# MARKETING PLAN FOR
# A RESTAURANT

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Bachelor's thesis
November 2015
Degree Programme in Tourism

# ABSTRACT

The aim of this bachelor's thesis was to create a marketing plan for Dream Hostel & Hotel's upcoming restaurant. Dream Hostel & Hotel has not created a marketing plan for the restaurant before. The thesis was commissioned by the company and the objectives for the marketing plan were decided by using information received from the representative of the company. The main idea behind this marketing plan was to create a plan for gaining visibility for the restaurant before its opening day.

The theoretical framework consists of marketing and marketing planning. The marketing tools for the marketing plan were chosen within the capabilities of the specific company in question. The tools aim to increase and improve marketing and visibility of the company.

All the strategies and tools of the marketing plan have been chosen based on the current situation in the market area and may change before the restaurant is opened. It will be up to the company to decide, which actions to take and what tools to utilize in its marketing at that time. The marketing plan itself can be found in the appendix of this thesis and due to confidentiality reasons, it will not be published.

**CONTENTS**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bachelor's thesis was to create a marketing plan for Dream Hostel & Hotel's upcoming restaurant. Dream Hostel is a small privately owned hostel located near the Tampere city center, in the Tulli area. Dream Hostel was founded in 2010 by Ville and Eveliina Virkki and was built in the old premises of a paper warehouse. On the first of August 2014, Dream Hostel opened up a hotel in the second floor of the building. Thus the company became Dream Hostel and Hotel. Dream Hostel and Hotel's main service offered was and still is accommodation. Hotel restaurant was still being planned during the writing of this thesis.

A qualitative approach was used in this thesis for the creation of the marketing plan. The primary data collected for this thesis came from both the company and the author. The author has previously worked at the Dream Hostel and Hotel. An interview with the hotel manager Juuso Viira was conducted and the author received a preliminary business plan for the restaurant that was created by Juuso Viira, who has previous experience in the restaurant business. The author also has previous experience in the restaurant business. The secondary data was collected through the Internet and by interviewing local people. The secondary data was used for figuring out the main competition in the area and for understanding the current restaurant trends. Appropriate literature was used for the construction of the marketing plan and for understanding marketing as a phenomenon.

Dream Hostel and Hotel is still in the progress of planning the restaurant, so this marketing plan is aimed to serve a purpose for launch marketing as well as continuous marketing after the launch. The marketing plan was drawn up after a careful analysis of the company and current market situation in the Tampere city area by using appropriate tools. The plan aims to give a realistic approach to marketing of a new restaurant within the capabilities of the company.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Marketing

#### 2.1.1 Definition of marketing

Marketing is a set of tools which companies and other organizations utilize in order to realize customers' wants and needs, to promote services and products, and to sell them. J. Holloway said: "*Marketing is about anticipating demand, recognizing it, stimulating it and finally satisfying it; in short, understanding consumers' wants and needs, as to what can be sold, to whom, when, where and in what quantities.*" (Holloway 2004, 7) Marketing revolves highly around the customer expectations and can be seen as a starting point for any company's operations. It is an important tool for businesses of all sizes, and it could even be argued that no business will survive without it. Holloway calls marketing a business philosophy that should encompass the whole organization. (Holloway 2004, 5.)

#### 2.1.2 Services marketing

"*A service is any act or performance one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything.*" (Kotler et al. 2012, 378)

There are four main factors of services marketing which need to be considered when producing services. Services differ from the normal products because of their intangibility. Customers cannot test a service before they purchase it, nor can they return it to the store. The only way to get compensation for a poor service is by making a complaint, which usually takes more effort than returning a faulty item. (Holloway 2004, 17.)

The second factor to be considered is heterogeneity. Unlike mass produced products, services cannot reach the same even quality, since there are so many variables. Most services are conducted by service personnel and when dealing with people, there are always uncertainties. (Holloway 2004, 17-18.)

