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# Creating an e-marketing plan for a clothing company using online and social media channels: a case study of Smokart Ltd.

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2016 Leppävaara

Laurea University of Applied Sciences  
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Degree Programme in Business  
Bachelor's Thesis  
September, 2016

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Year	2016	Pages	57
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E-marketing trends are having a significant impact on the clothing industry. Online and social media offer new marketing opportunities that challenge the old and familiar ways to reach buyers. Marketers need to be aware of available online marketing strategies and tactics that can boost online sales, raise customer engagement and develop brand loyalty. Therefore it is crucial that companies create a written document that summarize the online and social media marketing objectives and how to achieve them.

This study examines how a start-up clothing company can use online and social media as a part of their marketing plan. The study is done at the request of the case company and conclusions and findings will be presented to the company's owners. The study includes building the main e-marketing channels such as website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Also, this study reviews important theory of online marketing business and information on how other clothing companies similar to the case company are using it.

The outcome of this thesis is an e-marketing plan for the use of the case company, Smokart, which is a clothing company that owns the S.L brand. The company produces a unique, hand-made tattoo and street-style design t-shirts for men and women. The owners believe that with an effective e-marketing plan, the company can achieve their online and social media marketing goals and increase the visibility of the S.L brand in the international market.

The approach followed in this study was the case study and the findings were gathered using qualitative research methods. Select data was collected by benchmarking competitors and through participant observation as the author of this study worked in the case company.

The business marketing tool SOSTAC® was used to consider all the necessary elements that the case company's e-marketing plan should have. The completed e-marketing plan provides a strong perspective on Smokart's current online marketing activities and it will help the company to choose which online and social media strategies and tactics are most advantageous and profitable to them. Once the plan is done, it is important that the case company updates it frequently as the online and social media environment is constantly changing.

Keywords: Benchmarking, clothing industry, e-marketing, e-marketing plan, online marketing channels, social media channels, SOSTAC®

Anna Flykt

**Verkon ja sosiaalisen median kanavien käyttö sähköisen markkinoinnin suunnitelman teossa vaateyritykselle, Case: Smokart Oy.**

Vuosi 2016

Sivumäärä 57

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Sähköisen markkinoinnin trendit vaikuttavat parhaillaan vaatealan jatkuvaan kehitykseen. Verkkomarkkinoinnin ja sosiaalisen median käyttö yrityksen markkinoinnissa mahdollistaa ja jopa haastaa vanhat ja tutut keinot saavuttaa asiakkaita. Tämä johtaa siihen, että yrityksen markkinointivastaavan täytyy olla tietoinen käytössä olevista verkkomarkkinoinnin strategioista ja taktiikoista, jotta yrityksellä on mahdollista lisätä verkkomyyntiä sekä kasvattaa niin asiakassitoutumista kuin merkkiuskollisuutta. Siksi on tärkeää, että yritykset tekevät suunnitelman, joka sisältää verkko ja sosiaalisen median markkinoinnin tavoitteet ja kertoo miten ne saavutetaan.

Tämä työ tutkii kuinka uusi yritys voi käyttää verkkomarkkinointia ja sosiaalista mediaa osana yrityksen markkinointisuunnitelmaa. Opinnäytetyö on tehty vastaamaan kohde yrityksen sähköisen markkinoinnin tarpeita ja työn tulokset sekä loppupäätelmät on esitetty yrityksen omistajille. Tämä työ kertoo myös kuinka yritys voi rakentaa tärkeimmät sähköisen markkinoinnin kanavat kuten verkkosivut, Facebookin, Instagramin ja Twitterin. Lisäksi työ käsittelee sähköisen markkinoinnin teoriaa ja vertaa tietoa, kuinka vaatealan yrityksen hoitavat verkkomarkkinointiaan.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on tuottaa sähköisen markkinoinnin suunnitelma kohde yritykselle. Smokart on vaatetusalan yritys, joka omistaa S.L tuotemerkin. Yritys tuottaa yksilöllisiä, käsin piirrettyjä tatuointityyliä ja katu-uskottavia t-paitoja niin miehille kuin naisille. Yrityksen omistajat uskovat, että hyvin tehty sähköinen markkinointisuunnitelma voi saavuttaa yrityksen verkkomarkkinoinnin tavoitteet ja lisätä S.L tuotemerkin tunnettavuutta kansainvälisillä markkinoilla.

Tämän tutkimuksen lähestymistapa on tapaustutkimus ja tutkimuksen tulokset on kerätty laadullisin menetelmin. Tutkimusaineisto on saatu keraamalla tietoa kilpailijoista benchmarkkaamalla sekä havainnoimalla kohdeyrityksen liiketoimintaa, koska tutkimuksen kirjoittaja on töissä yrityksessä.

