M says that their goal is to reduce the amount of waste the fashion industry produces and aim for a supply chain of zero waste. Even though this is only one example of companies taking actions, there are many more from the technology industry to pharmaceuticals and back. However, the question that many ask is if companies are only doing good because they try to get a better reputation and want more customers at the same time (The Economist, 2008). This argument of pros and cons of CSR will be deeper discussed in part 2.5 where a few thoughts on do's and don'ts are presented.

2.3 New regulations of CSR

As the background of modern CSR is not so old, it may not be surprising that there are no rules or laws to regulate how CSR should be implemented; most guidelines for CSR and sustainable development have been taken from UN reports and goals. However, the discussion about companies taking responsibility has led to governments starting to take action. The first laws about CSR were established in Denmark in 2009 when they issued a law that large, listed companies need to report annually on their engagement in CSR actions (Erhvervsstyrelsen). According to the Danish Governments' sites, "the aim is to inspire companies to take an active position on corporate social responsibility and to communicate this position". Furthermore, the goals are to help companies get more internationally competitive through sustainable operations models that also have an impact on the financial position of the company by reducing costs in the organisation (Erhvervsstyrelsen).

In 2013 Denmark continued with their progress in CSR reporting, and stated that Danish companies must report on what actions they take to reduce their impact on the environment and how they respect human rights (Erhvervsstyrelsen). In the same year the European Union started to discuss their regulations on CSR, and progress on a Union level was seen in April 2014 when the European Parliament adopted the directive of Non-financial reporting (European Commission 2). Big companies with over 500 employees are now required to issue reports on their social, environmental and employee impacts

as well as how the company is acting against corruption, bribery and non-diversity in the company and the board. This new regulation is affecting around 6 000 companies and organisations across the European Union, and the hopes are that this will bring more transparency in company operations and awaken trust in the society.

As new laws are coming into the picture, so are also different standards and guidelines for the markets. The probably most known ones are the ISO standards that are developed by the International Organization for Standardization and they are guidelines and specifications on e.g. product safety, quality, sustainability, social responsibility, and energy and risk management (iso.org). The ISO organisation itself doesn't give out the certificates for different standards, but they rely on third parties to do this and decide if an organisation is fulfilling the requirements of one of the thousands of different standards that are available. The ISO standards are also covering almost every field and even in some market fields companies are required to have the certificates of some specific ISO standard to be allowed to operate. When relating to CSR issues there are also standards that take into account the social and environmental acts of companies and these also aim for cutting costs and being more efficient in business choices. Furthermore, according to the Standardization organisation itself, companies are benefiting from these voluntary standards as they help with optimising organisation structures and processes, reducing waste, increase productivity, enter a new market and gaining new customers at the same time as promoting safe products and open, free markets.

The shift from CSR being voluntary to now becoming more and more mandatory is not something that has been easily accepted. Even though big companies like Ikea and Unilever supported the proposal of mandatory CSR reporting in the European Union, others still believe that social responsibility brings more costs and bureaucracy than benefits (Chaplier J, 2014). In addition, as there at the moment are no sanctions towards companies who should report on CSR but don't do that, and as companies are free to choose their own way of reporting which makes comparing companies difficult, the law that European Parliament accepted, may not bring any big impacts after all. Jerome Chaplier adds in his article in The Guardian, that even though the demand for more transparent companies is growing, company leaders don't seem to care (2014). However, as the pressure from society is big, the next step in forcing companies to take CSR actions is to follow India's lead which established a law saying that big Indian companies need to invest 2 % of their net profits into social development (Prasad A. 2014) Critiques say that it is not fair for governments to interfere this much in company actions in a free economy, and the whole thing may threaten future profits - an argument that doesn't have any proof

yet, but will be closely analysed to set a base for if other countries will develop their CSR policies in the same direction as India.

2.4 Use and meanings

Even though the concept of corporate social responsibility is really broad and companies can do many forms of CSR activities, there are a few categories in which these CSR activities usually fall into. The most common of the approaches to measuring what kind of CSR activities a company is engaging in is called “The triple bottom line” and was introduced by John Elkington in 1994 (The Economist 1, 2009). According to this theory - which is also widely used when talking about CSR activities in different companies - companies should not only measure performance according to profits, but also to people and the planet. There we also have the three aspects of the triple bottom line, people, planet and profit.

If opening up these three bottom lines, one realises the connection to the background of CSR presented in the previous chapter. The people part of the triple bottom line is dealing with the social responsibility a company has towards its employees as well as its external social groups of e.g. customers and governments (Slack N. et. al. 2013). For company employees it means providing work that makes individuals grow and use their talent but not being stressful, and externally it means providing customers with safe products and not taking advantage of still developing countries. The second part consisting of the planet aspect means that companies take responsibility in how much their operation is damaging the environment. By designing production lines more environmentally friendly, reducing packaging material and recycling more, companies may take actions towards CSR and reducing costs in their production as well. The third and final part of the triple bottom line is then the profit section. As company lead is interested in maximising profits, this part is also concerned with cutting costs, making sure the business is flexible enough to meet changes in the market field as well as having has a constant supply and demand balance.

Even though the triple bottom line is seen as the most important concept, some like to include two more categories to the theory which are the stakeholder and the voluntariness dimensions (Slack N. et. al. 2013). The stakeholder dimension is pointing out that as a company has so many different interest groups from suppliers and customers to governments, employees and lobby groups, it is not always possible to make decisions that will please everyone. However, the opinions of as broad a range of stakeholder groups as possible should be taken into account when making CSR decisions, but still re-

membering that people have different backgrounds and everyone may not understand why one cause is supported over another. The second added dimension of voluntariness in CSR, is something that has been presented in brief earlier in this work. At the moment there are no clear laws on CSR actions and a lot is based on companies volunteering to take social actions. Furthermore, opinions about that big, global companies are not taking the responsibilities that their size is reflecting are heard. The critique that companies are only doing the minimum amount of CSR actions are raised, opinions that CSR is only used as reputation management are also heard. However, at the current moment most of the CSR actions companies get involved in are still voluntary actions, and as long as there are no laws on how much companies should involve themselves, the line of how much companies really should volunteer, will be unclear.

It seems like a logical idea that as businesses need customers and somewhere to operate in, they should also take the society into account. The society is build up by a mix of individuals, groups and organisation and hence they all need to cooperate on some level or another to make a functioning environment (Slack N. et. al. 2013). The companies can't function without customers and customers can't buy products without money which comes from work which again is done as an employee of a company. There therefore is a circle of connections between individuals, companies and groups in a society, and according to some thoughts the companies should also be responsible for its optimal functioning. The biggest trouble is that the concept of CSR is broad, and managers may not be sure what actions to really engage in to bring benefits for both the external environment and the company itself. The triple bottom line may bring some clues but it still doesn't answer all the questions about the benefits of CSR, and therefore the next chapter is about some positive and negative sides.

2.5 Pros and cons

As the purpose for many businesses is to grow and get more profits, it may contradict with the business strategy to add operations that cost to the equation. Because even though CSR sounds like a great idea from societies point of view, and even in some cases from the company's side, the reality is that most CSR actions will take more from the company than it actually will give back (Slack N. et. al. 2013). In addition, the positive effects of CSR can be hard to measure for companies as they often are long-run benefits, which makes it even harder to see the benefits in implementing social responsibility in the own company. However, there still is an idea behind that CSR can benefit both the society and the corporation, and this is also the topic for this chapter.

As the fundamental thought behind CSR started with sustainability ideas, it is only natural that the first points in positive CSR for the company is innovation and cost savings (Epstein-Reeves J. 2012). As a sustainable business wants to keep inventing new ideas, products and ways to serve and get more customers, innovation is needed. And with innovation comes cost savings. Examples of this can be new products that have more efficient and ecological production lines, reduction of the emissions from company factories or reduction of the amount of packaging a product has. All of these examples require new solutions which have to be thought about and redeveloped. However, in the long-run, companies can save costs by investing in greener machines as they usually are more efficient and take less energy, which at the same time fulfils some of the planet aspect of CSR goals.

The other aspect to why companies want to pursue CSR actions is because it looks good to the outside (Epstein-Reeves J. 2012). As customers get more aware of environmental and social issues, they are more willing to buy products from a company that supports social causes. However, there is no idea in investing in CSR if nobody knows about the efforts, and therefore CSR can be one tool that companies can use to strengthen their brand and the attractiveness of the own company. As according to one article in Forbes magazine, customers are more likely to buy products from a company they respect and share values with, there is no reason to not inform consumers of how a company is doing socially good actions (Thorpe D. 2013). Additionally, the Finnish Ministry of employment and the economy suggests that if company is involved in CSR and reporting about it well, it will attract more investors and business partners to cooperate with the specific company (2009).

If still throwing in more reasons into the mix of why companies are interested in CSR activities, the company own and also prospective future employees would be a good reason (Epstein-Reeves J. 2012). As one part of the triple bottom line-theory is focused on people, this also includes employees. If the own staff knows and feels the spirit of CSR - a good work environment, opportunity to develop and affect the own work - they also share this information. As the word goes around that a company is a good employer, it will attract more jobseekers to apply for open positions, which again gives a company the opportunity to select the most talented people. Studies have also shown that if the company is able to incorporate the values and believes of social responsibility in their organisation, the own employees are also more committed and work harder (Great place to work). Working for a good cause and delivering a message of how it is done will increase the employee satisfaction, an aspect that surely is positive for companies no matter the size.

However, there can't be endless amounts of positive sides in CSR otherwise everyone would incorporate it into business operations without hesitation. One of the biggest negative sides about increasing public focus on CSR is that most of the businesses and competitors already do it. According to an article in *The Economist* many businesses are already doing CSR - even though only a few companies know how to do a good job - and this has led to that company stakeholders already expect some sort of CSR actions as a natural part of the business plan (2008). Furthermore, as the interest towards socially good actions has been increasing, many companies notice that they can't attack CSR actions by only donating a percentage of their profits to a good cause, but they have to be more involved and create own practices, codes of conducts, business styles and strategies to fully live the attitude of CSR. This then again requires more staff and more planning to get the company fully engaged in CSR, an expense a company may not always afford.