The third factor is perishability. Unlike physical products, services cannot be stored and sold later. The exactly same services that a company could sell today cannot be sold tomorrow. For example, the money made from a seat in a movie theater, or a bed in a hotel for the night is lost for that day if no one makes a purchase. This is why many companies utilize discounts if they do not meet a certain sales quota during the day. (Holloway 2004, 18.)

The fourth factor is inseparability. This means that the service and the person conducting the service are inseparable. People are not keen on returning to a place where they had poor service experiences, even if the staff might not be the same second time around. First impressions can very well be the last. This is why proper training of the staff is a vital part of any company that wishes to succeed in the service sector. (Holloway 2004, 18.)

### 2.1.3 Marketing restaurant services

Restaurant services, in many ways, encompass most of the four factors mentioned before, but they do serve tangible products and have varied means of mass production. Usually, the customers also choose the restaurant for the quality of its food. If the service was unsuccessful, the customer might hesitate in choosing the particular restaurant again, but if the food was poor, the customer will most like never visit again. Food can be considered as a tangible product, since in many ways, it can be sampled beforehand. If the restaurant has a set menu, and well trained chefs, the food should also be of consistent quality so that a customer can enjoy the same meal multiple times without being disappointed. Especially fast food restaurants are known for their ability to mass-produce the same menu items consistently.

## 2.2 Consumer behavior

### 2.2.1 Consumer characteristics segmentation

In order to do successful marketing, a company needs to understand and connect with its customers. Customer characteristics can be studied through different factors such as cultural, social and personal. (Kotler et al. 2012, 173.)

According to Dictionary.com culture is: "*The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Culture is learned and shared within social groups and is transmitted by non-genetic means.*" (Dictionary.com) Culture influences persons' behavior and values, even if they do not realize it. Actions and behavior patterns that people deem right or wrong all arise from culture. Each cultural group also has subcultures, which provide more specific and often more meaningful identity for its members. (Kotler et al. 2012, 175.)

Social factors include reference groups such as family and friends. A reference group is individual people or groups that a person uses in order to determine accepted behavior or ideas. Some of the groups can be seen as primary reference groups and some as secondary groups. Primary groups consist of people that interact with each other on daily bases, such as family, coworkers or close friends. Secondary groups are more formal and less interactive, such as religion or political groups. There can also be aspirational groups, which are groups persons wish to belong to and could change their behavior in order to reach this aspiration. According to Kotler and Keller, family is the most influential reference group. There are two family reference groups that influence the consumer. The family of orientation is the consumer's family of origin, the parents and siblings. The family of procreation is the consumers chosen family, most often their spouse and children. (Kotler et al. 2012, 175-176.)

Personal factors consist of age, occupation, personality, self-concept, lifestyle and values. These are the things that help us in establishing our sense of self. Some of these factors can be influenced by the reference groups, and some are self-actualized concepts and ideas. (Kotler et al. 2012, 177.)

### 2.2.2 Purchase decision behavior and process

Kotler and Armstrong describe four different types of consumer buying behavior. Complex buying behavior is undertaken when the purchase involves a large amount of money or some other type of risk to the consumer. The perceived risk makes the consumer highly involved. In these situations, the consumers usually trust in brands they know a lot about and see the differences in the brands. They might even go for the higher price, because it is a brand they know. Dissonance-reducing buying behavior resembles the complex buying behavior, but in this situation, the product is something that cannot really be chosen by the perceived brand differences. In this case, the consumer might be more drawn to a low price than an exact brand. Habitual buying behavior occurs with low-cost items and has very low consumer involvement. Basically, people always buy the same thing out of habit, rather than brand loyalty. Take milk for example. People might buy Valio milk, just because it is the milk brand they always had at their childhood home. Variety seeking buying behavior happens when people are not very involved in the actual purchase, but do perceive brand differences. Kotler and Armstrong suggest cookies as an example here. They say that the consumer might go for a certain brand first out of habit or beliefs, but the next time they choose another brand, not because they are dissatisfied with the earlier product, but just to try something different. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 176-177.)