Yrityksen markkinoinnin välineenä on käytetty SOSTAC® menetelmää, joka mahdollistaa verkkomarkkinoinnissa tarpeellisten tekijöiden huomioon ottamisen. Tehty suunnitelma tarjoaa vahvan näkymän yrityksen nykyisestä verkkomarkkinoinnista ja sen tarkoitus on auttaa yritystä valitsemaan sille eniten hyödylliset sosiaalisen median strategiat ja taktiikat. Kun sähköisen markkinoinnin suunnitelma on kerran tehty, on tärkeää, että kohdeyritys päivittää sitä usein, koska verkkomarkkinointi ja sosiaalinen media muuttuvat jatkuvasti.

Keskeiset sanat: Sosiaalinen media, verkkomarkkinointi, SOSTAC® menetelmä, sähköinen markkinointisuunnitelma, sosiaalisen median kanavat, benchmarking

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## 1 Introduction

Nowadays when people spend a lot of time on internet it is a competitive advantage for companies to know how to communicate with customers online. Digitalization, and especially the use of social media, has drastically changed the way how companies approach and view their approach to marketing. Digitalization has also changed the way how consumers buy, access to information, communicate with other consumers and consume services. Purchase options and locations have changed to selling online. All these digital marketing opportunities are growing and therefore it is important that companies develop their marketing processes and offer up-to date online material and information.

Often, a small business cannot spend large amounts of money in marketing and in this case the affordability of social media can be a decisive factor. Social media has modified customers buying behavior and changed old marketing theories. Where as before customers were seen as purchasers, now they are part of company`s co-operators and developers. Companies that are not including online or social media in their marketing plans should begin to use the marketing tools, because without a good digital marketing plan company can easily miss on-line and social media opportunities and even lose business.

This study examines, how a start-up clothing company can use online and social media as a part of their marketing plan. The study includes building the main e-marketing channels. The outcome of this thesis is an e-marketing plan that serves as a resource for the case company. Below are brief definitions of the terminology which are used in this study and which will be discussed later with more detail.

*E-marketing - "Internet marketing or digital marketing is main part of e-business, getting closer to customers and understanding them better, adding value to products, widening distributions channels and boosting sales through e-marketing campaigns using online and social media channels" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 15)*

*E-business - "Has a broader perspective involving the automation of all the business processes in the value chain - from procurement or purchasing of raw materials, to production, stock holding, distribution and logistics, sales and marketing, invoicing, debt collection" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 14-15)*

*Social media - "Digital media which encourage audience participation, interaction and sharing" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 599)*

*Social media marketing - Monitoring and facilitating customer-to-customer interaction, participation and sharing through digital media to encourage positive engagement with a company and its brands, leading to commercial value. Interactions may occur on a company site, social networks and other third-party sites" (Chaffey & Smith 2013,*

*599)Social media channels - "A site enabling community interactions between different consumers. Typical interactions include posting, comments and replies to comments, sending messages, rating content and tagging content in particular categories. Well-known examples include Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, p. 599)*

## 1.1 Smokart Ltd.

Smokart Ltd. was established in the end of December 2015 and the company's base is in Bulgaria. Smokart is a clothing company that produces unique, handmade tattoo and street style design t-shirts for both men and women. T-shirts are made abroad and then shipped to Bulgaria. The rest of the process including designing, printing, packing, selling and marketing is handled in Sofia. Smokart Ltd. owns the S.L (Smokov 2016)

Currently the owners are the only employees in the company, but there are a number of external partners such as a Web server, a t-shirt manufacturer and a printing specialist. Owners of the company know that Bulgarian markets are too limited for such a special t-shirt business and that is why they want to head straight to the international markets and start online business. This means building a web shop and creating social media channels for the company's marketing purposes. Owners believe that investing in digital marketing plays a vital role in the progress of the business in the near future. With effective e-marketing strategies and channels, Smokart can enhance their image and awareness in the international markets. (Smokov 2016)

## 1.2 Purpose of the study

According to Dave Chaffey's and PR Smith's recent book E-Marketing Excellence of planning and optimizing your digital marketing (2013, 244) "having an online and social media marketing plan is a crucial aspect for all companies because it helps companies to develop engagement of target audience through the customer lifecycle. Plan also enables company to control their opportunities for interaction and sharing their brand assets more widely".

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate how to create an e-marketing plan for a clothing company by using online and social media channels. Based on the findings and the literature reviews, the outcome of this study is a step-by-step e-marketing plan which the case company Smokart can follow-up when they enter to new online market. Also, this study aims to collect business information from the case company for the first time. Core motivations of this study are how the online marketing can influence the case company's brand visibility and even increase the online sales.



