
Utilizing Social Media in Marketing & Brand Building



Bachelor's thesis

BBA in International Business

Spring 2014

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Unit
Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business
Option

Author Pekka Juhani Pelkonen **Year** 2014

Subject of Bachelor's thesis Utilizing Social Media in Marketing and Brand Building

ABSTRACT

Social media and internet plays a big role in people's daily lives. People feel the need to be connected constantly through technology. It has changed the rules of marketing and companies' don't give enough attention to the possibilities and opportunities it possesses. Commissioning company Laakkonen is the biggest car dealership chain in Finland. Selling new and used cars of different brands in different locations. Laakkonen wants to make the buying process on cars more casual and bring the company closer to the customer and form better relationships with the customers. The aim of this thesis is to show how social media can be used in marketing and brand building. To find out what kind of opportunities the web and social media withholds and how they can be used to help company's needs and objectives.

Theory used for this thesis has been acquired through school lectures and projects own experiences and personal knowledge of the author. The use of books, power point presentations, company information, and commissioning company's expertise has been used in the research. A survey has been conducted online as a part of the research. Results of the research show the importance of the web and social media nowadays to consumer as part of the buying process. In the beginning of the buying process consumers rely on the information on the internet. The power of social media in marketing with the opportunities it includes, it can't be ignored by companies.

Generating high quality content that people want to consume and share and publishing it online for free is a great way to get attention to a company and their products. Educating and informing the customer, rather than interrupting and trying to sell. The information of this thesis can be used by Laakkonen to manufacture a social media marketing plan.

Keywords Marketing, social media, brand building,

Pages 48 p.





VALKEAKOSKI
Koulutusohjelman nimi
Suuntautumisvaihtoehto

Tekijä	Pekka Juhani Pelkonen	Vuosi 2014
Työn nimi	Utilizing Social Media in Marketing and Brand Building	

TIIVISTELMÄ

Sosiaalinen media ja internet ovat nykypäivänä entistä isommassa roolissa ihmisten päivittäisessä elämässä. Ihmiset ovat yhä enemmän ja enemmän yhteydessä teknologian avulla. Sosiaalinen media ja internet nykyisessä muodossaan on muuttanut markkinoinnin sääntöjä, eikä Suomalaiset yritykset noteeraa tätä tosiasiaa tarpeeksi tai käytä sitä ja sen mahdollisuuksia hyväkseen. Toimeksiantajayritys Laakkonen on Suomen suurin autokaupapaketti, joka myy uusia ja käytettyjä autoja eri toimipisteissä ympäri Suomea. Laakkonen haluaa tehdä auton ostoprosessista helpompaa ja vaivattomampaa ja tuoda asiakkaita ja automyyjiä lähemmäksi toisiaan. Näin auton ostosta tulisi arkisempaa ja vähemmän totista. Tämän lopputyön tarkoitus on näyttää kuinka sosiaalista mediaa voi hyväksikäyttää markkinoinnin ja brändin rakentamistarkoituksissa ja selvittää minkälaisia mahdollisuuksia internet ja sosiaalinen media pitävät sisällään. Myös selvittää miten ne voivat auttaa yrityksiä saavuttamaan niiden tavoitteet.

Opinnäytetyön teoriaosuus on pitkälti hankittu koulusta, kirjoittajan omista kokemuksista ja henkilökohtaisesta tiedosta. Kirjoja, esitelmiä ja toimeksiantajayrityksen neuvoja on käytetty tutkimustyössä. Kysely on suoritettu internetin välityksellä ja tulokset näyttävät kuinka merkittävässä roolissa internet ja sosiaalinen media ovat kuluttajien ostoprosessissa. Yritykset eivät voi sivuuttaa sosiaalisen median ja internetin merkittävää asemaa markkinoinnissa.

Laadukkaan sisällön tuottaminen kuluttajille, jota he haluavat lukea ja jakaa, sen julkaiseminen ilmaiseksi netissä on mahtava tapa viestiä ihmisille yrityksen tuotteista ja palveluista.

Toimeksiantajayritys Laakkonen voi halutessaan käyttää tätä opinnäytetyötä pohjana sosiaalisen median markkinointisuunnitelman toteuttamisessa.

Avainsanat Markkinointi, sosiaalinen media, yrityskuvan rakentaminen

Sivut 48 s.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Social media as we know it nowadays is a relatively new phenomenon. It has been around only about 10 years. By looking at the timeline someone could argue it has been around for longer. Taking into consideration the first e-mails, but we are focusing on the new era of social media, so we can say Facebook is the start of this trend. When looking social media in the perspective of marketing for companies the history is even minor. Social media being around only a short time and social media marketing is even younger concept.

Social media as a marketing tool possesses a huge amount of opportunities for a company to increase their corporate image. A lot of companies don't know about or don't think the power of social media is relevant. Used the right way social media can be a huge advocate for corporation's marketing. The purpose is to find out what kind of benefits can social media offer to a corporation. The reach of marketing in social media can be phenomenal. It can blow the socks off of television or printing media adverts. On top of that the costs of social media marketing are none or close to none. Of course there is indirect costs of making the effort in having good presence, good quality of content and fast reactions to trends and interaction between customers.

So if social media marketing is so easy and low cost, how come everyone isn't doing it and being successful in it? The answer is simple, it is time consuming and when doing it right you have to be constant. It's not like other medias where you make an ad and then you are done and next add you make will be someday in a few days or even longer. Social media requires persistence and daily activity for continuum. Providing good quality content everyday or every other day. The activity is the key. Due to social media the information, photos or videos are popular or noticed for only a short period of time and then buried with the rest of the content which is being produced all the time, more and more. Social media in the form that is now is quite new thing and the definition is more vague than it is clear which can cause uncertainty for company's who have got along without it to start using it. It requires a new way of thinking and it can be a big step for a company. There goes always a lot of effort into repositioning but sometimes its necessary in order to stay relevant and maintain or increase market share. Social media by all its complexities may not be the most attractive for a company to take the leap, but looking at the opportunities and possibilities it shouldn't be ignored.

Social media shouldn't be viewed to be similar with television or printed advertising. It's more like an interaction between the company and the customer. The style of social media marketing should be that way in order to work. Pushing the information to the consumer without allowing them to interact with you is usually used in printed and television advertising and that can be used also in social media but it's not very effective.

The commissioning company Autotalo Laakkonen doesn't have any social media activity. Facebook page has been set up but it has only 334 likes

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and the last and only activity is from December 2013. The good thing about this is that not many of Laakkonen's competition are active in social media. Only a few companies have some kind of activity in Facebook and one competitor has poor content in youtube, but no one has presence in twitter, blogs or any other social media platform. That's why this topic is good, because this kind of social media marketing is fairly new amongst car dealerships it might be easy to gain a lot of hype through the social media and really be the forerunner of car dealerships in social media. Also being the first one to actually do it well can be a great advantage.

The role of social media in marketing is ever growing and the amount of power as it has it can't be ignored anymore. There has always been word-of-mouth advertising when someone tells someone else in a parking lot of a grocery store where they bought their car. The conversations has now moved to the internet, social media to be exact, and the power of word-of-mouth has gotten many times more powerful. Companies have to reposition and modernize themselves or otherwise they will be left behind in marketing if they don't start to look at social media as a possible marketing tool. This topic is contemporary and it has been around for sometime so we have proof of how it works. The timing of doing a thesis about this topic couldn't be better. Social media is still taking its shape and bending and re-adjusting the rules of marketing and communication so the possibilities are endless. People often think social media marketing is easy, just set up an account and start posting content and boom, you have followers and it's successful. Now that social media has matured a little bit from the novelty it doesn't work that way. By carefully selecting the right platforms to be active in, analyzing and researching where and how to influence, planning the right kind of content and creating value to the customer and interacting to generate profit for the company and a better corporate image.

1.1 Commissioning Company

1.1.1 Introduction

Laakkonen group was founded 1st of July in 1960 in Joensuu, east part of Finland. Laakkonen was created two car-brand company into the biggest car retail company in Finland and a significant business world player and employee by the entrepreneurial family of Laakkonen. The group's car sales operations are handled by Autotalo Laakkonen Oy and Veljekset Laakkonen Oy. The car retail network of Laakkonen group consists of 31 dealerships in 20 localities around Finland. Yearly Laakkonen group handles around 36,000 successful car sales and the certified brand service centers carries out over 250,000 service visits. Laakkonen represents 20 car brands: Audi, BMW, Chevrolet, Dacia, Ford, Hyundai, Kia, Land Rover, Mazda, MINI, Isuzu, Nissan, Opel, Peugeot, Renault, Seat, Skoda, Subaru, Suzuki and Volkswagen, representation varying in different locations.

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1.1.2 History

Company called Autokalusto Ay was founded in the northeast of Finland in Joensuu on 1st of July in 1960. The founders were Reino Laakkonen (27 years old) and his father Tauno Laakkonen (63 years old). The structure of the company soon had to be changed when Tauno Laakkonen passed away on 17th of July. His share of the company was transferred to the possession of his widow Aili Laakkonen. At that time there was only 256,892 cars in Finland and tens of other car dealers, and the availability was limited due to import regulations. A few years later there was huge growth in the car sales due to the cancellation of the import regulations. Within the next 13 years the car population grew to over million vehicles. Reino Laakkonen was the chief executive officer at that time when his brother Yrjö was still in school. The place of business was a previously acquired property that had a small office, café and spare parts warehouse, but no cars fitted inside the building. The first car brands the company sold were Volkswagen and British Roots –group cars, trucks and vans. The demand of cars was much greater than the supply. In their first years Laakkonen sold 11 Volkswagens and vans somewhere in the between of 50 to 90. The growth was quick and fast expansion came hand in hand with it. In the beginning of January in 1961 Laakkonen had moved to a new location where they had room for 10 cars and a service center filled with the latest technology. (Aatto Jääskeläinen, Autokauppaa ajan hengessä, Veljekset Laakkonen Oy 1960-2000, 2002)

The liberation of the car market in 1962-63 when the import regulations was being taken down and the Finnish highways started to fill up from English, German, French and Japanese cars the situation from having more demand than supply turned upside down because the car tax was at the highest 141 per cent. In 1965 there was a change in the ownership of the company. The widow, Aili Laakkonen, of the founder Tauno Laakkonen gave her share to her sons; Reino got 51 per cent, Erkki 25 and Yrjö 24. Change in ownership also meant a change within the company. Veljekset Laakkonen was established in 1966. By the brothers when they got the dealership of Sisu trucks. (Aatto Jääskeläinen, Autokauppaa ajan hengessä, Veljekset Laakkonen Oy 1960-2000, 2002)

The significance of the first decades to Laakkonen's car business was essential in creating a solid base for the recognizability and building relationships and networks. It was an important phase to continue to the 1970s and onwards where the steady and prominent growth started. One of the key elements for the rapid growth of Veljekset Laakkonen was their ability to predict the future of the car markets and taking risks at the right moment and when it was wise. The customer's were kept satisfied with the honest and straight up reliable service, this has carried on throughout the history to this day and is still the element that makes Laakkonen so successful in the car business. (Aatto Jääskeläinen, Autokauppaa ajan hengessä, Veljekset Laakkonen Oy 1960-2000, 2002)

The expansion outside of Joensuu started in 1978 when a new dealership was built. Nissan was meant to be represented there but at the last moment the importer cancelled the contract. At first the dealership was empty

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but not for long when the representation of Renault and later on Mazda, Peugeot, Seat, Subaru and Volkswagen was received. Years 1988 and -89 were record-breaking years for Laakkonen. The limit of over 10,000 sold cars was broken and the biggest revenue and profit yet was made. The recession of the beginning of the 1990s brought big operating losses, but still some investments were made trying to fight back the descending car sales. After 1993 the recession was fading away, at least Laakkonen started to have growth again in sales and they expanded to Tampere and Helsinki. Tampere at that time was the best areas to sell cars in Finland and Laakkonen got the exclusive representation of Volkswagen in Tampere, which has remained there to this date. (Aatto Jääskeläinen, Autokauppaa ajan hengessä, Veljekset Laakkonen Oy 1960-2000, 2002)

1998 there was a change in Laakkonen group. Subsidiary called Autotalo Laakkonen was established and the right to sell Volkswagen and Audi was transferred to it. In 2007 Kauppahuone Laakkonen was established as a parent company, which takes care of the corporate services and corporate management and handles the investments. Autokiinteistöt Laakkonen Oy was founded in 2010 and takes care of the properties that is owned by Laakkonen Group.