The process behind the actual purchase can be divided into five stages: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. When it comes to low cost products and habitual buying, the consumer might skip many of these steps. For marketers, the two most important parts in this process are the second and third steps. It is where they can affect the consumer's decision, since most information the consumer receives comes from commercial sources created by companies. Post-purchase behavior can be also affected by quality control. A satisfied customer will probably give good word-of-mouth to the company. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 177-179.)

## 2.3    Marketing management

### 2.3.1    Definition of marketing management

Kotler and Keller call marketing management *"the art and science of choosing target markets and getting, keeping and growing customers through creating, delivering and communicating superior customer value."* (Kotler et al. 2012, 27) In the modern world of business, companies have to become more and more customer-centered, because competition is high and consumers have multiple options to choose from. Therefore the importance of proper marketing management is high. According to Kotler and Keller (2012, 48-49) the main tasks in successful marketing management are the following:

- Developing marketing strategies and plans.
- Capturing marketing insights.
- Connecting with customers.
- Building strong brands.
- Shaping the market offerings.
- Delivering and communicating value.
- Creating successful long term-growth.

### 2.3.2    Market analysis

Originally the word market meant a place where the buyers and sellers gathered in order to exchange goods for some kind of currency or other goods. (Dictionary.com) In the modern world, a market is described as a collection of buyers that have a particular need and sellers who can fulfill that need through an exchange relationship. Marketers often use the word market adjacent to customers and not the sellers. There are ten types of elements that can be marketed: goods, services, events, experiences, persons, places, properties, organizations, information and ideas. (Kotler et al. 2012, 27-30.)

There are four key customer market entities: consumer markets, business markets, global markets, and non-profit markets. Consumer markets encompass all the companies that sell goods or services to the consumers. Business markets encompass the companies that sell goods and services to business buyers. Companies that decide to expand

their activities in other countries step into the global markets. In the global scale, one has to consider factors such as culture, language and legal differences when conducting business. A non-profit market refers to companies selling to non-profit organizations such as schools or charities. (Kotler et al. 2012, 31.)

When talking about markets and marketing, there are some core concepts to be aware of. Understanding consumer needs, wants and demands, and how to fulfill them is the base element of marketing. It is something most companies pay attention to and conduct various researches in order to gather data for further analysis. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 30.)

The market environment of a company is made up from the micro- and macro environments. The microenvironment consist of the factors such as the company itself, the size of the market, the suppliers, competition, customers and customer behavior, which was discussed in the earlier chapter. The macro environment is the bigger picture and is affected by factors such as politics and economical changes. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 90.) The microenvironment will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.2.

One way to analyze the current market is conducting a marketing research. Marketing research is a systematic collection and analysis of data to help a company in marketing of its products. The data itself can be collected by various means, such as question-naires, observations, interviews, experiments or existing records. The research itself can be exploratory, descriptive or causal. Exploratory research is used to gather preliminary data to help in defining problems and for suggesting possible hypothesis on these problems. Descriptive research describes the current market. It can be used for figuring out who buys certain items, when do consumers do certain activities or where do they shop. If the company is interested in why consumers choose the things they do, a causal research is needed. Causal research focuses on explaining the cause and effect relationships. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 130.)

Marketing research methods are often divided into two categories, quantitative research and qualitative research. Quantitative research focuses mostly on statistical information such as attendance, number or purchases or the amount of people of certain age or gender. Therefore quantitative research is descriptive in character. Qualitative research is

focused more in the behavior and feelings of the consumers and is often carried out by interviews or observations, rather than surveys or records. (Holloway 2004, 60-61.)

### 2.3.3 Market segmentation

Market segmentation is a way of dividing markets into defined sections such as geographic, demographic, psycho-graphic or behavioral. Geographic segmentation considers countries, regions, municipalities, cities and neighborhoods. Companies can consider all of these segments or just some of them and direct their marketing to suit their areas of interest. This makes marketing more personal and targets individuals and groups better than marketing aimed at a wide general audience. (Kotler et al. 2012, 236.)