Particularly interesting is to examine the benefits of social media tactics and strategies for small business as the case company is a start-up company. This study is a part of the writer's Business Bachelor's degree and it seeks to discover a better understanding on online and social media usage in today's growing e-marketing business.

### 1.3 Research questions and approach

According to Malhotra (2010, 68 -69) "The research problem needs to be clearly identified and conduct properly because otherwise the problem can be misunderstood and it will be waste of time and resources. When the problem is well defined it can radically improve the usefulness of research".

In this study the research questions are based on the study objectives. The main objective of this study is to create a practical e-marketing plan. Beside the e-marketing plan, another objective is to build the most popular online and social media channels from practice to implementation level which means bringing the case company's strategies on the life. The study aims to answer the following questions:

- How a case company can take advantage of e-marketing and how the online and social media can support the company's marketing purposes?
- How to build the most popular e-channels and then utilize them in the case company?
- What is an e-marketing plan and how to utilize the plan in the case company?

In order to answer to these questions, the author studies literature on e-marketing communications and does benchmarking on how other international retail companies advertise their products online and on social media. This study is a case research which is a very viable method and it is chosen for this study because it enables to investigate this special topic which cannot be easily covered by other method. Case research is also more focused on the explanation given as to the interpretation.

### 1.4 Structure of the study

This study is structured into five text chapters. The main parts are the introduction, knowledge base, research approach, empirical part and finally the discussion part.

The first chapter is the introduction part which gives an overview of the study. It includes a short presentation of the case company Smokart Ltd. and it answers the purpose of the study, defines the research questions and approach. Second chapter is the knowledge base that presents the studied literature and online materials. This chapter defines what online and

social marketing is and how to create an e-marketing plan. The third chapter is the research approach that explains how the research data has been collected and what methods are used in this study. The fourth chapter is the empirical part of the study and it gathers the knowledge base and the research part together. The outcome of this chapter is a written e-marketing plan for the needs of the case company. Also this chapter contains the evaluation of the research validity. The fifth discussion part is the last chapter and it presents the Smokart's feedback and the conclusions of the study.

## 2 Knowledge base

In this study, the researcher used qualitative methods to ensure deeper insight of the e-marketing as phenomena. The research data was collected by benchmarking and observing. The researcher worked in the case company as a marketing assistant during the writing of this study. This work experience and know-how can also be considered as one of the information sources in this study. This inside knowledge of the case company has enabled to collect detailed business information that have been used both in the knowledge base and empirical parts of this study.

The main theoretical data was collected from the literature and the most referenced production were; Ryan Damien latest book of "Understanding Digital Marketing" 2016, PR Smith & Dave Chaffey's book of "Planning and optimizing your digital marketing" 2013 and Philip Kotler and Kevin Keller's book of "Marketing Management" 2016. Another theoretical part included electronic sources that were mostly gathered from the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Also, the figures and tables were collected by using the e-sources' statistic.

Next sub-chapter begins by presenting what e-marketing in clothing business is and how companies' marketers can exploit online and social media channels. This also includes a demonstration of most popular e-channels. After that the study explores how to create an e-marketing plan that has all the necessary online marketing elements.

### 2.1 E-marketing and clothing industry

In the business life the digital marketing, also known as an e-marketing, is mostly about the marketers connecting with consumers to build relationships and finally drive company's sales (Ryan 2014, 12). E-marketing is also a way of thinking how to put the customer in the middle of all the company's online activities. It is underlying on technology which enables marketing through different online media channels and it is especially important for companies which operate only in the digital world (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 15). On the other hand, Ryan (2014, 12) points out that e-marketing is not actually about technology at all, it is more about un-

derstanding people who are using technology and understanding how they use it. One of the main benefits of e-marketing is that it enables companies to move from mass communication to more targeted, two-way communications with customers. This gives consumers a much more participatory role on the online marketing process. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 641).

Nowadays, when business is getting tougher and more global, e-marketing plays a vital role in the company's success. The digital advertising has grown much more than traditional media in the past years and the use of online and social media marketing channels are challenging the old and familiar ways to reach buyers. It seems certain that e-marketing trends are currently developing the clothing industry as well. Even though there has been an old believe that people always need to touch and try clothes before they are able to make buying decision, this way of thinking has changed as online fashion sales has grown up more than 185% between 2007 and 2012 and it is forecasted to rise by 41% by 2017 (Fashion retail 2014). This is also one proof of how well clothing fashion and e-marketing can work together.

Clothing companies should still remember that even though today's trend is shopping online, people want more than just the simple pleasure of being able to buy clothes online, so there is no reason why companies should not take a step to understand how the e-marketing works. According to Kotler and Keller (2016, 549-570), online is the newest and fastest-growing channels for marketing and selling directly to customers. Online business relies on the fact that technology is affecting the way how the retailers conduct virtually their business. E-marketing possibilities are growing and especially online and social media provide consumers and marketers more opportunities with better interaction and individualization.