Moreover, even though companies are focusing more on doing good in the society, many still believe that companies do it only to manage their reputation if something negative would be revealed about their business operation (*The Economist*, 2008). A bad hit of company reputation could for example be use of child labour, oil companies suffering from oil spills or a company product that accidentally harms a customer. Companies are therefore preparing themselves with doing socially good actions in order to defend themselves if something negative about them would come up. On one hand this might sound clever but as Drs. Brad Googins and Phil Mirvis (2012) ask that how can strategies like this be seen as positive when companies are only trying to save their own skin and aim for profits? The two authors, furthermore, point out that according to some study "60% of CEOs worldwide say that there is a significant "gap" between what their companies say versus do about CSR" and if this is even partly true,

the criticism towards companies performing CSR actions just for increasing profits, may be justified. This then again implies that even though companies engage themselves in CSR and may even do it well, customers are still suspicious and do not value the company efforts. However, some also say that the concept of CSR is so broad that companies have hard time focusing on the aspects of it that really matter for the core business strategy and this may also be a reason why companies are not fully incorporating CSR into their daily operations.

So now it almost seems that the biggest positive sides about CSR - cutting down costs and employee and customer satisfaction - are ruled out by the negative ones - CSR not being taken seriously by customers because of companies just protecting themselves. Even though some of it might be true and some companies might suffer from not being believable in their CSR actions, there are champions that know how to win over customers and for some companies aiming at sustainable, long-term goals in CSR strategies has been the key (Godelnik R., 2013). Sustainability in corporate social responsibility is therefore the topic of the next chapter.

2.6 Sustainability

When starting a business and becoming an entrepreneur, one of the first aims in mind is probably to be able to have a business that will go on for many years into the future. This then means that a business must have long-term goals incorporated into the business strategy and some of these goals are most likely to be connected with sustainability. The term of sustainability was introduced in chapter 2.1 and when extending sustainability in businesses, one definition says that it is “managing the triple bottom line” and being able to survive market fluctuations because of “healthy economic, social and environmental systems” (Financial Times Lexicon).

A sustainable business is then according to the definition above, a business that is incorporating CSR values into its operations and at the same time has the means to create growth and maximizing the resources available. So as a company aims for growth, the sustainable growth is the growth a company can do without compromising long-term goals and profits (Inc.). In a simple way it means not growing too fast to not be able to increase productivity but at the same time not growing too slow to fall behind from innovation and competitors. To ensure a steady and reasonable growth the company therefore is forced to act in an ever-changing political, economic and competitor field that is setting new challenges and requirements on businesses. As a sustainable business is at the same time focusing on long-term goals and successes both today and next week, and by taking the planet, profit and people aspects into

the business strategy and implementing them through the organisation's every corner, a company may even be able to grow in a reasonable yearly amount to be called a sustainable business (Confino J., Drummond J., 2010).

So now as it has been established that companies aim for sustainable long-term successes and growth, it is still a question on how to best develop the social, economic and environmental values and goals into the own company strategy. According to one survey done by IBM Institute of Business Value which interviewed more than 250 executives in CSR matters relating to sustainable growth, the conclusion was that sustainability needs to be understood and lived out by top line managers first and then engaging all employees to live out CSR values in the organisation (IBM 2008). Another point lifted up was that many executives thought that it is possible to have growth and cost savings even though CSR is part of everyday manager values. The survey gave examples such as cost savings done by reducing energy consumption in production lines and providing the customers more information on CSR actions which leads to increased sales. However, the survey stated that in order for a business to really live up to CSR goals, the values and beliefs of the company must change from within. Managers must lead by example, focus on the right and most valuable development points and encourage CSR in the whole organisation; otherwise CSR will still only look good on paper.

Additional information that the survey pointed out was that more and more businesses are taking CSR in as a tool for strategy planning and risk management (IBM 2008). Many executives believed that CSR should no longer be seen as only a cost that won't give any returns, but it should more be seen as a long-term sustainable investment that will give returns in the future. Furthermore, transparency and information was also getting a lot of attention in the survey. To be truly a sustainable business, a company has to provide transparent information to customers who are getting more and more involved and interested. However, almost 40 % of the interviewed executives said that they do not know how much information customers want and expect; an issue that is truly dangerous as the essential aspect is that a business has to know its customer to be able to develop in a direction that can be sustainable in the future as well.

However, the idea in sustainability is to be able to do business in the future as well and when times change, it can be difficult to manage a sustainable business. In CSR factors it is challenging for businesses that have taken CSR actions before there have been any guidelines on how to properly do socially good actions (Morrison J. 2012). Now when governments and other organisations are starting to develop laws and regulations on proper CSR actions, companies have a hard time adjusting their own

policies. Companies are forced to start cooperating more and more with external parties to get correct CSR implemented in their organisation, and in a way the control over the development of ideas and direction of CSR in the own organisation may be lost. In a long run it is therefore not the best solution to have an external party say what to do regarding CSR actions, as this may be a threat to the company sustainability strategies and distract the managers from selecting the activities that really matter. Furthermore, as the world of CSR and selection of possible activities are so broad, companies have a hard time focusing on the most beneficial tasks without more regulation and laws to bind companies and restrict the natural growth of both sustainability and return strategies.

All in all, in order to be a sustainable business a company cannot afford to overlook CSR fundamental thoughts of regarding the planet, profit and people aspects. Before making final decisions it is therefore encouraged to give a thought to how a particular decision will impact the employees and whether the external social stakeholders will be affected in any way. Furthermore, to keep customers satisfied transparency and reliability cannot be overly emphasized as according to IBM “a company’s most valuable asset is its ability to convert brand power into customer buying decisions” and this brand power comes from good products, trustworthiness and skilled brand management (2008). This is why the next big subject of this thesis work is discussing marketing, brand management and how to implement CSR challenges and goals into that world.

3 MARKETING AND BRAND MANAGEMENT

Marketing is often presumed as one of the key aspects in promoting a company products and services and through that possibly increasing sales. One of the main aims with marketing is to create value and relationships between a customer and a company to make the customer feel more attracted to a brand and willing to buy a product from that specific brand. Therefore brand management is one of the most discussed subjects in marketing and reputation keeping. A brand is as already mentioned in the introduction of this work, “a name, symbol or design, or a combination of these that identifies a maker or a seller of a product or a service” (Kotler P. et al, 2013). How to manage these symbols, names or designs in the best way and to keep or even increase the attractiveness and value of a brand, is of great interest for marketers and company lead all over the world. In the following sections is then discussed a few of the main points of how to manage a sustainable brand, in addition to a look into if corporate social responsibility can be a player in successful brand management.

3.1 Definition and practice

So as said, brand management is something interesting for the leaders of a company. As the brand is often the company name or a symbol connected to the company, the business lead is aiming to get the customers interested, trusting the company and also willing to spend money on products or services a company is offering (Kotler P. et al. 2013). The road to gaining this trust is not easy and requires a lot of work, but the essential point is to get consumers feeling positive emotions and have good experiences when associating about a brand and its products or services.

Another definition for a brand is that “a brand is a name that influences buyers” (Kapferer J.N., 2008). The fundamental thought behind a brand is therefore the idea that a product with a known name or logo is more appealing to customers than a product without any labelling on it. This factor of influencing consumers is powerful, it comes down to whether a buyer choses one company product over the product of the competitor, which in the end means more sales and profits. On the other hand, the mix of how a brand influences buyers is a complex one as there are many variables that may not always be in the company’s control (Kapferer J.N., 2008). These factors may be customer service and experience, product and package proper use, competitor performance and overall discussion about the company products in the society through product reviews, stores that stock products and individual word of mouth.

There are as mentioned above a lot of things that have an impact on how customers feel and perceive a brand and a company. As a strong brand with positive consumer perceptions may give a company more sales, it is in the manager's goals to carefully manage their own brand and make it as attractive as possible. The biggest challenge in managing a brand, however, is the subjective, individual opinions in how customers experience a brand, a product, a service and a company itself (Kotler et al. 2013). Experiences and also expectations are dealing with opinions, feelings and values which are highly individual and vary from person to person. The obstacle to tackle in marketing and branding is how to reach out with one consistent message to a big group of people who all have different values and opinions, and get these people to buy one exact product or service to gain sales and profits for a company.

One solution to how to manage people's opinions and meet expectations is to provide a brand promise, and set a base for the expectations of a product and company. A brand promise is a statement - for example one sentence - that explains what the company is achieving to deliver (Marsh B. Jr. 2013). Often brand promises are not explaining what the companies do, but they more try to pinpoint the personality and appearance of the company. One definition for brand promise comes from Jean Wilcox who wrote in a book about marketing that "a brand promise is the statement that you make to customers that identifies what they should expect for all interactions with your people, products, services and company" (Olenski S. 2013). An example of a company's brand promise comes from the giant Coca-Cola who says that their mission is to "inspire creativity, passion, optimism and fun" (The Coca-Cola Company). In the case of Coca-Cola, the consumer should therefore be able to sense the optimism and fun about the company when seeing advertising, making inquiries, attending events, visiting webpages or social media channels and making buying decisions.

On the other hand, a brand promise is also helping the employees of the companies to live up to the brand, and work towards developing the company to match the brand promise of e.g. a fun and quality company. When the brand is lived and felt from the inside employees, it is also easier to make stable customer relationships with the consumers. However, as brand promises give consumers something to base their expectations on- e.g. if a company says they have excellent customer service-the risk is that a brand cannot fulfil their promise (Gunelius S. 2012). If a customer then again is disappointed in a product or company because the expectations were too high, the likelihood that that same customer will purchase other goods from the company is low and it is extremely hard to get back customers who once have been dissatisfied. On the other hand, companies who manage to please and meet expectations constantly are strong as happy customers also become loyal to the company.

Brand promises do also count in CSR issues. If a company claims to be ecological, provide safe, quality products and care about their employees and customers, it would be a huge negative aspect if it turned out that the particular company uses child labour, has dangerous working conditions at production facilities or has sold a broken product that has caused damage. However, in the end it all comes down to that an average consumer wants value for their money spent, and they don't want to be disappointed in what they buy. Companies need to at least get to a basic level of meeting the expectations customers have, and if they can, even exceed them to excel. How to create these experiences that will exceed expectations is a keystone in sustainable brand building and brand management and is more discussed in chapter 3.5. Next in turn is how companies create relationships with consumers in order to get more loyal customers.

3.2 Creating relationships

As seen in the previous chapter, branding is interesting and important for companies. However, even though companies want customers to know about what they do and how they do it, consumers may not always be reachable or attentive towards the messages. This is why it is essential to know who the companies customers are, how they receive information and what kinds of opinions they have.