Demographic segmentation considers consumer age, gender, income, occupation, education, family, religion, race, nationality and social-class. Demographic segmentation is often used for marketing purposes because it is easy to use and measure. (Kotler et al. 2012, 238.) Psycho-graphic segmentation divides consumers into groups by their psychological profiles. This profile is made up from personality, values and lifestyle choices. People in the same demographic or geographic segments can also have very different profiles. (Kotler at al. 2012, 247.)

Behavioral segmentation considers consumers according to their attitude, knowledge, usage or response to a product. Behavioral segments can be divided into lower segments such as occasion, benefits, user, loyalty and usage status. Occasion means the time and situation when people buy a product. This kind of segmentation is useful for marketers when trying to create more demand for a product. Some products, such as cake candles are often bought for birthdays, but when colored orange, can also be marketed for Halloween. Benefit segment groups of consumers are formed according to the benefits they seek in a product. Consumers can also be divided into different user groups for marketing purposes, such as ex-user, potential or first time users, loyal customers, heavy or light users. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 220-221.)

### 2.3.4 Creating value

The consumers usually choose the item that they think offers them the most value. Value in this case doesn't refer to the amount of money changing hands, but rather the perceived value the customer gains. This value is a combination of benefits, cost and availability. The perception of value can actually increase while the price of the product decreases. Good service, quality and availability raise the value of a product. (Kotler et al. 2012, 32.)

Customer satisfaction is another aspect of creating value. Satisfaction is gained when a product of service is up to or exceeds the customer's expectations. According to Kotler and Armstrong (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 37), most studies show the relationship between high customer satisfaction levels and loyalty to the company or a product. Customer loyalty is something most companies seek to create. Loyal customers do not just buy more from the company, they also contribute to the company image and create word-of-mouth marketing.

## 2.4 Marketing mix

Marketing mix is a set of tools and strategies used by companies for marketing purposes. One of the most commonly used marketing mix is known as the four P's. These stand for price, product, place and promotion. (Holloway 2004, 52.) The following figure shows more on the content of the traditional four P's.

FIGURE 1. Marketing mix (Holloway 2004, 52)

Sometimes additional three, or even four P's are added to modernize and expand this mix. The three common additional P's are people, process and physical evidence and the fourth P stands for productivity and quality. People places meaning on both customer, and the employee behind the service or product. Process mainly refers to the interaction between the customer and the company representative and emphasizes the importance of it. Physical evidence refers to the whole experience of the customer, including factors such as sights, sounds, smells, touch and taste. The fourth P, productivity and quality, refers to the process on how customers' wants, needs and expectations are met. (Holloway 2004, 52-53.)

## 2.5    Marketing communications

Marketing communications are the means a company uses to inform consumers about its products and services. In the era of Internet, companies have to suddenly think dif-

ferently than they have before. Advertisements are everywhere and people are becoming increasingly numb to them. This is why companies must get creative and think of new ways of creating awareness, building a brand and simply reaching the customers. (Kotler et al. 2012, 498.) Marketing communications mix is a set of tools used to gain this visibility.

Kotler and Keller suggest the following eight modes general marketing communications mix model to reach customers (Kotler et al. 2012, 500):

- **Advertising -** A paid presentation or promotion of the company's products or services presented in any form of media.

- **Sales promotion** - An incentive for purchasing a product or service, such as coupons or samples.

- **Events and experiences -** Companies can organize or promote events in which they are visible and interacting with the possible customers.

- **Public relations and publicity -** A set of programs directed both internally and externally to enhance the company image.

- **Direct marketing -** Marketing conducted by mail, phone, e-mail or Internet directly to the customer.

- **Interactive marketing -** A way to promote the company through online activities. Encompasses all online channels, from the company website to Facebook, YouTube and other social media sites.

- **Word-of-mouth marketing -** Communication between people that either increase or decrease the company image in the consumers' eyes.

- **Personal selling -** Face-to-face communication with a potential customer.