1.1.3 Laakkonen group

The Laakkonen group consists of many different companies and ownerships of other companies. The majority owners of Laakkonen group are Yrjö Laakkonen and his son Jyrki Laakkonen and other family members. (Laakkonen, 2014)

The core business however is the car business. Which is conducted by Veljekset Laakkonen Oy and Autotalo Laakkonen Oy. The main business actions are retail of new and used cars, spare part sales and service for cars. The car service that Laakkonen provides is always certified by the car brand that they represent in any given location. The quality of the service is one of the highest in Finland. (Laakkonen, 2014)

Even though Laakkonen is nationally spread out to the whole of Finland they still embrace their roots in Joensuu where all started. (Laakkonen, 2014)

1.1.4 The brand

Laakkonen brand is known nationwide in Finland. Laakkonen has distinctive design and color theme that has been renewed through the history and carries out in all what Laakkonen does. Reliability, honesty and good service is the key elements of what makes Laakkonen the biggest car sales company in Finland today. With an image of a family owned business Laakkonen notices themselves as a traditional company. (Laakkonen, 2014)

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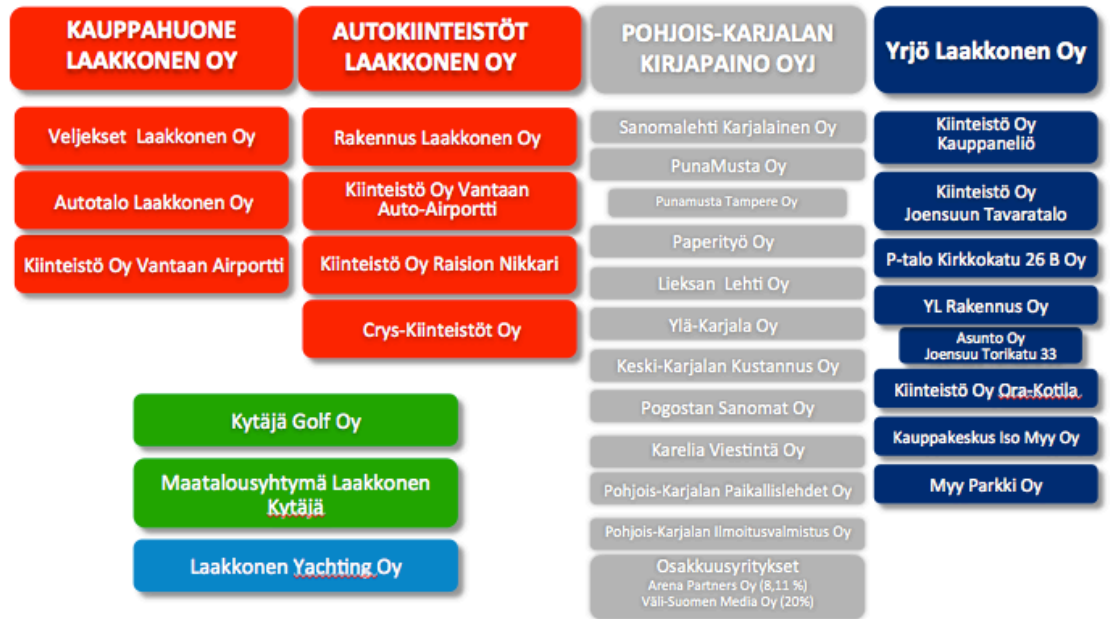


Figure 1 The business structure of Laakkonen group



Figure 2 The business operations and management of Laakkonen's car business

1.2 Objectives

Studying the theory of marketing, social media and potential and possibilities that it can offer for a corporation. To have a clear understanding of the ins and outs of social media. To gain the knowledge of the potential and possibilities of marketing in social media for a corporation. What are the pros and cons of marketing in social media. What are the benefits and how they can be measured. Social media can be cruel in way that news, wheter its bad or good travels fast, careful studying of brand building in social media is essential any harm will not be done to Laakkone's brand image.

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Studying the theory of marketing from the point of view of social media; how we can use the theory in coming up with actual examples and practical information. Social media has different kind of rules in marketing so to be able to find and apply the theoretical angle of marketing to this topic.

Researching and generating ideas how social media can be used in marketing and building corporate image. In order to be successful in marketing a thorough research needs to be made for generate ideas. To define the current situation and benchmarking the competition for clear understanding what has been done already and what are the possibilities. Researching the different social media platforms and what kind of content should be published in them and what is the general behavior in social media. Traditional and social media should complement each other rather than being two totally different things, so find out how they can work together towards the common goal. Find out what are the general steps of building a corporate image and what issues should be avoided. Use the theoretical knowledge of marketing and social media and how to apply it in practice. To research and analyze the possibilities of the commissioning company Autotalo Laakkonen in social media and how they can reach their goals. To define the methods, social media platforms and content Laakkonen should create in order to build social media presence that will complement and strengthen their company and brand image. What can be done in social media to make the gap between the customer and salesperson smaller, and make the car business less formal and more customer friendly. What needs to be done to activate the customer in social media in a way that creates value for the customer and for Laakkonen. The business culture of Laakkonen is strongly customer orientated and they aren't happy if the customer isn't satisfied so how these issues can be enhanced through social media.

With all the theory and research, with conclusions and recommendations will be come up with. How social media can be utilized in marketing purposes and building corporate image. Come up with real examples how to market in social media. Provide relevant and high quality information for the commissioning company, which can be used to draw up a social media marketing plan. How Laakkonen can take advantage of the possibilities of social media and how can they use the fact that their competition has little to none social media activity to their advantage and strengthen their marketing and corporate image.

1.3 Research methods

The base knowledge of this thesis comes from what is learned in school and personal experiences, thoughts and brainstorming. It is supported by theoretical knowledge gained from books and researching the topic with a survey.

Thorough research of different social media platforms will be made in order to get a clear understanding of the different dynamics and purposes of

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the social media platforms. Data collecting by social media marketing books and marketing theory will be used for background information. A lot of personal experience in the use of social media will be essential in recognizing upcoming trends and passing strategies in order to come up with suitable solutions for Laakkonen. Even though social media as it is nowadays, there are still a lot of books written of social media marketing and public relations, which re-define and challenge the basic theory of marketing so both sources will be used to have different angles.

1.3.1 Benchmarking

Benchmarking will be used as a research method in order to analyze how marketing in social media has affected certain company's corporate image, what benefits it has had. Bench marking is when a company which has already done marketing in social media is analyzed what are the results of it. How is has been done by them and if it has lead to success. Research and analyze a real life example according to the topic of the thesis.

1.3.2 Survey

A quantitative survey will be made. Questions of social media activity and the type of content is desired by people will be asked. Survey is distributed in social media and via emails lists.

2 THEORY

2.1 Introduction

The rules of marketing are ever changing, new theories are introduced all the time and everyone has a different opinion of marketing nowadays. Part of the old theory has gotten outdated but parts can be adjusted and are valid to this date. This chapter is looking into the theoretical aspects of marketing and brand building with selected methods from a contemporary point of view. This part introduces theories that are the key element for marketing and brand building for a company in the use of social media.

The job of marketing is revenue growth, getting new customers to buy products of them, and customer retention. Keeping the old customers as well. It's much cheaper to keep an existing customer for a company than acquire new ones. Marketing should be done for the perspective of these actions, rather than focusing on things like: website traffic, or being ranked as number one in google. They don't matter, unless they bring in revenue, but that goal might lead to increase in revenue. When the marketer's focus is on the same goals as the rest of the organization, marketing programs are developed that really deliver action and show results. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.2 Promotional mix

The methods of communication that a marketer uses in order to provide information of a product to different parties. Promotional mix consists six of elements: advertising, direct marketing, public relations, internet promotion, sales promotion and personal selling. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

- Advertising: any kind of paid form of non-personal communication of ideas or products in the prime media such as; television, radio, press and outdoor media. Good for building awareness by reaching a wide audience quickly. However, total reach and effectiveness can't be measured effectively. Push marketing, where information is pushed to a consumer without letting them to interact with you directly. Impersonal and lacks flexibility, might be forgotten in just minutes after seeing the advertisement. Requires usually a lot of investment to really make a difference, therefore the most noticeable advertisements are from big companies with big advertisement campaigns. If the resources are not available to conduct advertisement campaign this big, cheaper tools such as sales promotion or public relations might be used.
- Personal selling: communication with a prospective customer with the intention of making a sale. Interactive, questions can be answered and objectives overcome. Selling arguments can be changed depending on

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customer needs. Requires really good salesmen to be able to identify customer needs and uniquely addressing each customer and creating value for them. Personal relationships can be built, which usually is a good element in great customer service. Face to face selling will allow the opportunity to close the sale and actually directly bring revenue. Costly method and can't be used for masses. If the market is small and concentrated then personal selling may be feasible.

- Direct marketing: a way of distributing of information and promotional material to targeted consumers by an interactive communication method that allows response to be measured. Individual targeting of consumers is most likely appealing. Poorly targeted direct marketing can cause consumer annoyance and cause more harm than good. Communication can be personalized. A continuous relationship can be built through constant contact with the consumer. Can be very effective when the company knows well their customers. Common method now in social media marketing and can be bundled usually with internet promotion.
- Internet promotion: promoting products to consumers and businesses through electronic media. Possibilities to a global reach with relatively low costs. Number of site visits, likes and followers can be measured and analyzed by location i.e. what country or what city, or what kind of other things this person has liked or searched from the internet or social media website. Good tracking of people and usually a lot of data available. Possible for direct sales and avoids possible negotiations of price. Catalogues, prices and other information can be changed quickly and cheaply if a mistake or a change happens. Convenient way to search and buy products. A dialogue between business and their customer can be established, easy to interact. Offers a lot of possibilities to run successful marketing campaigns with a low cost. Enables word-of-mouth to spread quickly and reach a huge amount of consumers. Must be used carefully and updated constantly in order to keep a good image and stay relevant and fresh. When the mass market that is geographically scattered internet promotion would be the correct choice.
- Sales promotion: giving incentives to consumers that are meant to stimulate purchase. Making the barrier of purchase lower for the consumer. Incentives provide quick boost to sales and results might be only short term. Some incentives might damage the brand image. Takes the focus away from the product or its price and focuses it to other issues that appeals to the customer. Cannot be used constantly.
- Public relations: giving information to the public/media about products of business without paying for the time or space directly. The message can be more credible when it comes from a third party i.e. media. Higher amount of readers than advertisements. Company can't really control whether the press release is noticed by a media. It may or may not be used. The effectiveness depends on the field and popu-

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clarity of the company and the display of information. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.3 Power of internet

The frustration in relying only on the media and expensive advertising to deliver the company's message is over. Traditional advertising is still important but nowadays marketers generate interesting content and publish it directly on the web. Chip McDermott founded Zero Trash nonprofit organization to get rid of trash of the streets and beaches of Laguna Beach, California. The population and tourism had risen exponentially and the city didn't keep providing sufficient support towards trash management and recycling. McDermott used the web to gather people in keeping the environment clean by organizing events where local storeowners and residents walked the city and picked up trash. McDermott also recruited storeowners as sponsors who funded the purchase of proper tools like trash pickers, gloves and trash bags. He also uses twitter to update the amounts of trash they have collected and that seems to interest people. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

There's no doubt that getting a word around of a idea, a product or a service is much easier when you use social media sites like Facebook, Twitter or blogs. The internet allows a company, an organization large or small to reach buyers directly. However this is still hard to many executives and entrepreneurs to understand and find the right blend of traditional advertising and direct communication with buyers. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

Companies and organizations, and even single people can create themselves an important position on the internet. It allows companies to deliver their message and correct information to the buyers at the right time when they are most receptive to the information. Think of yourself as a consumer, what is usually the first thing you do when you consider of buying something. Go to the internet and compare prices and often read reviews and opinions of products. There's also an opportunity to interact and participate in conversations on social media sites like Twitter, blogs, chat rooms and forums. The similarity between all of these techniques is that organizations, people and companies of different type behave like publishers, creating content that people want to consume. Companies gain credibility and customer loyalty by publishing high quality content constantly. Marketers now create and deliver content directly to their audience. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

2.4 Brand & corporate identity

Company's product in the core element in the marketing mix because it provides a functional requirement that is pursued by customers. For example, a watch that does not tell the time or a car that doesn't start in the morning will rapidly be rejected by consumers (David Jobber – Principles

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and practice of marketing). Marketers are set to develop their products into brands that create a unique position in the market and that way in the minds of the consumer. Having a superior brand leads to high sales and the ability to charge higher price premiums. For example, Nike can charge 10-20% more with their sneakers than their immediate competition, just because of their brand equity (Ground breakers documentary – Phil Knight 2012). Companies try to retain their current customers through brand loyalty. Loyal customer is usually less price sensitive and give valuable information to the company about their products and business actions.