If starting with the basic starting point of marketing activities, a company needs to know who their customer is (Kotler P. et al. 2013). Knowing who the main customers are is essential because different age groups, genders and ethnicities have different spending patterns, different values and different channels for receiving information. The big masses of potential customers are therefore divided into smaller segments, which can be targeted better through channels that interest these special customer groups. These special channels for information spreading about a company are called touch points, and for a company trying to get a message through to a consumer about the own products- or even what CSR activities the company is engaging in- it is fundamental to know and be able to manage the right touch points.

According to one definition, a touch point is “each interaction -physical, communication, human and sensory- with and within your organisation” (Brigman H. 2013). It therefore means every interaction a customer has to a company; from visiting company websites and social media channels, seeing advertising in a newspaper or TV, to making a customer request and meeting salespeople in a store to emailing customer complaints and hearing word of mouth talk about the company and brand. On one hand touch points are excellent opportunities to advertise and communicate the brand message in for

example social media, but on the other hand it is hard for companies to manage the discussion between individuals in social media and the discussion going on on the streets. Furthermore, as the advertising in TV, on Facebook or in newspapers only creates some recognition of the name and brand but no major movements in customer loyalty which is needed for sustainable brand management, businesses also need to look at what experiences the customers get (Kotler P. et al. 2013).

The experience and also relationship management in a company comes down to a concept called CRM - customer relationship management. CRM is a core factor in delivering good and profitable customer experiences and one definition is also saying that CRM is “all aspects of acquiring, keeping and growing customers” (Kotler P. et al. 2013). The idea of why relationships with customers need to be managed is because companies *compete*; they are competing with each other of customer’s attention, opinions and in the end, money. When the market today is filled with companies delivering almost the same products with similar features but only from different brands, it is easy for customers to switch from one manufacturer to another after a bad or dissatisfying experience. As consumers want value for their money, companies who don't deliver that and disappoint customers will be abandoned. This is what CRM is trying to hinder, the idea is to realise why customers are unhappy or dissatisfied - whether it is the product quality or personal service they are getting- and fix these problems before they become bigger and out of control.

Additionally, to keep customers and give positive experiences, companies try to exceed expectations, be better and offer new exciting things for customers to get good associations to a brand and a product. Happy and satisfied customers will be more willing to come back and buy something again, and this encourages to customer loyalty which is what a company in the long-run is looking for; happy customers and sustainable income (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). Loyal and satisfied customers are also more likely to recommend a product or a brand to their friends and family, which again creates a circle of valuable brand ambassadors who have own, personal experiences in using a brand's products. As people also are more likely to buy products that are recommended by their friends or family, CRM at its best can create profitable streams if the right touch points and messages are used to reach customers.

The aim for companies is then to create constant value for the customer with products or services that can't be found at a better price or value from a competitor. This value is created with a mix of good products at the right price, correct customer service and effective marketing. However, these aspects are factors that require long-term business planning and strategy, and some of these aspects concerning long-term and sustainable marketing covered later in this work. The next step on the other hand is how

to create a presence online and communicate company messages in that channel to get more customers.

3.3 Online marketing and social media

It is probably no news that the internet has become one of the most important tools for companies to connect with their partners and customers. As the internet world started to develop, information became more available and at the same time it became more challenging for companies to control. As customers started to use online medias more and more - and even began to carry the internet with them on mobile phones - companies had to follow the customers and compete about their attention in the online world. Companies started to develop digital presence in first own webpages and in recent years they also have moved into social medias such as Facebook and Twitter. With the rise of social medias, everyday people had the new opportunity to express themselves, discuss widely and quickly access information, opinions and statistics about not only world news but also company standings, operations and critique. In this mix it is challenging for any company to manage the discussion about them and try to preserve their brand and reputation.

According to one definition online marketing is “efforts to market products and services and build customer relationships over the internet” (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). The internet has so changed a lot for both customers and companies and so has also the ways of do marketing and builds strong customer relationships rapidly changed. For consumers it is easier to contact companies and discuss the experiences they have as at the same time companies have access to more opinions, customer preferences and experiences that are valuable information for companies seeking to grow their business, engage customers and create a stable online presence. However, the road from going from not having online medias to having a successful online presence which engages consumers may be challenging and often it doesn't happen overnight.

When creating an online network and the initial company presence, the process is shortly divided into four steps: “Creating a website, setting up online social networks, placing ads or promotions online and using e-mail” (Kotler et. al. 2013). As a own website is often the starting point, companies need to create websites that are interesting, easily usable, attractive and encourage the customer to surf around and find out more about the company products and operations. Along with the information found on company webpages, probably the second most important channel is social medias where potential

customers share, talk about and engage with information. Companies therefore are building up Facebook and Twitter accounts, sharing videos on YouTube and trying to get into the news feed and discussion topics of people's everyday life's and interactions on social medias.

After developing social media presence, the third step of building an online presence is focusing on placing advertising on digital platforms in forms of display advertising, advertising related to search functions and online classifieds (Kotler et. al. 2013). This form of advertising appears for example when people look for something on search engines or in the beginning of a YouTube video as a short clip. The benefits of this sort of advertising- and especially with search engine advertising - is that the results are easy to measure and the advertising strategy can easily be altered depending on the results. Similar low costs and easy measurability as the third step option for creating an online presence is also coming from the final step of e-mail marketing. At its best, e-mail marketing is cost-efficient and as there is a possibility of sending customers personalized messages that are interesting to exactly them, e-mail marketing is usually successful. On the other hand, there has also grown a negative aspect on e-mail marketing that consumers usually hate; spam messages. However, even though this spam mails are increasing, there still has been successes with e-mail marketing in general as it gives the opportunity of personalised messages and easy measurability.

There then are two big aspects in online marketing and especially communication of the CSR actions. The first one being the company own webpage and the second the different social media channels and tools the company is using. When focusing on the own website, one of the biggest challenges is making a website useful for the customer (Chaffey D. & Smith PR. 2013). Usability and easy access to the right information is key, and this aspect is also making the website visit longer which is valuable for the company to strengthen their relationship with the customer. Furthermore, a webpage should also have a specific goal, may it be to sell a company product, give information about the company's core operations, values or products that the customer can easily discuss and share, or help the customer to save time and money.

As there are many types of web pages- ones that directly sell something such as online stores or ones that are purely for information and branding purposes- the look and first impression of a web page is important (Kotler P. et al. 2013). The first visit and initial impression of a site, the design, usability and access to accurate and interesting information can make either the customer to click away from a site or stay there a bit longer. However, no matter what kind of webpage it is may it be an online store or simply an informative page about a company, the base for creating working webpages that customers come back to is a site that is useful and creates excitement for the customer. In CSR purposes this means to deliver valuable, easy accessible information that convinces the customer of a company's socially good actions. And even though the task to provide information about the core values, operations and management systems of a company might sound reasonable and good thing to focus on, the findings of the research in this work suggests a different reality which is also discussed later in this work.

The second big part of company branding and value communication is the today much popular social media. Since social media started to develop, there now are many social media channels and tool options for companies to use. The range of tools from Facebook, Google+ and Twitter to LinkedIn, social blogging and Instagram is huge, and these medias are constantly changing and there are also constantly evolving new ones. However, the most essential point is probably not how many tools a company has available, but rather how the use of these online tools is managed into the bigger part of the whole marketing strategy a company has (Chaffey D. & Smith PR. 2013). Additionally, one of the most important factors that companies are forced to realise is that social media is meant to be social, meaning an ongoing information exchange and contribution of fun and exciting status updates, comments, pictures and general discussion. The aim for companies in social media marketing is therefore to create interaction, participation and an easy relationship between companies and customers, and in the end possibly even strengthen the awareness and emotional bonds of a particular brand.

As companies try to navigate and decide between different social medias, Chaffey and Smith point out that it may not be entirely necessary for companies to be on every social network that is available, but rather manage a few ones well (2013). The challenge in social media marketing is the competition of a consumer's attention as consumers tend to talk with friends, like funny pictures and have a good time on social medias which may lead to that consumers do not want to be disturbed by marketing

messages. When starting with the social media marketing, a company need to choose the appropriate channel for their message and then manage that channel well. As an example can be given the more business focused LinkedIn where companies may accurately post articles about their yearly results, but the same concept may not work in the more picture and visually oriented Instagram world. This then comes down to knowing your customer and being attentive to what information channel they prefer to use and finally following the customer to that particular channel.

Additionally, in social media marketing, the same guideline of having a goal and useful information is applying (Chaffey D. & Smith PR. 2013). As marketing efforts are aiming at creating bonds and a relationship with customers to in the end encourage and increase sales, social media should be used to create these relationships with customers. One of the biggest mistakes a company can make is not to reply on comments that consumers leave on company updates on e.g. Facebook, and this gives a message of not caring of the consumers. The best way to manage social media channels and giving out useful messages about the company is being fun and approachable. As the biggest advantage of social media is the immediate replies, reviews and opinions about company actions and updates, a company that listens to consumers can change the operation and products in a direction that pleases consumers more. In this same context the fun part also applies to CSR communication on social media channels, if it is done in a very boring way and without showing own enthusiasm as a company, consumers won't believe and actually embrace the socially good efforts a company is making. And if a customer doesn't know about the message and the actions of a company, a lot of the money invested may be lost because of no increase in customer rates or total sales either.

On the other hand, the biggest benefit with social media is also the information that is provided there. As consumers talk, share and engage themselves and e.g. comment on posts made by a company, the company has directly access to feedback and opinions of the customers who follow them (Chaffey D. & Smith PR. 2013). Companies therefore get close to the consumers, can better listen and get new ideas for altering their operations or products accordingly. Furthermore, this alternation and listening to the feedback when investing in marketing activities is also something that is beneficial in the long run. The opportunity to specify and develop more effective marketing campaigns when the feedback through online medias is easily measurable is something that brings advantages when planning long-term marketing effects.

3.4 Sustainable marketing

Even though the aim for marketing often is to boost sales and create more awareness and interest towards a specific company, there is also a concept called sustainable marketing which criticises the encouragement to consume and produce more that marketing is promoting (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). As sustainability is a big and growing factor, it has now also stretched out to the marketing business which also forces companies to integrate sustainability in marketing alongside of CSR efforts in the company strategy.