Of course not all of these modes of communication suit each company. In many cases, companies might choose to use only some of these modes. The key is to determine

which modes of communication are the most suitable for the company and the product in question. Companies need to consider the nature on the product and their desired target market. Other factors to be considered when choosing the right marketing communications mix are the market situation and the budget available. Using the same promotional channels as the competing companies is something that needs to be considered both ways. It can reach the same customers, but in a crowded environment, one really has to stand out. (Holloway 2004, 196-197.)

## 2.6 Branding

*"Brands represent consumers' perceptions and feeling about a product and its performance – everything that the product or service means to consumers."* (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 260)

Branding is something every company has to consider. Branding often relates strongly to big companies, but also small businesses can benefit from branding. Branding is a way to differentiate one's company or product from the competing ones and to create brand equity. Brand equity means the effect that the brand name or image has on the consumer. It can be either positive or negative. Positive brand equity creates a good feeling about the company or the product and thus makes the customers bond with the brand. Bonding creates loyalty and good word-of-mouth advertisement. (Kotler et al. 2012, 264-265.)

Brand equity can be measured with four dimensions. Differentiation means the factors that make the brand to stand out from the competing brands. Relevance refers to the satisfaction felt about a product or a service when it meets the customer's needs. Knowledge simply refers to the awareness the consumers have on the brand and how well they know it. Finally, esteem places meaning on how highly the consumers value or respect the brand. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 206.)

Branding should be used in order to create a positive and unique association with the company. One of the first things that make up a brand are the name, logo, slogans and other very visible factors. They should be appealing, short and memorable. They are brand elements, factors that make the brand identifiable to the consumer. According to

Kotler and Keller (2012, 272), there are six factors to be considered when choosing brand elements:

- **Memorable** – The brand element should be easy to remember and recognize.

- **Meaningful** – Does the brand element fit the product or the company?

- **Likable** – The brand element should be aesthetically pleasing and fit the current trends.

- **Transferable** – Can the element be used with different products and how well it translates in multicultural environments or for different target groups?

- **Adaptable** – Is the brand element something that can be updated when the trends and world change or can it adapt to changes.

- **Protectable** – Can the element be trademarked, and should it be?

Brands have to be maintained and reinforced from time to time. This requires keeping the brand up to date and moving forward. Brands have to be ready to evolve when the markets around them do. Branding is also about consistency. Consistency doesn't mean the brand cannot change, it means that the companies have to walk the talk and keep a hold on their vision.

## 2.7    Marketing plan

According to Wood (2014, 4), a marketing plan is a summary on what the company has leaned about the target area, how the marketing plan will enhance the company situation and how to accomplish it. The objective is to guide the company towards its goals through a set, yet flexible plan of actions.

Wood gives the basic framework for a marketing plan as follows (Wood 2014, 5):

- **Executive summary** to review the plans objectives.

- **Current marketing situation** to analyze the current environment. This part can include a SWOT analysis, competition and market analysis and external/internal situation analysis.

- **Target market, customer analysis, positioning.** A description on the desired target market, an analysis about the customer segmentation as well as an overview on customer behavior and the planned positioning of the company in the current market.

- **Objectives and issues.** A list of objectives and desired outcomes as well as possible issues.

- **Marketing strategy** explains the overall strategy for reaching the objectives.

- **Marketing programs** explains the actions that support the marketing strategy.