A product is anything that is capable of satisfying customer needs (David Jobber, Principles and practice of marketing). Usually consumers make the distinction between products and services, products being tangible (e.g. a car) and services mostly intangible (e.g. haircut). Nowadays there is a thinner line between a mere product and a service. Products and services are bundled together and package in a way that they could all be seen as services whether it's tangible or intangible. For example, a car provides the service of transportation and a haircut the service of looking good or confidence.

With branding companies distinguish themselves and their products from their competition. A brand is created when a distinctive name, packaging and design is created. Some brands have logos, for example Audi has the four rings, or the apple of Apple inc. By developing an individual identity, branding allows customers to develop a connection to the brand (e.g. luxury) and that helps with the purchase decision (De Chernatony, L. (1991) Formulating Brand Strategy). The marketing team takes care that the connection with the brand is positive and in line with the image that is being pursued. Branding affects to consumer's perceptions and preferences and it's well known that in blind product testing consumers often fail to distinguish the difference between brands (Table 1.1).

Table 1 Brand names affect consumer perception and preferences

Two similar samples of consumers were asked to taste Diet Coke, which is the market leader in diet colas, and Diet Pepsi. The colas were tasted "blind" (i.e. brand identities were hidden) by the first group, and then they were asked which they preferred. The procedure was repeated for the second group, however the brand names and identities were shown, "open". These are the results:

	Open	Blind
	%	%
Prefer Diet Pepsi	51	23
Prefer Diet Coke	44	65
Equal/can't say	5	12

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The test shows the power of strong brands in influencing consumer's perceptions and preferences towards Diet Coke. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.4.1 Strong brands are important

Strong brands are typically product category leaders and they are important to companies and consumers because they add value to companies and affect the perception of brands for consumers. The value of the brand is built through product innovation and marketing elements, it's something intangible, something that has to be earned one way or another. Having strong brands improves profits for companies, because strong brands often sell at a higher price margin. Consumers see strong brands as a type of quality certification; it creates trust. Well, think of yourself for example Rolex watches. Would you consider them good quality and trust that they perform how they should and is reliable. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

Financial value of companies is usually enhanced by the strong brands. For example, Coca-Cola counts that only 7 per cent of the value of the company are it's plants and machinery, and the real value comes from the brands they possess. Coca-Cola was estimated in 2013 by Forbes magazine to be the 3rd most valuable brand in the world, worth £32,7 billion. This trend also can be seen in the sales of brands. When Procter & Gamble acquired Gillette for £31 billion it was valued much more than the physical, tangible assets. Gillette's physical assets were valued at £4 billion, its brands were worth £10 billion: Gillette £4 billion; Duracell £2,5 billion; Oral B £2 billion and Braun £1.5 billion. It also consisted of the value of Gillette's distributor and supplier relationships (£10 billion) and its patents (£7 billion). (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.4.2 Brand equity

Strong brands have good brand equity. Brand equity is the strength of a brand in a marketplace; although brands are intangible they add concrete tangible value to a company through bigger sales and profit margins. There are two types of brand equity: customer-based and proprietary-based brand equity. Customer-based brand equity is in the consumer's minds, their perception of the brand and how they favor it compared to other similar products. Stronger customer-based brand equity product creates better perception and connection than other ones. As seen from the table 1.1 the soda test, people preferred Diet Coke over Diet Pepsi so Coke has better brand equity than Pepsi. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010).

A brand has a positive customer-based brand equity when a person reacts more favorable to a product when the brand is identified opposed to when its not. It usually results to high customer loyalty, which means: low price sensitivity and consumers are willing to sacrifice more effort in acquiring

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the product. Negative customer-based brand equity is when the consumers react less favorably towards the brand when it's identified than when it's not. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010).

Proprietary-based brand equity is based on indirect assets, and consists of patents and channel relationships such as: distribution and supplier relationships and the experience and knowledge company has on this matter. These actions deliver value to the brand. When thinking of brand valuation, patents are a vital part of it. They protect the product and the company from competitive threats and gives certainty of future revenue streams to the company. Patents can produce revenue also through licensing and the sales of patents. It can be seen from the sale of Nokia's mobile phones to Microsoft that Nokia will receive revenue from patent licensing. And not only from Microsoft but also other actors in telecommunication and mobile phone industry. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010).

2.4.3 Brand image

Brand equity can be increased also by creating a strong brand image. A brand image is created through the use of all elements in the marketing mix. Good (positive) brand image is created by generating favorable, positive, unique and strong associations to the brand in consumer's memory. Advertising and marketing is used to enhance the brand image by affecting to the thoughts of consumers associated with the brand. By creating clever, funny and informative advertisements and using psychological factors (e.g. colors and sounds) portray the company's message of the image company wants to strive to. Also previous contacts, whether its positive or not, with the brand affects to the image of the brand. Internet has enabled the spread of word-of-mouth to spread to a bigger audience faster so previous experiences, usually bad, are commonly shared via social media networks. On the other hand social media can be a great booster of good brand image when consumers act as marketers of your brand when they share for example cleverly made advertisement. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010).

A brand image of a smart phone, for example, is influenced by the product quality (associating it with perceptions of durability, ease of use, good feel to the hand, lightweight, appealing design etc.), promotion (marketing campaigns may associate the product to entertainment being more easily available or being hip and contemporary), price (highly priced product might portray towards high end image) and place (a contemporary store in a central location of a big city with helpful customer service might associate the smart phone with good services, large presence will portray commitment and reliability. Positive brand image is created to drive up the sales and that way increase the brand equity. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5 Brand building

Marketing activities are essential in brand building. Strong brands are successful in that, hence the premium prices, sustaining high sales and profits through brand loyalty. Brand is created around company's core product. Generating unique values to differentiate it from competition for example, the minimalist design of Apple products. To understand the theory behind brand value two things has to be defined: features and values. A feature of a product may or may not convert to customer benefit. For example, adding fluoride (feature) to toothpaste reflects as customer benefits because fluoride helps to protect the teeth from tooth decay and can decrease dentist costs. However not all features reflects into customer benefits, for example, a camera (feature) on a smart phone is not a benefit for people interested in photography. Core benefits come from the core product. For example, the toothpaste cleans teeth and consequently protects teeth against tooth decay, but all toothpastes achieve that. Marketers create added value that differentiate one brand from another and successful brands are the ones that have a set of brand values that are superior to their competitors. Brand building's key elements involve the thorough understanding of the functional (e.g. ease of use) and emotional (e.g. confidence) values what customers use when choosing between brands and how to affect to them. And the ability to bundle these unique factors together to create an enhanced product which customers prefer. This is what a brand is called by marketers. The value of knowing target groups and markets helps the marketers to achieve their goal in brand building, which leads to successful strong brand image. Focusing only into functional value rarely confers to a successful brand as was discovered by Ford with their car model Mondeo. Ford concentrated just on functional attributes like the ride comfort, reliability and fuel economy but the exterior design was dull and lacked character. Consumers referred to Mondeo as "blande" for not having the (emotional) excitement to compete effectively, that wasn't surely a success in the eyes of marketers. Nivea was the first one to differentiate by putting their sun block to an innovative bottle that enables it to be sprayed on. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5.1 Quality

Quality is one of the most important aspects of a core product. The main reason for brand failures is the inability to get the basic factors right. The core product must achieve the basic functional requirements that are expected of it, like for example an internet connection that is slow or disconnects easy is a nightmare. A major study shows that higher quality brands achieve greater market share and higher profitability than their rivals. Top companies like Apple, BMW and Google understand the importance of quality in brand building process and their success has been based on that. Once a brand is associated with quality, its tough for the competitors. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)



Figure 3 Seven factors of brand building

2.5.2 Positioning

Creating a successful position in a marketplace requires careful choice of target market and generating a clear positive difference in the minds of a customer. This is achieved by brand names and image, service, design, guarantees, packaging and delivery. Unique positioning is a blend of these factors. Positioning should be founded on the 4-C's, which are: clarity, consistency, credibility and competitiveness, and built with six factors: brand domain, brand heritage, brand values, brand assets, brand personality and brand reflection. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

- Brand domain is the brand's target market, where it competes in the marketplace.
- Brand heritage: the culture of the brand, the background. If it has achieved success, how was it done? It can be a superb foundation to build on. For example our case company, Laakkonen, has a slogan or mission statement like this: "roots in the forest, heart in the car business, power in the media and reputation in the business activity" This should be emphasized and nurtured to build strong identity to the brand.
- Brand values: The core values and characteristics of the brand. For example, the brand values of Laakkonen are honest and reliable service and everything is done for customer satisfaction.

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- Brand assets: logos, symbols, features images, and design, anything that makes the brand distinctive from competing brands. Nike has the “swoosh” as a symbol. It’s one of the most recognized logos in the world and it distinguishes Nike from other brands.
- Brand personality: The character of the brand if it would be described as a human being or an animal or a car. Marketers ask consumers to describe brands like this.
- Brand reflection: How consumers think that brand relates to self-identity when they are using the brand. The branding affects how people use brands to reflect and project their self-identity. The brand reflection is most important to strong high-end brands when the price is much more than just the tangible. For example Rolex watches or Louis Vuitton hand bags.