Often marketing is said to only go for short-term boosts of sales and fulfilling only customer short-term needs without thinking about the long-term consequences for the company, the customers and especially the planet (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). The critiques are saying that the costs for big marketing campaigns that companies do regularly only raise the prices of the end products, and this is in the long-run not beneficial for either customers nor the company itself. Sustainable marketing is then pointing out that a company should only focus on the marketing activities that are performing best when comparing to the resources invested in the activities (Anderson M. 2011). Examples of this sort of thinking can be found in e.g. social media efforts as companies may possibly substitute printing brochures with social media posts and reaching out to consumers through cost-efficient digital platforms. Furthermore, to shift the marketing activates to long-term beneficial ones instead of only short-term attention getters, the focus should be on long-term brand management and reputation keeping. According to Anderson this is coming from creating loyalty, relationships and emotional bonds to a brand (2011). As examples are given to create a history and a story for a brand which is truly interesting and emotionally connects the consumers to the brand and makes it feel more personal and approachable. Additionally, the company products should be developed together with the consumers by listening to the customers and knowing how they use the product, when they use it and what they feel about the product in general.

However, as the environmental movement has grown, marketing has been taking a toll of encouraging consumerism and material thinking that only leads to bigger carbon footprints (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). Critiques say that marketing creates a false image of that the more you own the better you are, and this is not encouraging into taking green actions and cutting emissions from production. Furthermore, some people say that as companies are trying to produce faster and bigger amounts to have products in stock when a big marketing campaign is launched, the safety and quality of products drops. The point

therefore is, that companies that do aggressive marketing are not thinking long-term and according to CSR principles as for example customers may abandon a company if they get unsafe or poor quality products, which then again is driving a company to do additional marketing campaigns and raise prices. Furthermore, as marketing often aims for growth for a company, sustainable marketing is also targeting the aspect that a sustainable brand has a sustainable growth curve instead of only occasional boosts. The aim is to do constant marketing that is not threatening or having an impact on the environment or quality of products and services, and only focus on marketing activities that have more sustainable value.

The consequence has been the development of environmental sustainability in both marketing and company strategy in general. This goes in accordance to the CSR planet aspect, and the aim is to “sustain the environment and produce profits for the company” (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). One of the biggest aims in the environmental movement is to get companies to understand that with serving customers with safe products that they actually need and are produced environmentally sustainable, the future prospects of the company is in better hands as well. Companies therefore need to truly develop a vision for sustainability along with CSR goals in all fields of their own business and also communicate these aims and actions towards greener strategy, and the communication of sustainability and CSR is coming up in the next part.

3.5 Marketing and CSR

As seen, sustainability is a big thing in marketing as well. As one aspect of CSR is focusing on sustainability and the innovation process to be more environmentally friendly, sustainable marketing and CSR are overlapping and going hand-in-hand with each other. However, the main point is still that a consumer should be aware of a company’s actions and this includes socially beneficial actions as well. There are a few guidelines on how to approach sustainable marketing and CSR and these principles alongside of the marketing ethics is giving a base to long-term brand and marketing management.

The basic of marketing is knowing your customer and this goes to CSR marketing as well. As consumers are getting more environmentally aware, companies are also following and taking steps towards CSR, but in the end it doesn't matter if a company is environmentally friendly if customers doesn't know about it (Ottman J. 2008). The aim is then to get consumers knowing that a product is

manufactured with the environment in mind because when consumers who value environmentally friendly products are making buying decisions, that kind of information is valuable. Furthermore, if a customer is pleased with a product, the step to next time buying or recommending the product and company is lower which in the long-run is beneficial for companies. And this is why consumers should know about if companies are engaging in CSR and what activities these actions are.

Additionally, as consumers know what a company is engaging in, the result is often that a company becomes more transparent and trustable. Transparency is one of the aspects of ethical marketing which says that a company should communicate honestly about what they are doing (Kotler P. et. al. 2013). As transparency and openness is also included in CSR principles, one assumption can also be that companies that don't have anything to hide are more positive about sharing information from e.g. production plants and employee situations. It is important that customers believe in the CSR messages and that they are actually true, because there are a lot of critiques who say that CSR is only a charade for continuing unethical business operations (Ottman J. 2008). According to Warren Buffet "It takes 20 years to build a reputation, and 5 minutes to ruin it" which in CSR can be seen that if a company says it is transparent and ethical, and then it turns out that it actually uses child labour or is promoting product qualities that don't exist, it may even ruin the company (Williams T. 2014). However, by being transparent and communicating openly companies may target factors like child labour, bribes or supplier problems to work in accordance to CSR goals and even add marketing of these actions to the mix to in the future be more stable towards reputation threatening aspects and revilements.

Even though companies may strive for an operations model that is totally ethical and in accordance to CSR aspects, it can be challenging for managers to supervise every factor of the organisation and make sure they are following company policy. One solution that could be good as a marketing aspect and a company internal development strategy is to let consumers and employees themselves tell the company in what direction CSR should be taken and what should be done first (Ottman J. 2008). By empowering the employees and the customers, there comes a sense of being able to make a difference which often leads to loyalty. Furthermore, as studies have shown that the own employees are more committed to tasks when they have a feeling that their work matter, they may also be more willing to give high scores in a Great Place to work questionnaire which is one of the best forms of marketing for companies searching for new employees (Great Place to work)

So as briefly seen, CSR can and should be used in marketing as a way to raise awareness, increase customer loyalty, create buffers to be able to survive negative critique of failures in information flows but also used to become more transparent and ethical in all aspects of the own business operations. CSR is also one factor that companies may use in their overall marketing strategy in e.g. social media and own webpages to communicate the activities they are taking to become more environmentally active. The next big topic of this work will therefore be to take a look at how a few Finnish companies approach the issue of CSR marketing and what their solutions have been to communicate their efforts in online medias.

4 RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

As now some of the theory of CSR and marketing has been discussed, it is time to see what the primary research done brought for data. The goal for this work was to find out how companies listed in the Helsinki stock exchange attack the issue of CSR communication and marketing in the online world and next is a description of how the task was done.

4.1 Company selections

The company selection was done by selecting from a list of listed companies provided by the Helsinki stock exchange webpage (<http://www.nasdaqomxnordic.com/osakkeet>). The author of this work tried to get different types of companies that represented different types of fields into the mix, in order to get a bigger view on what the real situation towards CSR is. The companies were picked from public companies listed on the Helsinki stock exchange and therefore no private companies are represented. The author chose to limit the companies to listed ones because the requirements on reporting and transparency are higher than on privately owned companies. By doing this the author was aiming at to be able to get more accurate information about if and how companies use CSR in their operations.

Furthermore, the companies were picked from three market size categories, large, medium sized and small companies. The goal was to try to get a selection that represents the whole market field but at the same time also represents the different sections by company size. The final amount of companies chosen was 36, twelve in each category of companies. In the following tables the companies, their market capitalization rate and their business field are presented according to the company sizes.

Table 1.1 Big companies

Company name	Industry	Market cap. in €
Elisa Oyj	Telecommunication	3 818 586 366
Fortum Oyj	Utilities	15 724 096 697
Kesko Oyj	Consumer Services	2 101 060 064
Metso Oyj	Industrials	3 676 014 859
Neste Oil Oyj	Oil & Gas	5 330 632 632

Orion	Health Care	2 661 295 512
Outokumpu Oyj	Basic Materials	2 030 241 808
Sampo	Financials	21 882 608 000
Sanoma Oyj	Consumer Services	780 846 798
Stora Enso	Basic Materials	4 583 670 554
Teliasonera	Telecommunication	23 404 108 241
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	Industrials	7 045 453 164

Table 1.2 Medium sized companies

Company name	Industry	Market cap. in €
Aktia Bank	Financials	443 246 801
Alma Media Oyj	Consumer Services	226 460 559
Elektrobit Oyj	Technology	449 706 552
Finnlines Oyj	Industrials	824 050 256
F-secure Oyj	Technology	336 653 327
HKScan Oyj	Consumer goods	171 707 522
Metsä Board	Basic Materials	1 361 978 018
Oriola-KD	Health Care	363 340 822
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	Consumer goods	565 326 560
Rapala VMC	Consumer goods	186 030 000
Uponor Oyj	Industrials	857 985 384
Viking Line Abp	Consumer Services	172 908 000

Table 1.3 Small companies

Company name	Industry	Market cap. in €
Affecto Oyj	Technology	66 229 698
Biohit Oyj	Health Care	58 032 484
Endomines	Basic Materials	14 418 628
Kesla	Industrials	9 932 580
Marimekko Oyj	Consumer goods	77 660 256
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	Health Care	44 365 760
Panostaja Oyj	Financials	41 903 819
Qpr Software Oyj	Technology	13 440 452
Restamax Oyj	Consumer Services	58 147 651
Sotkamo Silver	Basic Materials	12 798 783
Takoma Oyj	Industrials	6 265 706
Ålandsbanken Abp	Financials	89 926 250

As seen, the companies are representing a big variety of businesses and because of that they also have a different approach to how and if they use CSR in their operations. As Finland doesn't have any regulations on how much a company should focus on CSR activities, they are voluntary actions. However, as mentioned in the theory section of this work, the voluntariness is done mostly because of customer pressure, reputation management, employee satisfaction and also because it is becoming a more common thing in competitors strategies as well.

4.2 CSR on company webpages

As this work has been targeting online presence of company social responsibility, the author chose to take a look into how companies bring their CSR message forward in online channels. The research was done by only looking into material and information that was available without any form of registration or sending e-mail inquiries; this means information found on company webpages, online available annual and other types of reports and also possible social media channels.

The first starting point for the research of how companies use CSR in their communication was to start with the company webpage. As a company own webpage is usually the most important tool to spread information about the company operations and the organisation itself, the author wanted to look into whether CSR is lifted up as a core point in business operations. As the first page - the usual landing page - has an important factor of either triggering more interest or encouraging sales or pushing the customer away, the aim was to find out if companies communicate social responsibility goals or actions on the first page of their webpage (Vaughan, Pamela 2012). The author took a look at the webpages in the Finnish language as the aim was to find out how companies use CSR in their communication in Finland. Therefore only .fi pages were used to collect the information and the exact webpages and their addresses can be found in appendix 1.

There was therefore two possible variables in this research either “yes” or “no”, if there was a mentioning of CSR as some sort of article or other post on the company first page, it was rated as “yes” but if there was no mentioning or only a link which led to more information about CSR, it was rated “no” as it was not a visible way to communicate CSR actions. In the research two big categories could be found when doing the research, either there was a big article or own section on the landing page for CSR, or then it wasn't even mentioned or taken as an important aspect on the first page. As an example of how CSR actions could be seen on company landing pages, can be seen on the next page from the petroleum company Neste Oil, which had an emphasis on CSR on their landing page during this research period.