- **Financial and operational plans.**

- **Metrics and implementation control** explains how the marketing plan is to be executed, evaluated and measured for performance.
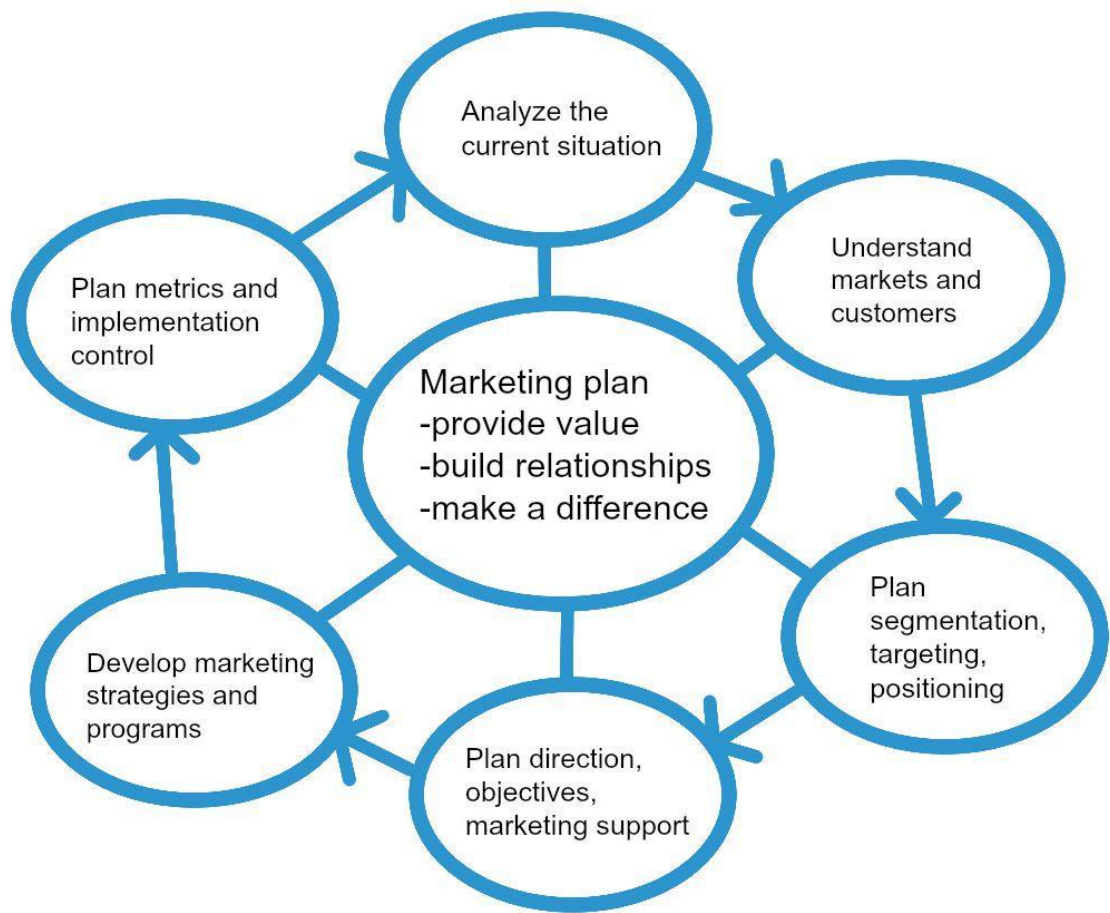
FIGURE 2. Marketing plan (Wood 2004, 28)

# 3   RESEARCH AND TOOLS

## 3.1   Research questions

Since the aim of this thesis was to create a marketing plan for Dream Hostel and Hotel's upcoming restaurant, the research questions were drawn up within this context. The author wished to know the answers to the following questions: What are the main factors needed to be considered when marketing a product or a service? What is included in a marketing plan? How will the new restaurant fit within the current market? How to gain visibility for the new restaurant and how to market it efficiently? What are the best marketing tools for this individual company?

## 3.2   PESTEL

Factors such as politics, economical changes and environmental aspects affect company's macro environment. Tools such as PESTEL (also known as PEST or PESTLE) help the companies to analyze the environment in which they operate. PESTEL stands for political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental. (Team FME 2013, 6.) PESTEL is a tool used by marketers for gaining a wide view over the external operating environment.

Team FME explains the different factors in the following way (2013, 12-21):

- **Political** factors include areas such as consumer law, labor law, environmental law, and trade restrictions.

- **Economic** factors are for example; economic growth, taxes, cost of living, interest rates, exchange rates, inflation rate and globalization.

- **Social** factors include culture, lifestyle, population growth rate, age distribution, attitudes to working life, and historical issues.

- **Technological** factors include automation, technological changes in services, intellectual property and R&D.