By analyzing each factor an accurate conclusion can be made of how brands are positioned and think if there is need for repositioning to improve performance. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5.3 Repositioning

As the world change so does the markets. With change come new opportunities and sometimes even a must for repositioning so a market share can be maintained or even increased. The car manufacturer Skoda repositioned from a downscale, designed and appealing for low-income consumers, with questionable quality to durable mid-market brand which has won several awards for good quality and resulted to better sales and profitability. Samsung has successfully repositioned from a cheap television and microwave manufacturer to be perceived as “cool” brand producing high quality mobile phones and flat screen televisions for people interested in technology. Nokia also has repositioned from a paper manufacturer to be known for mobile phones and telecommunication services but failing to reposition again to the smart phone era and we all know what happened. Samsung and Apple took the biggest market shares and Nokia was left in the ropes. Eventually the mobile phone sector of Nokia was sold to Microsoft. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5.4 Well-blended communications

Brand positioning is base on the perception made by the customer. Huge amount of thought and effort goes into creating a clear and desired position in target audience’s mind. It consists of advertising and other promotional activities. Awareness needs to be generated and brand personality enhanced, and positive attitudes reinforced. Marketing communications

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and combinations of traditional and digital media is used to promote successful brands. The image of them is reinforced by marketers, public relations and sales promotion. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

Brands can be made more attractive and noticeable through display or package design, such as new and modern dealership for car sales. Also getting the customer familiar with brand names, logos and brands visual appearance. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5.5 Being first

Research has shown that forerunner brands are more likely successful than a follower brand. Being first gives an opportunity to a brand to generate a clear position in the minds of the customers before the competition enters the market. It also gives the advantage to build customer and distributor loyalty, however, being first doesn't guarantee success. It requires continuous marketing effort and the strength to survive competitor's innovations and entry's to the market. The competitor that releases their product later than the one who was first there might have an advance in some cases if the first product doesn't work like it should, the second one could come up with a solution and grab the markets with the initial release of their product. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

2.5.6 Long-term perspective

Brand building is a long-term process. Creating awareness, getting brand values through to consumers and building customer loyalty takes many years. Company must be prepared to constant investments into brand building and maintaining the position in the marketplace. However, it might be tempting to cut back on expenses in the short term. Short-term results in brand building can be hardly measured accurately, because for strong brands, sales are unlikely to fall in short term due to the effects of past advertising. Persistence is key to success. To emphasize on the importance of consistent brand investment the chairman of Cadbury Schweppes Sir Adrian Cadbury wrote: For brands to sustain they have to be maintained properly and imaginatively. Sir Adrian Cadbury the Chairman of Cadbury and Schweppes says: "brands are extremely valuable properties and, like other forms of property they need to be kept in good repair, renewed from time to time and defended against squatters." (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

When marketing brands to entirely new markets companies need to be willing to be prepared to make losses. Coca-Cola was suffering losses for 15 years in the Japanese markets before it became one of it's most profitable markets to this day. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

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2.5.7 Internal marketing

Many brands focus the marketing in building the brand. This is common in companies that offer services such as: banks, restaurants, insurance companies, airlines and why not our case company Laakkonen. Attempting to build awareness and loyalty through the services is provided by them. Internal marketing is one of the key factors and it means training and communicating with the staff. Training of staff is important because companies like these rely on face-to-face contact between service provider and service user. The brands values and brand strategies should be made clear to the staff so they understands the company goals in brand building. In service companies training should be made to be a central element of the company's brand-building plans. (David Jobber, Principles and Practice of Marketing 2010)

3 CURRENT SITUATION

Laakkonen currently doesn't have any social media activity. They have a Facebook fan page, which has only 334 likes and the last activity is from December 2013. However, they monitor and follow what is happening in Facebook. There isn't a weekly newsletter you could subscribe to on their website. Nevertheless, this is not a problem because most of their competitors also don't have activity in social media. There is only one competitor that has activity on Facebook, twitter and Youtube, but it's not the significant, yet. That company's brand image is a little bit different from the rest. It's smaller company compared to these big chains but they present themselves as young, cool and contemporary. Majority of the car dealerships nowadays rely exclusively on the traditional advertising such as: Television, radio, printed and outdoor media. The reason possibly relies in the target group. Laakkonen's target group is people around 40 and onwards, because they are most likely to buy cars, and they generally handles the financial side of things when a young person buys a car. (Laakkonen 2014)

Although Laakkonen does not yet have social media activity they are active in traditional advertising. Laakkonen does advertisements for television, radio, local daily newspapers and magazines. Laakkonen also has sponsorships with the Finnish national ice hockey team, the miss Finland competition, Finnish volleyball association and Finnish orientation association. Some local sponsorships are also established with local sports clubs. The Laakkonen group handles nationwide big marketing campaigns which are standardized strictly made for brand building purposes and the dealerships, which usually have different car brands in different locations handle local trading post advertisements, which is more targeted to boost sales and reflect to revenue growth in the short-term. Style is to market to masses nationwide in television and locally in newspapers and radio. Direct marketing is done via sms messages, updates of current situations and new campaigns or the releases of new car or models. Social media could be used in the future also for this purpose, as it might end up being cheaper and more effective than send sms messages to thousands of people. (Laakkonen 2014)

The Laakkonen brand is strong and known all nationwide, it is the biggest car dealership chain in Finland. The characteristics of brand image that its well known, good and reliable service and professional, well trained staff. Laakkonen's brand is rather traditional and still to this day they embrace their family-owned company roots even though Laakkonen has grown to be the in Finland. This however, doesn't come across to the public so much. The colors red, dark blue and grey come from the Joensuu region's emblem and the color scheme carries through in everything.

As a service company, the brand image is nurtured by constant training of staff. The quality of the service has to be maintained high. Laakkonen has developed and exceptional quality standard management system in order to measure and analyze constantly the services and develop them further. Being a service company this is essential and Laakkonen has done very good job in it. Even though they are the biggest now they still have the goal to always grow and develop their services further and better, to offer

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easier and more reliable purchase process for customers. (Laakkonen 2014)

3.1 Benchmarking – Case Ford Lebanon, Ohio

Ford, Lincoln and Mercury dealer in Lebanon, Ohio in the United States of America launched their social media marketing in 2010. They are active in Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Google+ and Youtube. Currently Ford Lebanon's social media activity:

Facebook page:	3,233 likes, 4,5/5 stars rating
Twitter:	1,176 followers, 4,129 tweets
Youtube:	149 channel subscriptions
Google+	146 followers, 462,718 page views

Ford Lebanon has incorporated social media channels to support their own website which has proven to be quite the success. Here are some numbers from Ford Lebanon's year-over-year (YOY) digital marketing performance. (TK Carsites, Successful Social Media to Auto dealers, Lebanon Ford, 2011)

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	YOY Increase*
Total visits to www.lebanon-ford.com	181%
Unique visitors	125%
Total page views	623%
Average visitors per day	121%
Submitted internet leads	407%
Appointments made from submitted Internet leads	480%
Total internet sales	260%
Traffic from Google (organic search)	154%

*May-Dec 2009 to May-Dec 2010

3.2 Survey

As one research method describes, a survey was conducted about some general information about social media activity among people nowadays through company's viewpoint. This survey was conducted online and shared to people via social media (Facebook and Twitter) and by e-mail in the HAMK's school e-mail. Those factors can have an affect the end result of the survey.

The factors what the research asked among age and gender was:

- What social media platform do they use the most: To get a clear understanding where the people are interacting and to what social media platform they pay the most attention.

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- How important is social media activity for a company that sells B2C: How much people rely on social media when they think of products and services. How big role has the social media taken in being the first and personal contact for consumers with companies?
- Where do you look for information if you are for example, buying a car: To be able to figure out how the purchase process is nowadays when consumers make bigger investments. To have an understanding how the internet has affected the way consumers think and act.
- What kind of information would they like to receive from a local company in social media: We need to know what kind of information people go to social media to look for when they are purchasing products. What do they want to get, what is important. It is valuable information in brand building, and creating successful social media marketing plan.

The most used social media platform was Facebook and second one was Instagram and third Twitter among both men and women. Facebook is a website where people create profiles and communicate with friends and can share information, companies can establish fan pages and gather likes from people. You can only see peoples content when you are friends with them. Instagram is purely a photo sharing application. People or organizations create their own profile and start telling their stories with photos and videos. The idea is built around sharing photos and videos on the go. You can follow anyone you wish and anyone can follow you. Twitter is similar to Instagram but when in Instagram you also upload a photo in Twitter you can post text, photos, links and videos. It's called micro blog because you message, "tweet", is limited to 140 characters. Your "tweet" in twitter can be "retweeted" so a person or an organization can publish it in their own profile, that's how the content is shared.

Majority answered that it is important to very important for a company that sells products to consumers (B2C) to have social media activity. The scale was from 1 to 5 and majority answered 4 or 5. It is clear that social media provides a good platform for sharing ideas and opinions and consumers constantly use it to search information and reviews about products. It is a good way to reach consumers directly. Once you are active there you can affect to the discussions and even straighten facts or provide credible information as an organization with professional knowledge. Let's say that a person wants to find out what you need to know when you are buying a car, for example. Wouldn't it be more credible if the consumer could read a buyers guide written by the company that are professionals in that area rather than some random person that you don't know even if they know about cars.

96 per cent of people answered that the first place they look for information when they are buying a car is the internet. Car is a big more carefully considered purchase, not something that is bought spontaneously, so majority of consumers start their purchase process online comparing products and prices. Web is a convenient tool to reach the buyer directly. It helps to

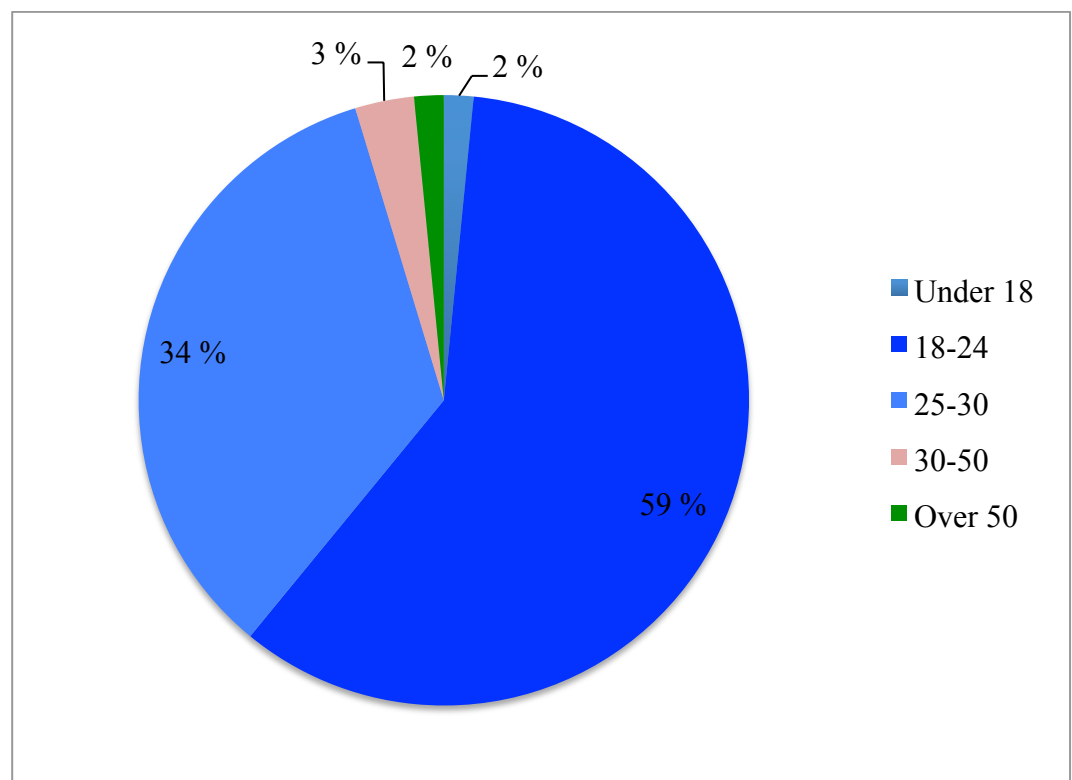
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affect to their opinions and eventually steer them into coming to your place of business further down the purchase process.

When asked about the type of content consumers would like to receive from a local company in social media the majority answered informative (e.g. about products and services and updates of current situations (e.g. opening hours, sales promotions) rather than entertainment or real-life stories. Social media has made information be valid only for few days or weeks. Consumers look for latest and most updated information in social media. It also allows it. Organizations can reach customers directly very fast when they have a change in opening hours, for example. Consumers know these factors and benefits of social media in this matter, and use it to their advantage.