Picture 1; Example of a company webpage in December 2014

As was mentioned in the theory part, the landing page has a big difference in how consumers and people who visit the company webpage perceive the company. As the landing page should also give the most important information about what a company is doing and also the most important things that are beneficial that the consumers know about the company. In this particular example, the above company has chosen to lift up a Christmas charity where consumers could vote between how much money each of three organisations should get from a 15 000 euro lump sum. This is a good example on how to create engagement on the own company webpage as the article about which charity organisation should get most money is easily attracting consumers who are interested in donating money but who aren't able to use their own money to do so. The article is therefore having a clear call to action which makes the page more interesting to customers and at the same time it also spreads CSR awareness about the company actions. The information about this type of aspects of a company it also something that is easy to share on social medias and being interesting and fun for the company customers to engage in.

In the overall research about company landing pages, it was visible that the bigger companies of this selection were more focused on having information about CSR on their webpages - a result that was also somewhat anticipated. On the first page half of the big companies had some article or other section about their CSR action when the same amount was around 40 % for the medium sized companies and only one of the small companies had CSR on their front page, which in numbers is only 8.3 %.

However, as this first search of landing pages was done on December 15th 2014, the author was not sure how much Christmas time had to do with the promotion of socially good actions. According to earlier research, companies are keen to involve themselves in some good actions especially during Christmas times to promote good spirit and responsibility between staff and customers (Heiskanen, Reetta 2014). In a few cases the front pages promoted Christmas charity events and Christmas donations of money which then also counted as a CSR activity. The author still felt that it was done only because of influencing a good Christmas spirit and therefore decided to take a look at the front landing pages again at a maybe one more neutral time on February 6th to get a comparison rate.



Picture 2; Example of a the same company website in February 2015

The result for this second look at front pages compared to the first one, was that when twelve companies of 36 had some CSR related content on their webpage in December, only seven had some CSR content in February. When continuing on this same example about Neste Oil, their landing page didn't have any form of CSR mentioning anymore in February. In this specific case it therefore could be said that the charity was done in Christmas spirit. However, as the charity article was in a good way encouraging customer to click forward and having a clear action that people visiting the page could do, this simpler page doesn't create the same interest and fun spirit as the page in December. When also

analysing the colouring of the landing page, it is in accordance to the company’s branding and the choice of colours in the logo. However, it still is plain and when comparing to the landing page in December, the one with the Christmas charity has more colour and is somewhat more engaging and fun to look at.

When taking a look at the overall situation on how the companies performed in the research, the table underneath is aiming to compare the results between the landing pages of all the companies in December and February.

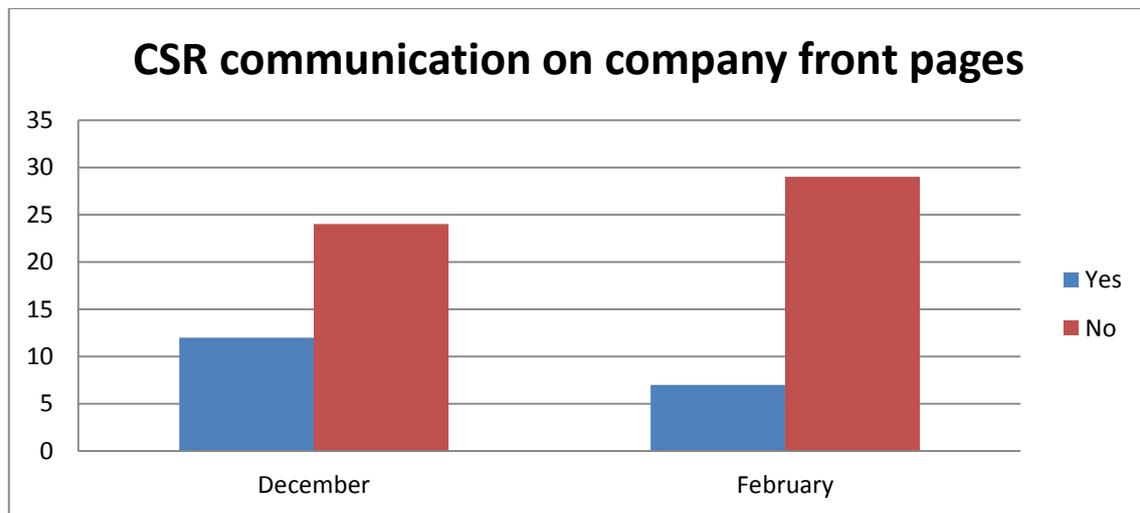


Table 2. CSR communication on company front pages in December 2014 and February 2015

The analysis and the table above are therefore telling that a big amount of companies didn’t have any sort of CSR communication on their landing page in either December or February. For those companies who had information about CSR, the big companies were again represented as having the most CSR related content on their webpages. The amount had however decreased from half of the big companies in December to only a third in February, and in the overall research it could also be seen that CSR related content had decreased during these two research periods. Some correlation could therefore be found with the Christmas time and CSR actions. However, there were still a big number of companies who had no mentioning whatsoever of social responsibility and if thinking about trying to connect CSR to the company brand and overall communication, the efforts on company first pages are not big. The tables for comparing company front pages one-by-one regarding CSR activities in December and February can be found in Appendix 2.

When taking into account how much CSR has been discussed and how much progress it has made in e.g. legislations requirements, it was a slight surprise that CSR was having such a small emphasis on company webpages. Also as adding the increasing consumer awareness and attention towards green and ecological thinking, one could assume more focus on developing organisations towards CSR aspects and at the same time also communicating actively about these efforts on the company webpages as well.

4.3 Triple Bottom Line

When moving away from the landing page and going deeper into the company webpages and CSR reports, the author decided to take a look at whether companies are aware of the Triple bottom line and the ISO standardisation tools. Therefore if companies reported on CSR on their webpages, had an own sustainability report or code of conduct or just an own paragraph in the annual report, the content was divided into people, planet and profit. This was to find out whether companies are targeting these different aspects of CSR and following some ISO standard in their operation. Triple bottom line was also discussed earlier in this work. To be rated as a “yes” factor the people aspect had to include clear mentioning’s of how the company take care of their staff or customers interests, the planet aspect how environmental goals are targeted and the profit aspect on how continuous revenue streams are ensured by also being sustainable and socially responsible.

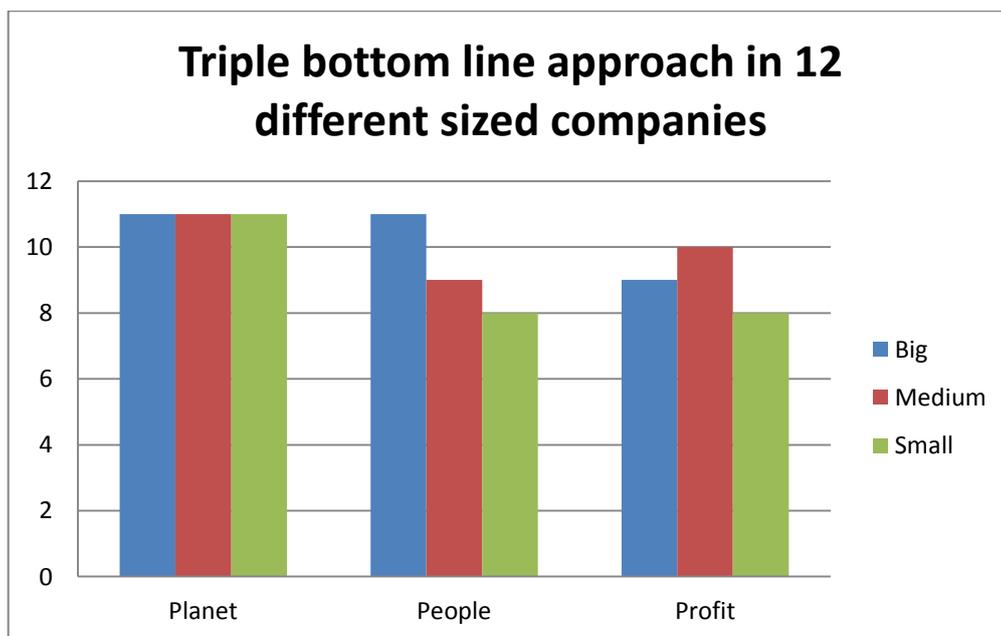


Table 3. Triple bottom line approach in the different company size categories

The result was that most of the 36 companies are aware or at least mention the different aspects of the triple bottom line principles. The environment, or planet, was mentioned in 11 out of 12 companies in each size category and only one company in each category had no mentioning of CSR activities or activities involving the planet aspect. In the other parts the results are a bit more spread out; in people 11 big, 9 medium and 8 small companies and the in profit part 9, 10 and 8 companies out of 12 in each size category had included sustainability issues related to profits. The results for this triple bottom line per company can be found in Appendix 3.