- **Environmental** aspects are energy availability and cost, climate, infrastructure, sustainability and waste management.

- **Legal** aspects include employment, advertising, import and export, health and safety and the consumer legislation.

The business world is constantly changing through new legislation, shifts in population and economics and especially when it comes to technology. The technology has been developing in a rapid pace for the last 50 years or so. Now, almost all consumers own a computer with a possibility to go online. According to Kotler and Armstrong, technological advances are the most powerful forces affecting the current marketing strategies, especially online marketing. (Kotler and Armstrong 2008, 106.)

## 3.3 Market and competition analyses

Competition environment usually holds several companies competing for the same customers and target markets. The company that holds the biggest share of the market is called a market leader. A market challenger is the company that holds the second largest share and is trying to become the market leader. Companies that hold smaller shares of the market but are content with it, are called market followers. Market niches are for companies that serve smaller customer segments that the mainstream companies cannot or do not want to reach, or the customers are not interested in them.

New companies should aim for the niche market first, in order to gain visibility and some loyal customers, who can then convert other consumers. Small companies can gain respectable revenues by utilizing niche markets, and competing with companies of their own size. Some of these niche markets can already exist, but sometimes the companies might have to create them. Niches have to also be maintained and reinvented as they grow old. Something that is fashionable today might be out of fashion tomorrow. (Kotler et al. 2012, 321-333.)

One of the ways to analyze the competition is to create a SWOT analysis on each of them. In fact, according to Wood (2004, 31), each competing company should be evaluated by using a SWOT analysis in order to properly determine the market situation for one's company. SWOT analysis will be discussed in more detail in the chapter 3.4.

## 3.4   SWOT

SWOT refers to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. SWOT can be divided into two different categories, internal environment analysis and external environment analysis.  The internal environment analysis focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the company and external on the possible opportunities and threats. (Kotler et al. 2012, 70-72.)

SWOT can be further explained as follows (Wood 2004, 31):

- **Strengths** are factors that can help the company to achieve certain goals and objectives.

- **Weaknesses** are factors that can hinder the company from achieving their goals or objectives.

- **Opportunities** are situations or conditions that the company could use for its benefit.

- **Threats** are circumstances that might hinder the company performance.

SWOT is a tool that can be used to analyze the performance and position of the company or a product and to identify possible shortcomings. SWOT serves a purpose in various areas, such as business plans, marketing plans and product development. As mentioned before, it can also be used in order to assess the competing companies.

# 4 MARKETING PLAN

This chapter contains the analysis of the current market situation of Dream Hostel and Hotel and the market situation of the restaurant business in both the Tulli area and Tampere city. Based on this analysis, a marketing plan for the upcoming restaurant was created. The marketing plan is aimed to serve the needs of the company both for opening up the restaurant and after the initial launch. Due to confidentiality reasons the marketing plan can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

# 5  CONCLUSION

This bachelor's thesis contains a theoretical framework on marketing, as well as a marketing plan for Dream Hostel & Hotel's upcoming restaurant. The main aim of this thesis was to create a viable marketing plan for the company to be utilized in its future marketing actions. The theoretical framework was deemed necessary in order to understand the marketing concepts and tools as a whole, before creating the marketing plan. The theoretical framework leans a lot on Philip Kotler and other well-known authors of modern marketing books.

The idea for this thesis came from the author. The author has previously worked for Dream Hostel & Hotel, and considered that the need for a structured marketing plan existed. The company representatives agreed on this. The main idea behind the creation of the marketing plan was to gain new ideas and insights on how to promote a new restaurant and to gain visibility before the launch.

This marketing plan does not include a financial budget, due to the fact that the restaurant is still in a planning stage. All the strategies and tools provided in the marketing plan are deemed viable in the current situation of the market area, but are subject to change in the future. The company is left responsible for the re-evaluation of the viability of the strategies and tools at the time it would use them. In the end, it is for the company to decide which parts of the marketing plan are to be executed.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix. Marketing plan

# MARKETING PLAN

# Dream Hostel & Hotel Restaurant

Erica Appelroth