3.2.1 Results

1. Age (%)

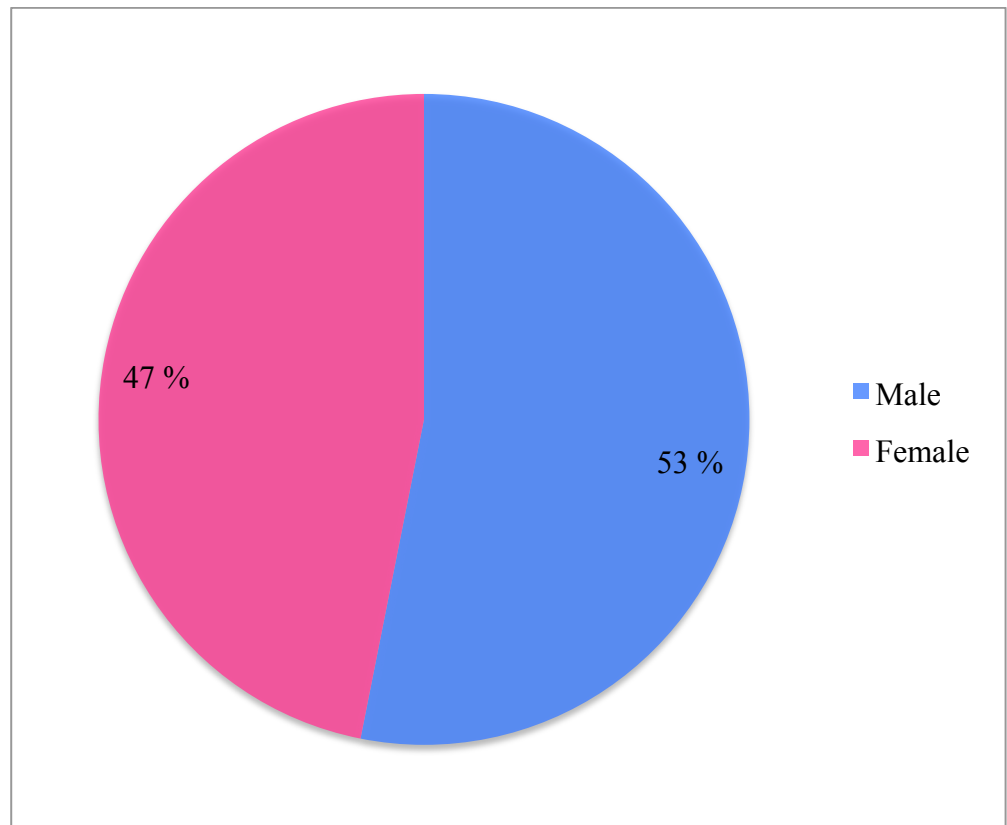


59% of the respondents were between the ages of 18-24, which was the biggest age group. 34% were between age of 25-30, 3% were between 30-50 and over 50 and under 18 was left at 2%.

In total 64 respondents.

2. Gender (%)

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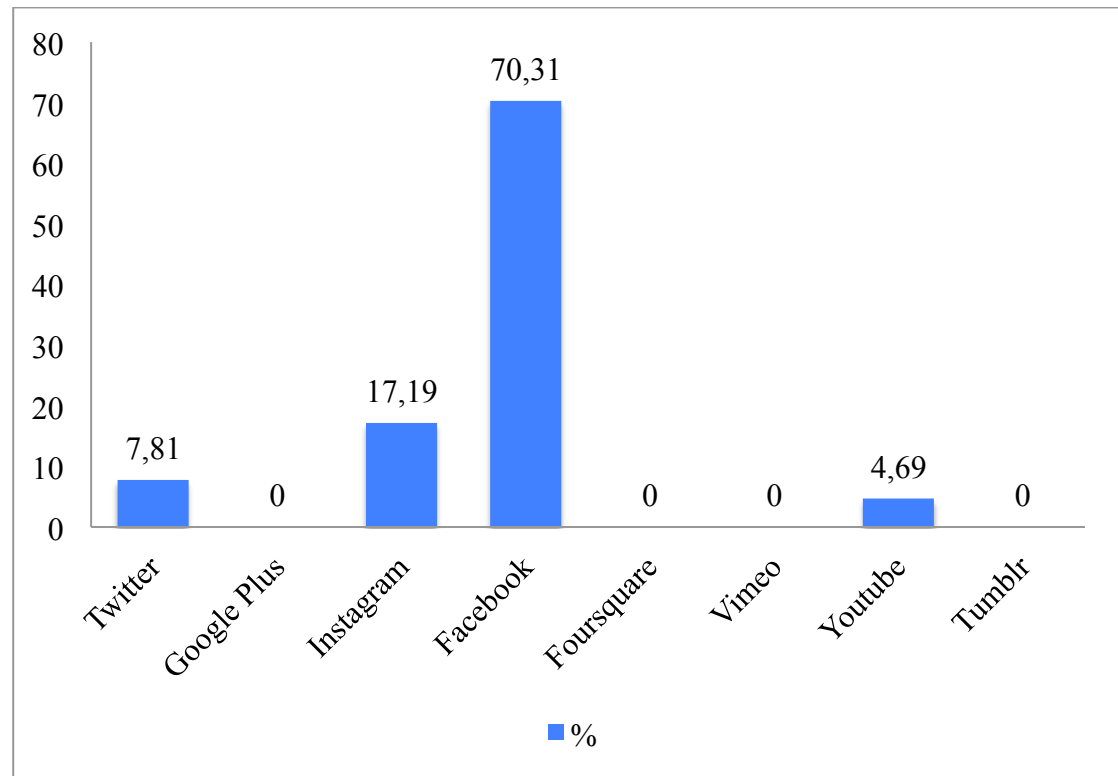
53% of the respondents were male and 47% were female.

83,33% of the female respondents were between ages 18-24 and the rest of the female respondents were between 25-30 (16,67%)

50% of male respondents were in the group "25-30" and 38,24% in the group "18-24". These were the two biggest groups.

In total 64 respondents.

3. What social media site you use the most?

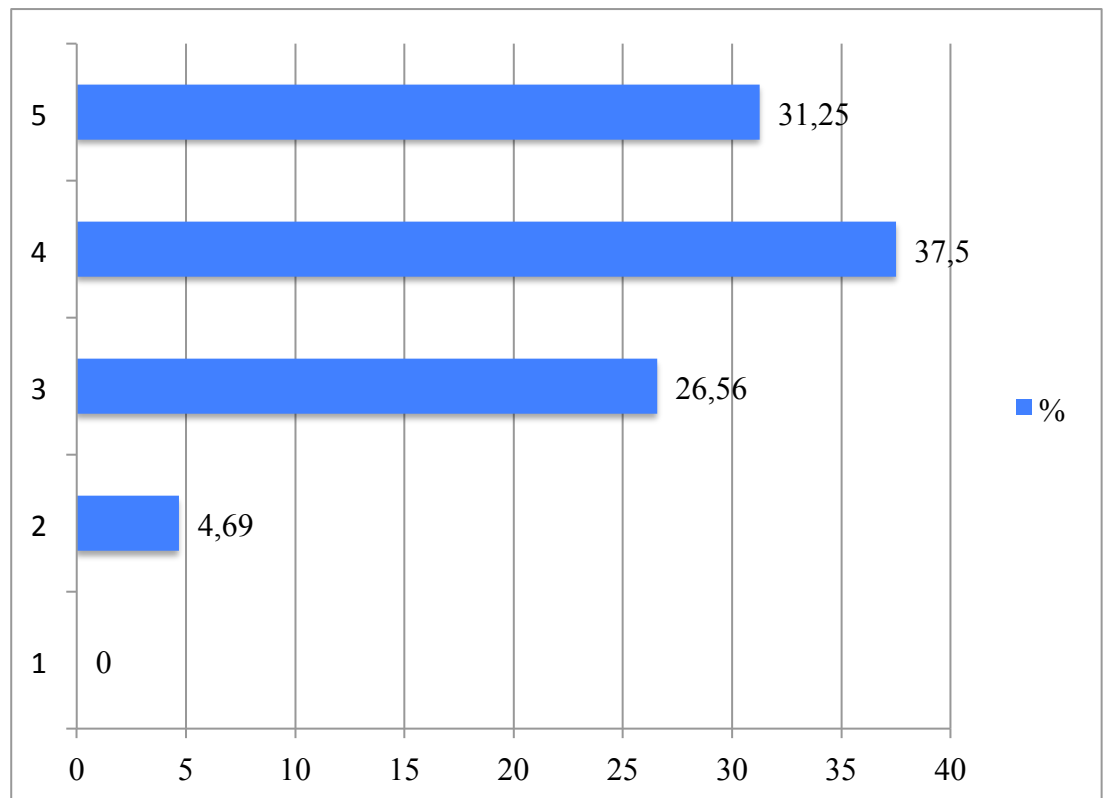


70,31% of all respondents answered Facebook the social media site they use the most. 83% of female respondents said to use Facebook when only 58% of male respondents used Facebook the most. Male respondents had more variety in the social media sites they used.

Instagram was the second popular social media platform by 17,19%

In total 64 respondents.

4. How important do you think social media activity is for a company that sells products and services for consumers (B2C)?



1 = not important at all, 5 = super important

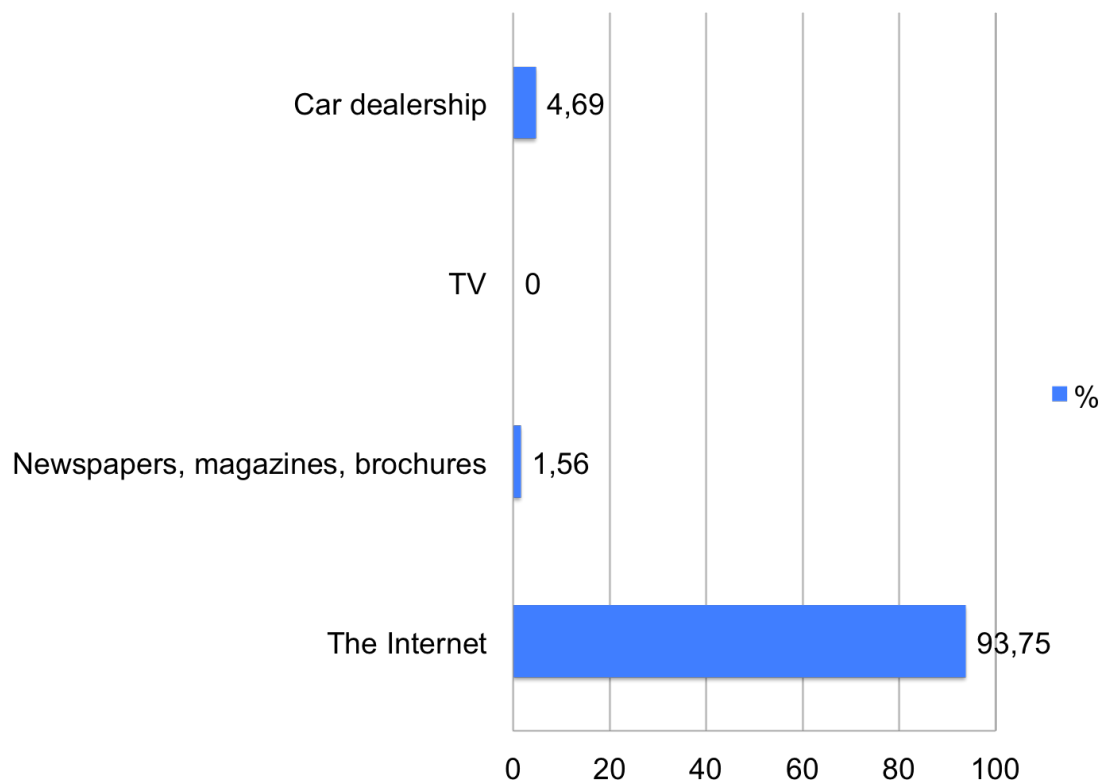
68,75% of respondents think that social media activity for companies who sells products and services for consumers (B2C) is very or super important. Nobody thinks that social media activity is not important at all.

44,74% of the group "18-24" answered 4, that social media activity is very important, 39,47% answered super important. Respondents between 25-30 majority (45,45%) answered 3, social media activity is important. Rest of the respondents between 25-30 answered 4 or 5.

The older we go the less important activity in social media is. Respondents from the age 30 and upwards 66% answered 3 (important) and the rest 2 (less important).

In total 64 respondents.