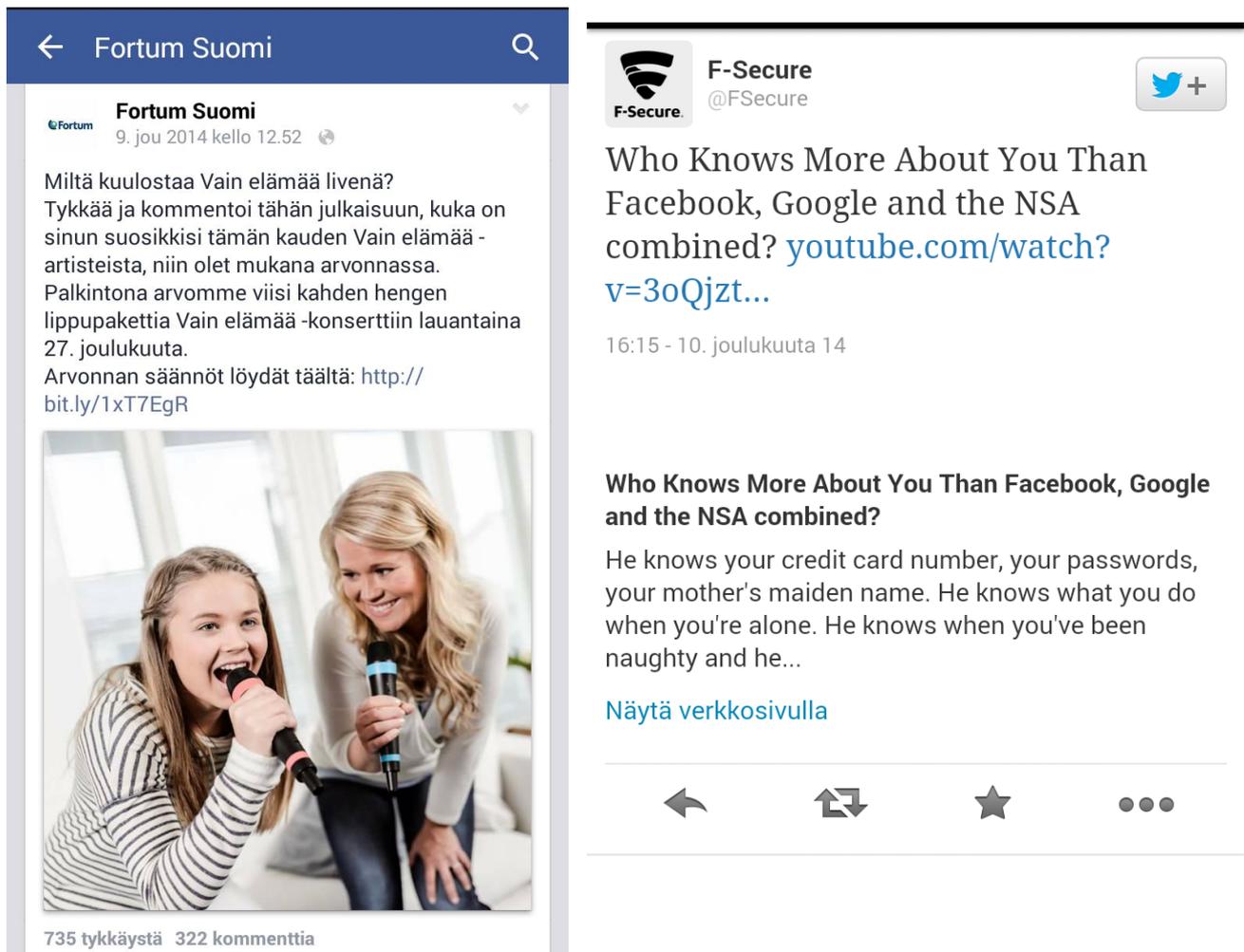
Another factor that can be related to CSR activities and also triple bottom line are the ISO standards as they often target the same aspects of business operations as the planet, people and profit principles. ISO standards is also something that was discussed earlier in this work and the author wanted to include them in the research to see whether companies in Finland are aware and follow market standards in their operations. The founding of these look can be seen in Appendix 4, and the result was that 26 companies out of 36 had mentioning's about ISO standards on their webpages. Companies who didn't have any ISO mentioning were ten, and six of these could be found in the small company category. In the big section only one company didn't have relation to ISO standards on their webpages and in the medium seized category the amount was three. Therefore 72 % of all companies are following ISO standards and when dividing into big, medium sized and small companies, the numbers are 92 %, 75 % and 50 % respectively. Most of the ISO standards that companies were using were about the ISO 9000 which is focusing on quality management and the other was ISO 14000 which is targeting environmental management.

4.4 CSR in social media channels

It does not come as a surprise that social media is one of the most valuable networks of communication to the mix of external partners a company have, and this could also be seen when taking a look at the social media communication the companies selected for this work uses. As social media has grown into such a big tool of marketing and communication, the aim was to see if CSR goals and values are expressed in these networks. In order to get as big a sample as possible, the author decided to research how the selected companies communicated in social medias for a period of six weeks; from Monday the 3rd of November until Sunday the 14th of December 2014, meaning from the beginning of week 45 to the end of week 50 in the year 2014. From this period the author counted the total amount of posts a company made on their social media channels and additionally the author counted separately the posts

that had a connection to CSR. Doing so the aim was to get an understanding of how much companies communicate and how much if any - of the communication is going to CSR purposes.

The results from the social media research was that most of the companies focused on having three social media channels; Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The bigger companies were again represented more in social medias and in the small company category there were four companies who did not have or hadn't used any social media channels for the six week period the research was done. The overall result was however, that most of the companies had some sort of social media presence and they also used the social media channels to spread varying types of information about their company. As this research was aiming at specifically CSR related content, underneath can be found some examples of social media posts that didn't have specific CSR content and some that could be counted into that category.



Picture 3; Two examples of social media posts that are not CSR related content

As the purpose on social medias often is to on one hand spread news about the company and their operations and on the other hand create engaging and fun content that customers want to discuss, there are a lot of choices for what kind of posts to put up. The two posts on the previous page are typical examples of posts that can be found in social media as they are easy to comment and people have opinions about them. The Facebook post on the left by the energy company Fortum is a competition where you can win tickets to a concert if you comment and like the post. This type of posts can be seen in social media use in Finland on a regular basis as it is an easy way to create some buzz and momentary attention to a company's page. This sort of social media post doesn't spread information about a company in a direct way, but as some consumers may visit a company webpage, the posts may still work towards gaining customer loyalty and create relationships as it certainly grabs the attention of consumers wanting to win tickets to a concert. The other post on the right hand side is a Twitter comment from the computer data protection and online security company F-secure which raises a problem of security online with a post about individual privacy. This topic has been a big issue and raised a lot of discussion as revilements about individual privacy going down and the ability from states to spy on their citizens. Therefore a catchy headline that is combined with a question will get attention and be easily shareable as well. This post is also something that F-secure can use as an advantage in promoting their own services and products as they aim to sell computer security systems and privacy programs.

When then looking at the social media posts that could be counted as CSR related content, the variety was also broad. However, during the time for this research it was Christmas, and it could also be seen as there was a lot of promotion for Christmas charity organisations. Other charity organisations could on the other hand also be seen in especially November as the "Movember" campaign which is targeting awareness for male cancer rolled out. At the same time the "Nenäpäivä" event in Finland was also happening and it aims at gathering funds for improving the environment for children in third world countries. On the next page can therefore be seen two examples of how CSR could be seen in social medias.



Picture 4: Two examples of CSR related social media posts

The example on the left is illustrating a Christmas charity promotion, which was posted on the grocery store chain Kesko's Facebook pages. It is encouraging people to take part in the "Hyvä Joulumieli" (translating into "good Christmas spirit") charity events which are collecting funds to help less fortunate families in Finland to afford to create a Christmas with their families and e.g. buy food on the table. The post is also directing the consumer to Kesko's homepages, where there is information about how Kesko as a company is taking part in the charity work. This can be seen as an example of how companies may communicate their efforts of taking part in social actions as they first encourage others to participate and at the same time also promote their own work and try to raise awareness of the good actions of their company. The other example is from the picture sharing application Instagram. The example is illustrating the telecommunication company Elisa's participation in the "Nenäpäivä" ("Noseday") charity event that is held to gather money. Instagram is a social media channel that is for sharing pictures and creating a more visual side to the company that consumers can relate to. The company becomes more close to everyday consumers when they share things about their daily operations and tasks and Elisa is also taking advantage of this by sharing a picture with a caption of

“Have a good weekend”. The company is then coming closer to the consumers by being happy that the weekend is near but at the same time they are also communicating CSR actions through their social media channels.

When taking a look at how many times on average the 36 companies posted on social medias, the number was 62 posts in six weeks which is about ten posts for one week. On the other hand when taking into account the size categories the average social media post numbers were 101 for big companies, 72 for medium ones and 20 for the small ones for the six week period. In posts per week it means 16 per week for the big ones, twelve for the medium ones and three for the small ones. In this same context one must also remember that the amount of posts were counted from all the different social media channels a company is using; meaning that even though a medium company posts twelve times a week, it might have been five posts on Facebook, five posts on Twitter and two LinkedIn articles. Therefore it might have been the same content shared on only different social media channels, but the average amounts of how many posts the different company categories have made still gives some guidance into the activity level in social medias. Additionally, according to numerous studies the amount of social media posts does not automatically transfer into big follower numbers or many comments and likes. The bigger issue at hand is to create content that is truly engaging and interesting for the consumers because if a company posts a lot of irrelevant and boring content, the followers will start ignoring the posts more and more.

As social media has become a big player in the communication of companies to consumers, the author also took a look at how much of the social media content was CSR related. When taking a look at how many of these posts had CSR content, the average number for 36 companies was 7,85 % of all the content. If looking at it in amount of individual percentages in the three category groups, the numbers would be on average 11,67 % for the big companies, 2,25 for the medium sized ones and only 0,5 % of the content for the small companies in the six week timeframe.

However, the same thing as with the company front pages, the author decided to do the research again because of Christmas times and also big charity campaigns such as Movember and Nenäpäivä, which got a lot of attention during the first six week period. The second look into social media posts was done by taking into account the social media activities during weeks 1 to 6 of 2015. When now finding out the average number of posts in all the different social media channels the number had dropped to 51 posts for six weeks. When again dividing into the different size categories, the amounts were 67 posts for the big companies, 58 for the medium sized ones and 33 for the small ones. As seen, both the

big and medium sized companies had fewer social media posts for the second look but on the other hand the amount for the small companies had increased. Furthermore, as the CSR aspect was also taken a look at, the percentage for all 36 companies was 3,27 %, which at the same times means that the content related to CSR has gone down. Again when looking at the individual amounts the big companies had 5,17 %, medium ones 1,58 % and the small ones landed once more on 0,5 % . The amount of social media posts regarding CSR actions and activity then dropped significantly in the second look but it did not stop all together.

5 DISCUSSION

As now some theory about CSR and sustainability has been presented alongside some research about how a few Finnish companies use online communication tools to communicate their CSR activities, it is useful to go back to the research questions from the beginning of this work. The first question was how CSR can be useful in marketing, and as an answer to this question can be said that CSR can be used as a tool to communicate the environmentally friendly and sustainable activities a company is engaging in. As was seen in the marketing part of the theory section, the aim of marketing is to create engagement and strengthen relationships with existing and prospect customers, CSR can be used to create relationships with consumers who value companies that are environmentally aware and work towards a more sustainable future. CSR can therefore be a tool in marketing to communicate the values and believes a company has, and by communicating these aspects regularly and in an appropriate way in the right channels, they will slowly be a part of the brand promise and the association consumers has to a company. As was also said, there is no use for a company to engage in activities that have a cost if it doesn't bring value and competitive advantages in some timeframe, and if companies are engaging in CSR, marketing can make CSR a strong competitive point in the struggle for consumer attention.

When adding another example on how CSR can be used in marketing, the aspects of creating a good work environment is a profitable one. As surveys have shown that a good employer who have a reputation of treating their employees well get more job applications and then also have a wider selection of people to choose from, CSR can be useful to communicate the positive sides of an employer according to the people aspect of the Triple bottom line theory. Even though some opinions about that CSR is only used in marketing to create a buffer and a shield towards some negative aspects about a company that may rise up, the important thing to remember is that customers are drawn to companies who share

fun and engaging topics in their marketing and the possibility of helping others in need can be counted as one of these topics. However, when answering the question on how CSR can be useful in marketing, the reputation management aspect must be considered as an option on why companies communicate their CSR goals on e.g. social media channels and why it also may be a useful component in the marketing activities a company is investing in.

When then moving on to the second question about if CSR is used in online medias in Finnish listed companies, the answer can be both yes and no. If looking at big companies the answer would fall into the positive side but when taking into account the small ones, the answer would not be that clear. If taking a look at only how all of the companies communicate on their online front page, the result was that direct communication of social responsibility and good actions were not clearly visible. As a company front page is one of the first impressions of a company and their operations, the fact that socially active and good aspects are not emphasized is a big one when looking at it through a marketing perspective. Furthermore, if a company brand and management of it is not actively lifting up company CSR actions, the activities a company is engaging in won't be easily connected and realized as values of a company and a brand. Through the research was seen that only a few of the companies had CSR related content on their front page and a big part of the content was related to Christmas charities in December. When taking a look at company front pages again in February, the amount of CSR communication on company webpages had fallen with around 15 % and only seven companies of 36 had some CSR related content on their front page. As a front page should contain the most important messages a company wants to deliver, it may be surprising that CSR is not represented even though the companies had big sections in their annual reports or going as far as having own codes of conducts issuing the subject. If correlating back to how continuous marketing messages are the most effective, the small amount of front page CSR communication may indicate that companies are not that involved in CSR after all.

When going over to the social media channels, the companies were not again equally represented. However, as bigger companies have simultaneously bigger resources and bigger audiences; the result that they also engage more in CSR activities and social media communication was not so unexpected. The research showed that where big companies were actively engaging on social medias, small companies didn't engage in a big extent. As social media still is one of the cheapest and most versatile marketing channel that is available it was a surprise that some companies didn't have a single social media page in use. However, the companies who had social media channels were mostly actively engaging and also communicating CRS goals and activities in some extent. As it is not beneficial for

marketing to only try to boost one topic all the time because it may become boring and uninteresting for consumers in the long run, the amount of CSR posts that the research showed may even be good for creating awareness of the social actions a company is engaging in. However, the research also showed that the CSR related content on online medias decreased from December to February. Through this it can be answered that on one hand companies are communicating CSR goals and activities, but on the other hand it can also be correlated more to times when consumers may expect more socially good actions such as Christmas and the Movember event which creates awareness of cancer. Therefore the author was not entirely convinced about CSR being taken seriously in all the companies that were included in this research as the amount of CSR related content was so small. However, one must still keep in mind that there is no rule on how much of the same type of message a company should communicate on online medias, but in marketing purposes a constant message that is fun to read is usually beneficial for creating strong brands and communicating brand values, beliefs and attitudes.

The third question was targeting the issue if CSR is the future and whether it can be seen as sustainable. As was discussed in the theory section, there is a correlation between sustainability and CSR and they go hand in hand and overlap each other. As sustainability is going over so many fields and even reaching marketing activities, it has surely become a factor that is hard to ignore. As the research showed that a lot of companies already have some CSR activities, it is not likely that they will abandon them easily. It was also presented that some instances such as the EU has taken steps towards greener reporting, more social engagement and more transparency, and therefore the road towards more CSR is open. As CSR is targeting a sustainable growth, saving costs, being innovative, having an environmentally friendly operation model and an organisation that is serving the people, the planet and the profit the answer to the third question is yes, sustainability and CSR will become more integrated into the operation models. The time frame however is unclear, India has taken the first steps towards regulating CSR activities in companies and if this is successful, other countries may follow. But when coming to this point of this work about corporate social responsibility and its communication in online medias and tools, one can say that yes, CSR has definitely come to stay.

6 CONCLUSION

The research of this thesis work was all in all a quantitative study that aimed at finding out if and how corporate social responsibility is communicated in online medias in a few Finnish listed companies. With a base of three research questions concerning if CSR can be useful in marketing, if CSR is used in online communication and lastly if CSR can be seen as a part of future development in organisations and companies, the author started to go deeper into the world of CSR combined with marketing and communication.

The theory section was based in a big part on the Triple bottom line theory by John Elkington. This specific theory gave a base for the whole research and was also mentioned a lot in the work. Even though the theory was first raised up in 1994, the part about companies focusing on three aspects in their operations still applies twenty years later. The three aspects of companies emphasising people, planet and profit in their organisation was creating a guideline for the author to discuss the possibilities with CSR and developing the own staff and investing in ecological activities, but also negative challenges and uncertain profit cash flows that investments in CSR can bring. Furthermore, one big conclusion that could be taken in combining the theory section, was that sustainability is emphasised in corporate social responsibility and really building a base for the whole CSR theory with developing sustainable models for developing the people, the planet and the profit aspects further in the company.

The other big theory part was focusing on marketing and communication. As the aim was to find out how companies communicate in online media, the author thought it as important to include theories about how relationships and loyal customers are made. As one of the fundamental thoughts about social media is to communicate and keep in touch with friends in an easy way, the theory was also focusing on lifting up how companies may create stable and loyal relationships by sharing fun, engaging and informative content that makes companies more approachable for everyday consumers. Additionally, in the marketing part was also lifted up how companies may combine CSR into their marketing efforts. One opinion that was lifted up was that if companies are engaging in actions that create value for the companies if consumers know about them, consumers should really be aware of these actions otherwise these activities are a waste of money. However, CSR used in marketing is also an important aspect in raising awareness of ecological efforts that is also appealing to environmentally aware customer and consumer groups and if used effectively, CSR can become a big competitive advantage for the company itself.

The research part of this work had a focus on analytical research of 36 Finnish listed company webpages and social media channels. The author took a look at company online communication channels for two six week periods in November to December 2014 and also January to February 2015 and the aim was to find out if and how much companies communicate their CSR actions and goals. The final result that could be seen from the research and analysis of the company webpages and their social media channels they were using, was that CSR is in big role in some companies and in other companies it is not even mentioned. The author was expecting to find that the big companies are engaging in socially beneficial activities but that some of the big companies did not have any mentioning about CSR was a surprise. Furthermore, a bigger surprise was that some companies are not using any social media channels whatsoever. As social media have become accessible to a lot of people and it is also easy to use in marketing purposes, it was a surprise that some companies did not have any social media channels to get messages through to consumers online.

From the overall research some conclusions could be drawn. Firstly it could be seen that Christmas time had some impact on the amount of CSR communication as the amount of CSR related content decreased when doing a second research in February. Therefore the communication of CSR in December may have been part of only an occasional marketing campaign and CSR is not communicated as actively throughout the year to really make it a part of brand promises and consumer associations with one specific brand. Secondly, it could be seen that social media channels have become a part of companies marketing aspects in Finland as well. Even though some companies didn't have any social media channels, the ones that had were for the bigger part actively using them and sharing content with followers. As social media is one of the most versatile tools available today for marketing purposes and consumers have taken it in use in a big extent, it is also one that companies wanting to target customers should take into account. Finally, one can also say that CSR is something that is becoming more attracting. As firstly consumers have become more aware and demand better and greener products, sustainability and CSR are aspects that companies need to start incorporating in their own organisations to stay competitive in the future. However, the theory also lifted up that managers are not totally aware how to start engaging in CSR activates that are beneficial for both the consumers and the company, an aspect that requires future studies and research to assist companies in the journey towards more sustainable operations.

As a final comment in the conclusion, the author wants to lift up suggestions towards further research points. As this work was only focusing on what companies are communicating in medias that are available to external parties, the truthfulness of these may be questioned. In the theory part was also suggested that companies only engage in CSR because of protecting their brand and company. In this particular research the author trusts the companies and assumes that the information found on company webpages and social media channels is correct. However, a further research point could be to take a deeper look into individual companies and see how they are rated in unbiased reports, how their own annual reports match and how the charity organisations they engage in is acting. On the other hand, as legislations are starting to change, further research topics could also be how CSR is affecting and possibly improving specific parts of an organisation such as the logistical flows or the development of new innovative and fun ways to develop the staff and their working style forward.

7 SUMMARY

As resources are scarce and the consumers are more aware of what is happening in the world because of the information available, they are also demanding better, cleaner and more quality from companies. Corporate social responsibility is targeting the good treating of employees and customers, the environmentally friendly and ecological approach and a financially sustainable growth model. CSR has been a talk point in the recent years and it can now also be seen that Finnish companies has found CSR and starting to take it into their operation models as well. As CSR can be used as a competitive advantage in both company operations because it often brings cost savings and production effectiveness and also has marketing and branding benefits, it can be seen as a long term positive aspect for company managers to consider. And as the theory and research of this work is showing, CSR is an aspect of the future and therefore should be taken into account and be incorporated into all levels of the company organisation to ensure sustainable growth, profitable marketing channels and a better future for both customers and companies to operate in.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1; Company names and webpage sources

Company name	Industry	Home page
Big		
Elisa Oyj	Telecommunication	http://elisa.fi/
Fortum Oyj	Utilities	http://www.fortum.com/fi/pages/default.aspx
Kesko Oyj	Consumer Services	http://www.kesko.fi/
Metso Oyj	Industrials	http://www.metso.com/fi
Neste Oil Oyj	Oil & Gas	http://www.nesteoil.fi/
Orion	Health Care	http://www.orion.fi/
Outokumpu Oyj	Basic Materials	http://www.outokumpu.com/fi/Sivut/default.aspx
Sampo	Financials	http://www.sampo.com/fi/
Sanoma Oyj	Consumer Services	https://www.sanoma.com/fi/
Stora Enso	Basic Materials	http://www.storaenso.com/
TeliaSonera	Telecommunication	http://www.teliaSonera.com/fi/
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	Industrials	http://www.wartsila.com/en_FI/Home
Medium sized		
Aktia Bank	Financials	http://www.aktia.fi/fi/
Alma Media Oyj	Consumer Services	http://www.almamedia.fi/
Elektrobit Oyj	Technology	http://www.elektrobit.fi/etusivu
Finnlines Oyj	Industrials	http://www.finnlines.com/laiivamatkat/
F-secure Oyj	Technology	https://www.f-secure.com/fi_FI/web/home_fi/home
HKScan Oyj	Consumer goods	http://www.hkscan.com/fi/etusivu ja www.hookoo.fi
Metsä Board	Basic Materials	http://www.metsaboard.com/Pages/Default.aspx
Oriola-KD	Health Care	http://www.oriola.fi/