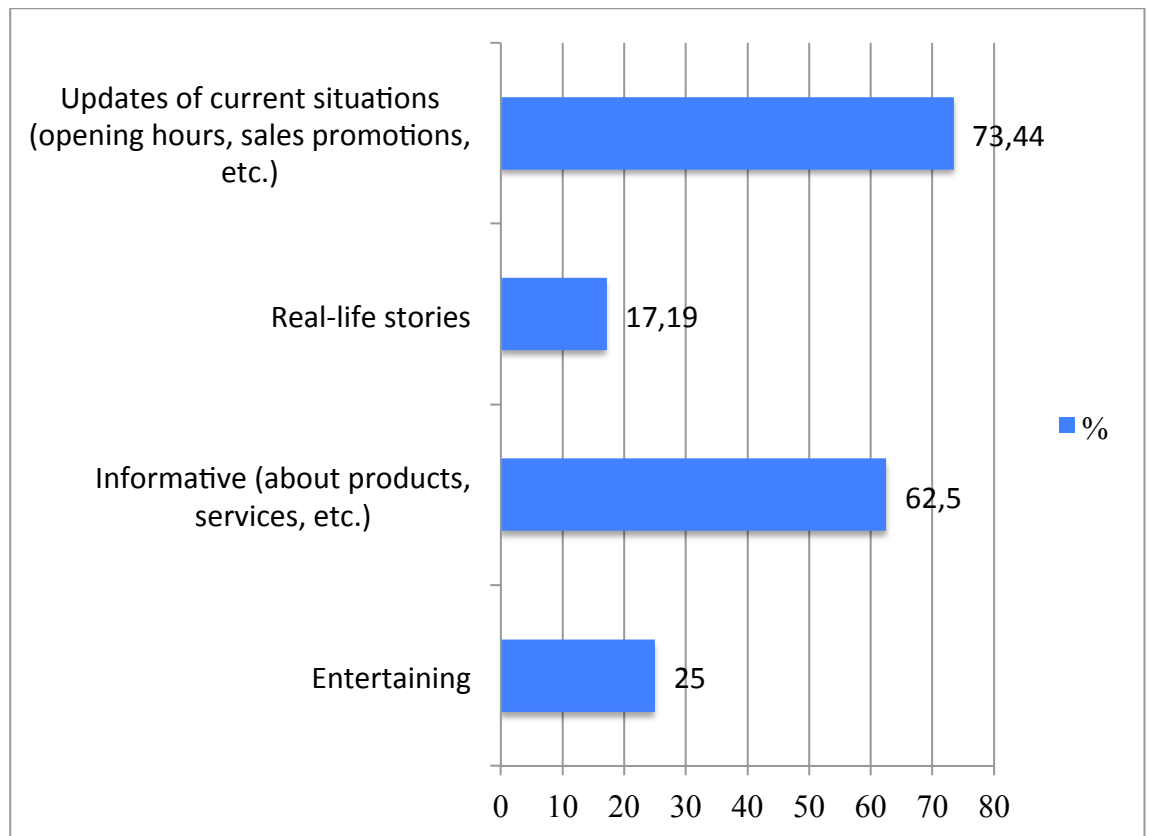
5. You're buying a car, where do you first look for information?



93,75% of respondents would first look information on the internet when they are purchasing a car. 100% of respondents from 30 and upwards first look for information online which is surprising when they are the group that least think that social media activity is important. 4,69% of respondents first hand look for information from a car dealership and 1,56% from newspapers, magazines and brochures.

In total 64 respondents.

6. What kind of content would you like to receive from a local company in social media? (You can choose up to 2 alternatives)



Majority answered that updates of current situations and informative content should be published by local companies in social media. 75% of those who answered that they want informative updates also answered updates of current situations. Entertaining and real-life stories got minority of the answers.

In total 64 respondents.

3.3 What is social media

“Social media provide the way people share ideas, content, thoughts, and relationships online. Social media differ from so called mainstream media in that anyone can create, comment on, and add to social media content. Social media can take the form of text, audio, video, images, and communities.” (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

Social media and social networking is two different things. Social media is a term used of different platforms, websites that people use to communicate and interact with online in a social way. Social media includes blogs, wikis, video and photo sharing, and much more. Social networking occurs on these websites when persons and organizations create profiles and in-

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interact to become part of a community of friends and similar people and to share information in Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and similar sites.

Let's take a closer look to the different social medias to get a better understanding of what is social media currently and how does it affect to peoples lives in the eyes of a company and promotional opportunities. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

3.3.1 Facebook

Facebook has over billion users worldwide and they report that 580 million people log onto Facebook at least once a day. It connects people through friend request process. Only when you approve someone as your friend, your extended profile becomes visible to him or her, otherwise it remains private. With requesting process you can control with whom you interact with and who interacts with you. It's a good way to maintain contact with school friends and work colleagues. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

Facebook is a great way to get your organization engaged in social networking. Once you have your company's profile up with the logo as the profile picture and general information of the company, you should post interesting information there that people who are engaged with the profile want to share. That's the way to spread information in Facebook, not overly advertise. You can share links to blog posts, images and videos as they are created. (Facebook, 2014)

3.3.2 Google plus

Google created Google+ as a service of Google and it has direct link to how your company appears in Google search results. Google+ is similar to Facebook and it is the fastest growing social network in history. There are more than 400 million users nowadays. The connection to Google's search engine makes it too important to ignore. It's an important tool for people and companies branding because when someone searches your company's name in Google, the Google+ profile that you created is shown in the top results. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

You can create Circles, which are groups of people to follow. You decide yourself who you want to follow as of Facebook you automatically follow someone who is your friend. Hangouts, is a tool for free video conferencing. You can communicate with up to ten people at the same time, and you can record it and publish it live on Youtube, which is also owned by Google. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

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3.3.3 Youtube

Video sharing website owned by Google. People can create their own profiles where they can publish videos or make playlists of videos they find important or entertaining. Every person in Youtube can give thumb up or thumb down for videos, another way to measure the publicity of a video is the amount of watchers it has. These factors are displayed to everyone. Youtube has stunning figures, as it is the biggest video sharing social media in the world. Over one billion unique visitors use Youtube monthly. Every month in Youtube there is 6 billion hours of video watched. Every minute is downloaded 100 hours of video to Youtube. Youtube is owned by Google so it works with Google search engine and Google+ amongst other Google products. (Youtube.com, 2014)

3.3.4 Linked in

The world's largest professional social network, with over 200 million users in over 200 countries and territories. LinkedIn is like the Facebook of business/professional life. It's used to connect the professionals around the world and make them more productive and successful. LinkedIn you meet other people from your industry and meet buyers of your products and services. LinkedIn is used for sharing information, promoting events, conducting market research, and identifying buyers and potential partners. Similar to other social networks, your profile is your public face. One of the fastest growing in LinkedIn are company profiles. They provide an overview of what company does and for whom their products and services are offered, and if there is any work positions available. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

3.3.5 Twitter

Twitter has become popular very rapidly. It allows people and companies communicate through short messages, with maximum 140 characters, with friends, family and coworkers. People share their thoughts and what they do through text, images, links to videos, blog posts and other content they find interesting. People can freely choose who they follow depending on what they want to hear from in Twitter. You might follow your friends, colleagues, or even celebrities or companies you are interested in. For the limit of only 140 characters per update people share links to the information they think is important. It's more casual than an e-mail, and people who receive it will see it when they want. E-mails are controlled by the sender, the receiver might not be in the mood for reading it when its received, it makes e-mails often neglected. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

The best way in getting people to follow you on twitter is interacting with your followers; responding to their answers and comments and asking and challenging them to communicate with you. Every marketing and PR person should be aware and understand how people use Twitter. The search

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engine of Twitter is a great way to discover what is said about your company's services or products and your organization. The information in Twitter is more open to everyone than for example, in Facebook so monitoring what people are saying can tell you a lot.

3.3.6 Instagram

Instagram is a photo and video sharing application to your smartphone or tablet. It has grown popular very fast and Facebook for 1 billion dollars acquired it quickly when it became famous. It's like Twitter but only with photos and videos. Companies use it for promoting their services and products by posting creative images to tell their stories. Some people use it as a modern photo album of their daily lives, other use it to promote their work, such as photographers, videographers or designers. (Instagram, 2014)

3.3.7 Other social medias

Chat rooms are places where you can communicate with people you don't know about a common topic. Wikis are websites that can be edited and uploaded by anyone. Wikipedia is a good sample on this. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

4 PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES

This part of the thesis will involve the problems, downsides and challenges of this topic. In social media there is a lot of freedom and lot of different aspects need to be considered. Social media being so complicated in ways like, platforms, content etc. having a successful marketing and branding activity in social media needs a lot of work. With the freedom come responsibility, content and quality control and timely activity. Word-of-mouth has never been playing such a big role than it is nowadays. Especially information about bad news, scandals, bad service, products travel quickly and is seen by a lot of people. Building a brand image takes a lot of time and effort, so being careful and cautious when publishing content and interacting with people is a key factor. Not only your social activity is analyzed and judged, so avoiding conflicts in traditional customer service is as important. Social media can act as a tool to right the opinions, if a consumer feels they have been treated in a bad way.

Social media can be complicated because it is so huge entity with a lot of different possibilities. There is three types of media; paid media, which is where paid placements of promotional messages are distributed; owned media, those channels which the company controls and earned media; messages that are distributed at no direct cost to the company and beyond the control of the company. For example, Word-of-mouth. Social media has elements of all these three but more owned media and earned media. When the publicity in social media largely can only come through earned media, by word-of-mouth, it can be hard to control and hard to measure. Of course it's low cost, and you can measure website traffic and likes or views, but if the company doesn't have much people following them then the power of owned media can be very small. So the power of word-of-mouth could be more important for the company in the beginning of their social media marketing plan, before they have a strong position in the web. The challenges are what kind content can, and should be created that will create a positive message of the company and be align with the brand image, and also that people want to share it so the full affect of social media can be used.

4.1 Takes time

Gaining likes and followers is a long process. The beginning is the hardest and slowly growing time because once you for example get 1000 followers, people who follow you talked to their friends and family members and the word-of-mouth helps you gain more followers. Also when a person somehow discovers your company's profile they tend to think several things on top of if they like or not your company: "if so many people follow it, should I follow it". The more likers or followers you have the easier is to people like your page or follow your feed, because it's human nature, just like if there is one person on a street corner watching somewhere and pointing it doesn't really capture your attention but if there is ten or twenty people doing that you will most likely also take a look of what is going on there. You can do an experiment yourself: get a group of your

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friends and go to the city center and randomly stop somewhere and look and point into a direction even though there isn't anything special or out of the ordinary, people will still join you.

There are no shortcuts in earning followers or likers. Of course, companies already have a customer base, or even a fan base, so the first step would be to deliver them the message to start following your activity on social media or like your Facebook page and you have a base of followers/likers to build on. Promoting in other channels such as your place of business or your daily newsletter can be a convenient way to get new followers. Earning followers or likers comes with a simple, yet lengthy process. The key is constant activity in social media in publishing high quality content, but also communicating and interacting with other people.

4.2 Advertise without advertising

David Meerman Scott wrote in his book *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* to consider social media like it's a cocktail party. You just don't go in the middle of the living room and shout "Buy my products!", people will look at you a while like your crazy and then continue what they were actually doing, paying no more attention to you. Rather than that, you go around and speak to everyone individually. Do you listen more than you speak? Are you trying to meet with every single person in the party or have a few great conversations. Are you helpful for them? Do you provide valuable information to people and don't expect anything tangible in return? Or do you avoid social interaction with people and parties because you are uncomfortable in those situations? (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

You could also go to the party and try to sell for everyone and treat everyone as a sales lead, but that will probably not make you very popular. However, the popular people in the party make friends and people like to do business with people they like. And they are happy to introduce their friends to each other. And the word spreads, this is also the case in social media. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

When a company like Laakkonen has only had traditional advertising adapting a new way of advertising which might lead more into brand building, which eventually will lead to increase in revenue, it might be hard to understand the dynamics of social media marketing. The web and social media has changed the rules of marketing and the traditional method isn't really that effective in social media. Implementing a new style of marketing with new set of tools will be challenging and take a lot of time, but will eventually pay off.

The marketing in social media will fail if it is treated like a traditional media. In traditional marketing the problem is that the company who sells or who buys the advertisement, in our case Laakkonen or any media outlet, they will determine when the consumer sees it. So it can be looked as in-

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interrupting, its not effective if a person is not responsive to the advertisement. So rather than interrupting and selling it should be educating and informing the consumer. In social media company will have a little of success if they try to do the traditional way, or at least creating a buzz and gaining likers/followers will be more expensive and the reason of social media marketing is not to be expensive. The web and social media should be communicating with the customer when they are most receivable to the information. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

4.3 Where to be active in?

There is quite a range of different social media websites to choose from, so how can a company decide where they should be active and what platforms to use?