Raisio Oyj	Consumers goods	http://www.raisio.com/
Rapala VMC	Consumer goods	http://rapalavmc.com/fi
Uponor Oyj	Industrials	https://www.uponor.fi/
Viking Line Abp	Consumer Services	http://www.vikingline.com/fi/
Small		
Affecto Oyj	Technology	http://www.affecto.fi/
Biohit Oyj	Health Care	http://www.biohithealthcare.com/fi/
Endomines	Basic Materials	http://www.endomines.com/index.php/etusivu
Kesla	Industrials	http://www.kesla.fi/
Marimekko Oyj	Consumer goods	https://www.marimekko.fi/
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	Health Care	https://www.oral.fi/
Panostaja Oyj	Financials	http://www.panostaja.fi/
Qpr Software Oyj	Technology	http://www.qpr.fi/
Restamax Oyj	Consumer Services	http://www.restamax.fi/
Sotkamo Silver	Basic Materials	http://www.silver.fi/sivu/fi/
Takoma Oyj	Industrials	http://www.takoma.fi/
Ålandsbanken Abp	Financials	http://www.alandsbanken.fi/info/opencms/Finland/fi/

Appendix 2; Comparison of company front pages

Table 1: Big companies

Company name	December	February
Elisa Oyj	no	no
Fortum Oyj	no	no
Kesko Oyj	yes	yes
Metso Oyj	yes	yes
Neste Oil Oyj	yes	no
Orion	yes	yes
Outokumpu Oyj	yes	yes
Sampo	no	no
Sanoma Oyj	no	no
Stora Enso	no	no
Teliasonera	yes	no
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	no	no

Table 2: Medium sized companies

Company name	December	February
Aktia Bank	no	no
Alma Media Oyj	no	no
Elektrobit Oyj	no	no
Finnlines Oyj	no	no
F-secure Oyj	no	no
HKScan Oyj	no	no
Metsä Board	yes	no
Oriola-KD	yes	yes
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	yes	no
Rapala VMC	no	no
Uponor Oyj	yes	yes
Viking Line Abp	yes	yes

Table 3: Small companies

Company name	December	February
Affecto Oyj	yes	no
Biohit Oyj	no	no
Endomines	no	no
Kesla	no	no
Marimekko Oyj	no	no
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	no	no
Panostaja Oyj	no	no
Qpr Software Oyj	no	no
Restamax Oyj	no	no
Sotkamo Silver	no	no
Takoma Oyj	no	no
Ålandsbanken Abp	no	no

Appendix 3; Companies Triple bottom line approach

Table 1: Big companies

Company name	Planet	People	Profit
Elisa Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Fortum Oyj	yes	yes	no
Kesko Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Metso Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Neste Oil Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Orion	yes	yes	yes
Outokumpu Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Sampo	no	no	no
Sanoma Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Stora Enso	yes	yes	yes
Teliasonera	yes	yes	no
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	yes	yes	yes

Table 2: Medium sized

Company name	Planet	People	Profit
Aktia Bank	yes	no	yes
Alma Media Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Elektrobit Oyj	yes	no	yes
Finnlines Oyj	yes	yes	yes
F-secure Oyj	no	no	no
HKScan Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Metsä Board	yes	yes	yes
Oriola-KD	yes	yes	yes
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	yes	yes	yes
Rapala VMC	yes	yes	yes
Uponor Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Viking Line Abp	yes	yes	no

Table 3: Small companies

Company name	Planet	People	Profit
Affecto Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Biohit Oyj	yes	no	no
Endomines	yes	no	yes
Kesla	yes	yes	yes
Marimekko Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	no	yes	no
Panostaja Oyj	yes	yes	no
Qpr Software Oyj	yes	no	no
Restamax Oyj	yes	no	yes
Sotkamo Silver	yes	yes	yes
Takoma Oyj	yes	yes	yes
Ålandsbanken Abp	yes	yes	yes

Appendix 4: ISO standards in different companies

Table 1: Big companies

Company name	ISO standards?
Elisa Oyj	yes
Fortum Oyj	yes
Kesko Oyj	yes
Metso Oyj	yes
Neste Oil Oyj	yes
Orion	yes
Outokumpu Oyj	yes
Sampo	no
Sanoma Oyj	yes
Stora Enso	yes
Teliasonera	yes
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	yes

Table 2: Medium sized

Company name	ISO standards?
Aktia Bank	yes
Alma Media Oyj	yes
Elektrobit Oyj	yes
Finnlines Oyj	no
F-secure Oyj	no
HKScan Oyj	yes
Metsä Board	yes
Oriola-KD	yes
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	yes
Rapala VMC	yes
Uponor Oyj	no
Viking Line Abp	yes

Table 3: Small companies

Company name	ISO standards?
Affecto Oyj	yes
Biohit Oyj B	yes
Endomines	yes
Kesla A	no
Marimekko Oyj	yes
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	no
Panostaja Oyj	no
Qpr Software Oyj	no
Restamax Oyj	no
Sotkamo Silver	no
Takoma Oyj	yes
Ålandsbanken Abp B	yes

Appendix 5; Company social media use

Table 1: Total amount of social media posts compared to the amount of CSR related posts for weeks

45 to 50 in 2014

Company name	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Youtube	Instagram	Google +	Total amounts
Big							
Elisa Oyj	47/7	155/8	21/3	57/-	39/6	63/-	382/24
Fortum Oyj	18/2	51/8	-	3/2	-	-	72/12
Kesko Oyj	18/7	67/17	1/1	-	-	-	86/25
Metso Oyj	5/1	27/1	-	2/-	-	-	59/2
Neste Oil Oyj	25/4	30/8	14/4	-	-	-	89/16
Orion	10/8	7/4	-	18/17	-	-	35/29
Outokumpu Oyj	-	-	1/-	-	-	-	1/-
Sampo	-	75/1	-	-	-	-	75/1
Sanoma Oyj	-	24/1	-	-	-	-	24/1
Stora Enso	9/1	6/3	9/1	4/-	-	-	28/5
Teliasonera	-	53/-	-	-	-	-	53/-
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	110/4	163/13	41/6	2/1	-	17/1	334/25
Medium sized							
Aktia Bank	21/-	5/-	2/-	-	-	-	28/-
Alma Media Oyj	19/2	81/4	17/-	-	21/3	-	138/9
Elektrobit Oyj	8/-	9/-	4/-	-	-	-	21/-
Finnlines Oyj	6/-	-	-	-	-	-	6/-
F-secure Oyj	62/2	477/7	-	25/-	-	-	564/9
HKScan Oyj	9/-	-	-	-	-	-	9/-
Metsä Board	-	19/3	-	-	-	-	19/3
Oriola-KD	-	-	8/-	-	-	-	8/-
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	-	29/5	-	-	-	-	29/5
Rapala VMC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uponor Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Viking Line Abp	28/1	-	-	9/-	-	-	37/1
Small sized							
Affecto Oyj	9/-	97/-	21/-	-	-	-	127/1
Biohit Oyj	-	-	5/-	-	-	-	5/-
Endomines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kesla	5/-	-	-	1/-	-	-	6/1
Marimekko Oyj	33/1	9/-	-	-	29/-	-	71/-
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	9/-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Panostaja Oyj	-	-	2/-	-	-	-	2/-
Qpr Software Oyj	3/-	5/-	-	1/-	-	-	9/4
Restamax Oyj	7/-	-	-	-	-	-	7/-
Sotkamo Silver	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Takoma Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ålandsbanken Abp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2: Total amount of social media posts compared to the amount of CSR related posts for weeks 1 to 6 in 2015

Company name	Facebook	Twitter	Linkedin	YouTube	Instagram	Google +	Total amounts
Big							
Elisa Oyj	27/2	109/5	15/1	20/-	20/-	20/-	211/8
Fortum Oyj	14/3	47/6	-	-	-	-	61/9
Kesko Oyj	12/3	43/14	30/-	3/-	-	-	88/17
Metso Oyj	12/-	43/1	20/-	3/-	-	-	78/1
Neste Oil Oyj	21/4	24/6	10/3	-	-	-	55/13
Orion	3/-	1/-	-	-	-	-	4/-
Outokumpu Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sampo	-	58/1	-	-	-	-	58/1
Sanoma Oyj	-	19/-	-	-	-	-	19/-
Stora Enso	7/1	5/1	-	1/-	-	-	13/2
Teliasonera	-	6/-	-	-	-	-	6/-
Wärtsilä Oyj Abp	91/4	83/5	17/-	2/-	-	13/1	206/11
Medium sized							
Aktia Bank	17/-	5/-	2/-	-	-	-	24/-
Alma Media Oyj	19/2	65/2	17/-	-	14/2	-	115/6
Elektrobit Oyj	7/-	8/-	3/-	-	-	-	18/-
Finnlines Oyj	7/-	-	-	-	-	-	7/-
F-secure Oyj	56/4	375/5	-	25/-	-	-	456/9
HKScan Oyj	13/-	-	-	-	-	-	13/-
Metsä Board	-	17/1	7/1	-	-	-	24/2
Oriola-KD	-	-	5/-	-	-	-	5/-
Raisio Oyj Vaihto-osake	-	5/1	-	-	-	-	5/1
Rapala VMC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uponor Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Viking Line Abp	31/1	-	-	1/-	-	-	32/1
Small sized							
Affecto Oyj	23/-	194/-	13/5	-	-	-	230/1
Biohit Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Endomines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kesla	5/-	-	-	-	-	-	5/-
Marimekko Oyj	30/-	32/-	-	-	51/-	-	113/-
Oral Hammaslääkärit Oyj	15/-	-	-	-	-	-	15/-
Panostaja Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Qpr Software Oyj	1/-	4/-	4/-	-	-	-	9/-
Restamax Oyj	6/-	7/-	6/-	-	-	-	19/-
Sotkamo Silver	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Takoma Oyj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ålandsbanken Abp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-