In the beginning choosing a couple different social medias, which complement each other and are a little different. Not trying to be everywhere and please everyone because it will become difficult for the company and for the consumer. A clear understanding should be made of where for example, the current customers are active and establish a presence there. As my research shows it differs for people what to they prefer but sticking with the most popular ones (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) in the beginning would be a good choice. It depends what the company wants to portray in social media, it could be more into recruiting and business relations and then for example, LinkedIn would be a correct choice. Evaluation from the brand-building point of view would also be important, what suits our needs the best and where the potential customers are.

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4.4 SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low cost• Direct communication with consumers• Available when buyer wants• No interruptions• Easily available• Relevant information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information's life cycle is short• Needs constant attention• Huge entity, how to use effectively
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vast publicity with literally no cost• One of the most important communication tool between you and customers• Endless growth possibilities• Saves money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some things are beyond control• Bad for image when done wrong• Power of negative word-of-mouth

4.4.1 Strengths

Publishing content in social media is free. However, companies can also pay for extra visibility in some sites, just like traditional marketing. The strength in social media relies in how information is shared. By earning followers and likers, people share your information without any direct cost to the company. Content just has to be appealing to the consumer, so they will want to share it. Social media has also low costs in updating old information to new or changing mistakes. It's a lot more costly to print and hand out new brochures, than just a few clicks in the web. The cost of hiring social media personnel of course exists, or a current member of the marketing team can handle it. Cost of creating content depends on what you want to do, but ideas are often inexpensive and the more creative you are the less it usually costs. Of course the cost of for example, making videos or photos are similar than in traditional marketing but the publishing of the content is free, rather than in traditional paid media, the time and space is bought.

Direct communication with consumers; if you think public relations before, it was only exclusive to certain medias. The company didn't even know if the media will publish their bulletin. Now you can directly be in contact with consumers and interact with them. Telling the information straight to the consumer gives more credibility to the company than if they hear it from somewhere else. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

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The content on websites and social media is available when consumers decide to digest it. Traditional advertising is interrupting people when they aren't receptive for the content. People are already active in the web and in social media so having information there is a bonus for them and for the company. It's easily available for the consumers and the information is usually the latest and relevant, since the cost of updating it is minimal. This serves the consumer and the company in a positive way. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

4.4.2 Weaknesses

The life cycle of information is usually very short. Take for example Instagram, the photo and video sharing application, people usually look at a single photo for under one minute and then they proceed to the next, it's already old. However the message gets across at that time. When the information is relevant and easily available and easy to publish the life cycle suffers.

Social media users crave for new information daily, so social networking needs constant attention. It's not enough if its done once a week, once a day is more likely a good pace, sometimes even more often. On top of creating and publishing the content the interaction between people has to be maintained, there might be a need to answer questions, solve problems etc. just like reading and answering e-mail, daily. The web and social media is a huge entity. There is numerous different social media websites and a lot of information published all the time, so considering where to be active and what to publish in order to use it effectively and how can the message get to consumers if there is so much information thrown at them for everywhere in social media.

4.4.3 Opportunities

The information of people or an organization can be shared by others unlimited times which makes the opportunities for cheap publicity endless. Back in the day a company had to pay for people to see their advertising and it was limited, now with the power of word-of-mouth and sharing in social media information travels for free, and can reach much more people than in traditional paid advertising.

Since social media sites are easy to use and are made for interaction there is an opportunity that it will become the most important way to communicate directly with current customers and new potential ones. It's a lot easier and more casual than e-mail. With e-mail the consumer has to find the addresses from the company website and then think of what people to contact, and the response could take days or neglected. When social media activity is done right the interaction with people should daily and fast responses.

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Facebook fan page likers, Twitter followers, Youtube views don't have a limit. The community can grow forever. The more there is these factors the easier and more influential the publicity is. The social media profiles have endless growth possibilities. The process of acquiring followers and likers can be long and slow but the biggest investment is time, rather than money. Another aspect is that successful social media marketing plan can save money in other marketing expenses. No need for bought space in the newspaper or national television, just clever advertising in the web where people act as distributors of the information.

4.4.4 Threats

As the web and social media is practically an earned media some things aren't under control of the company. For example, people can express their frustration towards company's product or service and the negative word-of-mouth reaches people quickly.

A careful plan of how to be active, and what kind of content to publish in social media needs to be made so the activities doesn't do any harm for the image of the brand or it won't have any added value. Without good planning and clear vision of the information of the content with a unified theme and constant activity social media might only be a waste of time, no added value to a consumer.

5 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The development plan will be made with the knowledge of the theory research and personal experiences doing a proposal for the commissioning company on the subject. Ideas with examples will be provided for Laakkonen, which they can use as a base for their marketing plans in the future.

5.1 3 types of media

There is three types of media: paid media, is when company pays for advertisement in the television, radio or printed media etc., owned media, channels that company controls such as: website, brochure, newsletters and last, earned media: messages that are distributed with no direct cost to a company and by methods that aren't in the control of a company. Also known as word-of-mouth (e.g. shared content, likers, followers, fans). Generating educative, informative and interesting content to social media can influence this.

5.2 Repositioning

The social media has changed the way people search information and compare products, social media and the web has changed consumers purchase process. The repositioning of Laakkonen is inevitable in order to renew the brand image and stay relevant through the social media. In the questionnaire was asked where people first find information when they are buying a car. Majority of answers were in the web. It seems to be the trend nowadays for big purchases that are considered for a long time before actual buy is made. Just like buying a house or purchasing a holiday, consumers rely on the web for first hand knowledge before they actually start making decisions. It is the easiest way than immediately go look for cars from a dealership. Of course Laakkonen has their own website with the catalogue of the cars (used) they now have in their dealerships, and information about the brands they represent in different locations. Also other websites are available for consumers to find used cars from, and the car brands such as Audi or Volkswagen has their own website. But every single car brand and every single car dealer has similar websites, so why would they want to look at yours?

Laakkonen is viewed today as a traditional brand. Traditionalism is good thing and it can be maintained even after the repositioning. Talking about the start of social media marketing. Brands need to reposition themselves in order to maintain or grow their market share. In the time of when the author started writing this thesis the competition of Laakkonen didn't really have social media activity. As of now, one dealership that had a little now has started being active in another social media platform. This is a good opportunity to Laakkonen to reposition as a company with contemporary up to date marketing and social media that interacts with the current customer base and younger potential future customers. The way Laakko-

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nen should look at their potential customers, a rough division without analyzing or creating buyer profiles, is that they have two types of people as potential customers: The typical customer that buys a car, around 35 and upwards maybe even older, and the fans. Fans can be younger who are just about to get their drivers license or older persons who just like cars. Even though the younger fans might not have the money now to buy a car, maybe their father or grandfather is buying them a car, or eventually they will grow older and then buy a car.

5.3 Target group

As mentioned before the target group could be divided into two groups: potential customers (aged 35 on upwards) who are buying cars for them or their sons or daughters or grandchildren, and fans; car fans who are most likely younger people with dreams of nice cars. Younger people unlikely buy a lot of cars so considering, as fans would be a good division, because sooner or later they will start buying cars so they already know where to come. Why fans are important for a company like Laakkonen? If we think of car brands like Ferrari or McLaren, why do they sell after-shave or shirts or other merchandise that has little to do with cars? It is purely for brand building and image purposes for fans that doesn't have the means to buy a Ferrari. The Ferrari after-shave might make them feel prestigious like they would feel driving a Ferrari, and one day the fan might actually become a customer. Fans in general whether they buy the Ferrari shirt or not like to talk passionately about cars and driving, so if they talk about Laakkonen, it's a success.

5.4 Content rich website

Individuals don't go to the web to look for advertisements; they go to look for content. Company's website should be designed for the customer in mind. Do they find what they want there easily? Content drives action so website should be clear and easy to navigate in. Usually websites are built for the design and color in mind, but the real question is, does it provide your customers what they want? Does it help them with their buying process? These are the factors website should be built upon. The website should capture the customer from the start of the buying process to end and maintaining the relationship through after sales services. After the car is bought the consumer will still need information of it from time to time, how to maintain it etc. Social media can be linked in the website and vice versa, so customers can find their way from the website to your social media sites and from your social media site to the website. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

5.5 Content

The information that should be published in social media needs to be honest, informative, entertaining, it should add value to the consumer and compliment traditional advertising. There are a lot of different styles that could be implemented and even use different social medias for different purposes. However, some kind of similar theme or voice to everything can be made to have a solid entity. Informative and updates of current situations was the type of content what the majority of people answered in the survey in the question what kind of content should a local company publish. Information about sales promotions, about company news, possible new job positions available, changes in opening hours or days when some service isn't available etc. Publish content that is useful for the customer and what they would want to consume. Not advertising, but building relations to customers. Educating and informing them, rather than sending one way messages. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

Here is a selection of platforms what Laakkonen could be active in. Maybe not in all places at the same time, expand as they go along social networking. The content would be selected to match the style of the social media. For example, don't ask on Twitter people to respond you with long stories, because one post or message is limited into 140 characters.

5.5.1 Blogs

There is a lot of blogging websites such as: Blogger, Tumblr and Wordpress, or a separate blog could be established to Laakkonen's website. However, Google owns Blogger so the information more likely to appear in Google search engine results, when a consumer is looking for information. The style of the blog can be altered and converted to the design that fits Laakkonen's profile. It would be preferred that the blog would be in one of these types of social media because people can find it within the blogging site through key words, and tags. A blog could be filled with longer stories and texts, of the history of the company, for example. Laakkonen has a long history and expertise in the car business so stories along the way could help the company to maintain a traditional Finnish family owned company.

To get a contact to the consumer on the beginning of their buying process a series of buyer guides could be written. They could contain information for the buyer about different car models and what they are suitable for, or what they should take into consideration when buying a car. These could be made a series of different blog posts, so there wouldn't be just one long post. Providing the customer more personal information of products and services. User guides could be written from general factors what comes ahead for car owners. For example, what is the correct way to wash a car, or what kind of preparations should a person make for the car when they are leaving for a road trip, what about the weather? What to do when it's

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winter and what during the summer? In the beginning of every season there could be a post of what how weather affects to the car or the driving conditions and how should it be dealt with. Several different blogs could be established. People want to hear and read about real stories and about real people. For example, a car guy blog or some celebrity could blog about driving and living with a car from Laakkonen. Laakkonen sponsors the new Miss Finland, so she could be blogging about the car she drives her year as the Miss Finland. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

The style of the text could be more casual, so it would feel more personal to a consumer. Images and videos can be linked to the blog posts. It will be talked more later. Laakkonen wants to create more casual relationship between the company and its customers so here is chance. Think of the customers as friends. You are the friend who know everything about cars, about their technology, how to live with them and how to maintain them, so what would you tell your friend, if they said that they are going to the Lapland for a week in Christmas and how should they prepare the car.

5.5.2 Twitter

Twitter is called a micro blog due to the limitation of 140 characters per message, which are called “Tweets” in Twitter. Twitter can be used to communicate short messages between people, because answering and communicating has been made very easy. There is a possibility for private conversations, if the topic of discussion needs that, however interacting in public is great because other people also can get value off the conversation, and the Twitter search engine will pick up conversations that are made publicly. Short messages could contain updates of current situation, such as sales promotions, company news, changes in opening hours, or whatever information that needs to be distributed timely. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

Hashtags (#) can be used in order to tag a certain message to a group. For example, Laakkonen could always use #Laakkonen, for when a person presses the tag they will find all posts made by everyone that are tagged #Laakkonen. This is a way for people to search information about a topic without the need to know the person or an organization that “tweets” about the topic. People can “retweet” posts so they will appear in their feed and be visible for people who follow them. It’s a way to discover new users to follow.

Images can be attached to “tweets” to get more attention. Images, videos and news, blog posts and other content in the internet can be shared in Twitter. Activation of the followers is very welcomed. A question could be asked of a topic that relates, for example to a blog post or news, start a conversation with the followers. It can be controlled with a hashtag so the follower could find the whole topic under the same hashtag. You could

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ask the followers to “tweet” out the best car related memory and encourage them to add a photo and you Laakkonen would, for example publish the best story in their own Twitter profile.

5.5.3 Facebook

Facebook fan pages has been great for companies to communicate and interact with their fans, but recently Facebook has made limited visibility to companies’ pages so Facebook isn’t so good tool in getting the message across anymore. Rather use Twitter for that. Facebook still has some unique characteristics. Making short text posts and linking blog posts to Facebook with a picture and open-ended questions to get people to comment on like the status update. Facebook uses a name of “status update” from the message that is distributed to the fans (people who like the page) and liking comes across as giving “thumbs up” for a picture or a post. Facebook has a special algorithm of showing posts in peoples news feed (the content what is share to every person by the people they are friends with or pages they like). The algorithm favors post that have an image, so attaching a picture will most likely give the post more publicity. Also the amount of likes, the more the better the visibility. But asking the open-ended questions activates the people to comment and Facebook favors comments more than likes, so more publicity. People can share each others posts or whatever content, from video clips to news so creating content for people that they want to share is way to gain more publicity and it will lead to more likers. Facebook allows companies to create apps, or games to involve and interact people.

5.5.4 Video & photo sharing

Instagram, Youtube, Vimeo, Flickr and Picasa web are photo and video sharing applications or websites. Instagram is probably the most popular purely photo and video sharing application. It’s only built for smartphone or a tablet and the idea is to share images and short videos of your life or something you are passionate about. An image is worth more than a thousand words, it’s true. With Instagram a company like Laakkonen car share cool car photos of new models that are about to be released or any kind of image based promotional messages. Instagram is not so much about the images; it’s more about the sharing. Yes, high quality images are the base for success, but it will only get you that far. Generating a story or an idea behind all the images will give them a deeper meaning, than just a good picture, and it will capture the attention of people. Instagram doesn’t let links to be shared so it is purely focused on images and short videos.

Youtube is full of all kinds of interesting content and it would be a good idea for Laakkonen to also make videos, which can be shared, in Twitter, Facebook, Blogs or Instagram. Instructive videos of cars; how to connect a phone to the car via Bluetooth, or how to change windshield wipers. Something simple that would be helpful for the customer, but not take business away from Laakkonen. In the videos which features spare parts

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being replaced or changed could attach the information of the spare parts sales unit in Laakkonen so the content could drive action, and when people learn about the part they would also learn where to get it from. Publishing videos to support other content for example, when we talked about the Miss Finland blogging for Laakkonen, there could be a few videos made of her with the car which could be shared in the blog and the Miss Finland could share them in her own social media channels. Producing videos of the dealerships of Laakkonen for people to see what does it look like and how can they navigate coming to the dealership or inside one. Making videos of car events or introducing new models, Filming an interview for example, of the player of the ice hockey team Ilves in Tampere telling about their cars or what they like about cars. Content could vary from local to national.

Video sharing doesn't solely limit on the videos Laakkonen would produce. Videos from Youtube can be shared in Facebook, linked on Twitter or Blogs. If there is a good video that someone else made it can be also shared, rather than making a new one similar to it.

5.5.5 Google

Google+ with the Google search engine and Blogger are power tools for people to find your social media or website. When searched from the search engine in Google it looks for the words what the search has been made with. And if a person searches, in the beginning of their buying process "a guide for buying a car", and Laakkonen has made several blog posts about it using combinations of those words. Guess what? It will show in top results in Google and the person has just discovered your blog, with information they need. It might just happen that the person will come first to Laakkonen to look for cars and then you have a new customer. Being clever and creative in social media gets you quite far without spending bucket loads of money. Google search engine prefers Google+ profiles and shows related profiles in top results so using the combination of the services offered by Google generates exponential visibility.

5.6 Influencers

Trying to get likers or followers without any kind of activation of supportive factors is waste of time. Why do something the hard way when, making a little different kind of effort will get you there faster and most likely be better visibility. Not only marketing products and services directly to people, or informing and educating people directly. Using social influencers who have the power of social media to get more likers and followers to your company's social media sites. Bloggers, photographers, athletes or politicians. The later two types might be expensive, but let's talk about the idea. The idea is to give an influencer a reason to tell about the company's products or services. For example, give a blogger, let's assume she is a female, an cabriolet car for a few days for test drive, make a deal that in return she will write on her blog about it, post pictures or even videos

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about it while tagging or linking your company's social media sites in her blog post. They can be then shared then in the social media of your company, or your company could make their own video of it.

The web and social media is full of tools that allow measuring of the traffic to a certain post or website, so make sure to ask for some kind of proof of followers or readers before you hand them the car. Different social influencers can be used in different ways. Photographer can take amazing images of your products and share them in Instagram tagging the company's profile on it. A politician might have a lot of followers in Twitter so he or she could tell them how the service has helped him, for example. Even turning a conference day into a social media promotion through an influencer could be executed. If Laakkonen sponsors athletes, asking them to host a day with lectures of nutrition or small exercises for the employees to keep them performing better or feeling better during their workday. Encourage the athletes to post about it in social media. Keeping good relationships to professional bloggers and other influencers is vital in brand building.

5.7 Measure the outcome

Social media websites are great in following how people react or behave and some of that data is available for us. Measuring the outcomes of post visibility, campaigns, likes, shares, retweets, thumbs up, videos popularity is a crucial part of social media marketing. The tools are available for tracking these factors; so analyzing the popularity of different actions in social media will give you important information of the content, which works for your followers. With that information new content can be created and content that doesn't get picked up can be neglected or altered to suit the needs of the followers. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

6 CONCLUSION

Social media used in marketing and brand building for companies shows a huge amount of opportunities. It is a large entity with diverse tools and styles to be used. Understanding the difference in marketing in social media opposed to traditional marketing has its own challenges, but companies need to adapt new ways of communicating and interacting with the consumers. When the world changes, we as individuals and organizations need to change with it in order to stay relevant to the times. Social media and the use of internet has brought a huge change in the rules of marketing and PR. Reaching buyers directly and communicating with them is easier now than never before. We live in the information age where knowledge is power, and everybody you meet knows something that you don't so knowledge is the biggest commodity to organizations nowadays. It can be used in marketing in various different ways, but educating and informing consumers is probably the best way. Large organization like Laakkonen has tens of years of expertise and knowledge what they might think is self-evident. It's not for all people. Social media is the perfect way to distribute that kind of information that adds value to the consumer, and at the same time helps to build the Laakkonen brand stronger.

Some consumers might think of car dealerships negatively and they are just trying to get their money or hustle them. Changing the mindset of consumers by providing them valuable information about all that comes to purchasing, owning and even reselling the car could change the image of the car business. Social media is a good platform to do it. The power of the internet is incomprehensible and people are connected always to it. The modern technology allows it. The modern technology allows a lot of things and we take advantage of it, so why not take advantage of social media in marketing and brand building.

6.1 Plan carefully

Brand building in any mediums requires a lot of planning. It's a journey, not a destination. A brand is never ready. Planning carefully and setting goals what the organization wants to achieve with social marketing. Making a plan for the content and the style of the content and sticking with it. Brand building is a long and strict process. The stronger the brand is the stricter they are with the content that they release. Getting to know the dynamics of social media, how people behave there, what kind of content they want to consume. Knowing your customers and their needs and knowing the goals of the organization, the long-term brand building goals and the success factors, and the short-term revenue growth goals. Social media marketing and traditional advertising should compliment each other.

6.2 Resources

Social media activity needs constant attention, constant updating and creation of content. Company has to be able to provide sufficient resources to maintain active online presence. Social marketing can't be done success-

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fully with just using the left hand. Even though it might seem enough to just update something every once in a while with no clear plan or theme, because it's free. It's like any marketing, time and resources is needed to succeed. At first, it might not require a lot of attention but as it grows, the need for hiring personnel that work solely on social media might be inevitable. Hiring a journalist might help you create amazing content, the know how to tell a story and they are great in understanding an audience and generating content people want to consume. That is what they do for living. Not hiring a journalist to write press releases, but to create stories, just like they are doing – but for your company. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

As the publishing in social media is free, it doesn't mean that the creation of content is. Just like the advertisements of newspapers or television costs to make, so does the content in social media. Social media is different from the traditional media in a way that company doesn't have to pay for people to see it; the idea is that consumers want to share it. Advertising agency, photographers and video makers can help in generating compelling high quality content to social media. Strong brand requires high quality content in brand building. Providing proper resources enables the success.

6.3 Creating guidelines

Larger organizations getting a marketing and communication initiative through might need to go through the legal department, management and even human resource department before it can be released. These departments are trying to reduce the company from risks not it might be tempting for them to say no or trying to affect everything the marketing team wants to do. They might not know social media as well as the marketing department, so sitting down and discussing and generating common guidelines what can be published and under what can be operated in. The company's guidelines should include advice about how to communicate in every medium, face-to-face conversations, presentations, email, social media, online forums and chat rooms, and other types of communication. The guidelines should include that employees can't reveal company secrets etc. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

6.4 Content drives action

Updating new content frequently is needed to keep the interest of the audience. As we have talked, social media requires a great amount of attention daily. Generating interesting content and communicating and interacting with the audience. Be ready to engage into conversations, allow dialogues with the audience and encourage them to interact with you. New daily content keeps the consumers active, even though they might not always start a conversation, by giving them a reason for engagement and it

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doesn't mean its not helpful if people don't communicate about it. Being authentic and honest, not anonymous, will help you a long the way.

Patience is a virtue; Rome wasn't built in a day. These cheesy quote is also relevant in social media. In order to achieve good results, patience is needed. The steps are simple, establishing an online presence; deciding what social media platforms to be active in, what will support each other and in long term what platforms should be implemented to enable natural growth. Building an audience, getting likers and followers; this is a never-ending process, but it will be the slowest in the beginning. It will test the patience, the idea of social media marketing for company isn't getting likes and followers, but to sell products and help customers in their buying process. However, the amount of follower and likers will help to get there. Once reaching the set goals with followers or likers, expand the activity to other social media platforms to get a bigger audience. The creation of high quality content should carry on through the process and growth will enable bigger and nicer social media marketing campaigns. (David Meerman Scott, The New Rules of Marketing and PR 2013)

6.5 New way of thinking

Enable a new way of thinking. A new way of thinking about your customers, your advertising, your products. Understanding your buyers is the key thing when you do social media marketing, so you can provide them the knowledge they want to consume. Just talking about your products and services is long gone. Advertising in social media is not just sending one-way messages. It's about sparking conversation, communicating and interacting with the customers. Fearing the social media for the reason that people talk negative things of a company there, is wrong. Yes, it can and most likely will happen, but it would probably happen whether your company wouldn't be in social media. By addressing these cases correctly, responding to them professionally might actually change the opinion of the individuals who were unhappy with the service or product. There's a possibility also to be prepared to be wrong and then react and respond. The good thing about the web is the immediate access to conversations, and by having activity so the company can influence the conversation. Being active in social media you have a chance to make sure fewer bad things is being said of your organization.

There are four different styles of generating attention in today's marketing world.

- Buying attention with advertising such as television commercials, newspaper and radio ads, magazines, outdoor advertising, direct emails etc.
- Getting attention from the media such as radios, television stations, newspapers, magazines

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- Having a sales team creating attention to one person at a time going door to door, calling people with the telephone, sending personal e-mails or waiting for consumers to walk into your showroom
- Earn attention online by using the ideas in this thesis, generating interesting high quality content that people want to consume and share and publish it online for free.

The web is suitable place to generate attention to any company, big or small. It doesn't matter if you want to do it by text, videos, photos or audio there's a place for all of those in social media. Generating content is fun and exciting; it feels good to get your ideas out into the world. Spending big amounts of money to get the message heard is old news. (David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* 2013)

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