## 2.2 Online and social media marketing

Customers' purchasing behavior has changed in the recent years and that makes the understanding of online and social media more and more important. Kotler and Keller (2016, 624-634) define social media as "a platform which allows people to share text, images and video information with each other and with companies and vice versa". Nowadays, online and social media allows consumers to be more engaged with a brand than ever before. This is a great opportunity for marketers to encourage customers to engage more productively. Therefore it is important that business marketers are aware that online marketing can be divided on three types of media; owned, paid and earned. Owned media refers to all the digital properties like web sites, blogs and mobile applications. Paid media includes the digital advertising, paid research and display ads. Earned media is when people talk about the company's brand or product on different social media platforms. Each of these media has to be measured its own way. (Ryan 2014, 70)

In clothing business retailers are using social media to pass information and to create communities around their brands. Marketing through social media channels is cost-effective and especially young fashion consumers use rich variety of social media sites in order to get information of trends, share their experiences and to compare the prices of products. When companies market their products on social media and use different communities, they need to remember that consumers want brands they can trust and companies who know them. According to Ryan (2014, 151) social media allow users to come together online and exchange, discuss, communicate and participate in any form of social interaction. This enables exciting opportunities for marketers who are brave enough to engage. Companies' marketer must spend time listening to their customers through blogs, online discussion, social networks, and other online media. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 644)

The sum up is that the online and social media marketing can provide for small and medium-sized enterprises an opportunity for rapid growth both domestically and in international markets. It is also a great way to save marketing costs and increase products visibility. It can also lead deeper engagement with customers. Online and social media offers many insights which are not available in any other way and it is a marketing place where customers are online already. Through online and social media, companies can collect feedback easily, talk two ways with customers and get improvement suggestion in their business which can lead to creating better products. In the end it will bring more customers. (Ryan 2014, 155)

### 2.3 Building most popular e-marketing channels

When the company has made a decision to start marketing online, it is important to think in which channels to participate and how and why. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest offer highly targeted advertising area for marketers. Twitter is also increasingly popular with its 140-character messages or "tweets". Website and email marketing are a part of company's online marketing and necessary channels if the company has online business. Website enables to sell online, promote the brand and engage the website visitors by keeping brand's blog. Email marketing is a way to connect the customer more individually and keep the customer updated of coming campaigns or other updates. Choosing the right social media channels are more and more difficult nowadays when the Internet enables numerous of different e-marketing options. (Ryan 2014, 43-48)

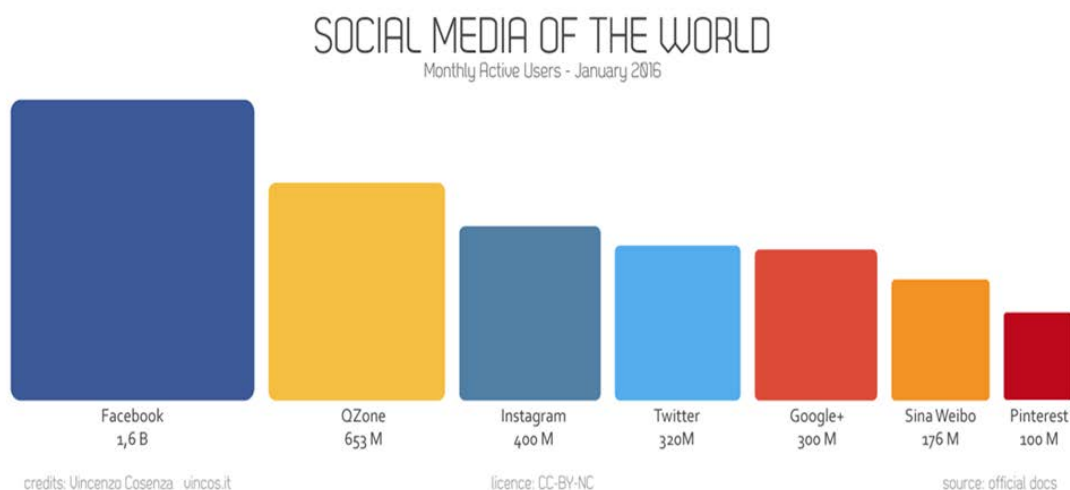


Figure 1: Social media of the world (2016 Social Media Statistics)

Based on the figure above, this study will examine the three most popular social media channels which are the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The second popular channel QZone is not included in this study as it is a Chinese social network (2016 Social Media Statistics). Next step is to give guidelines how the company can build these chosen channels for its marketing purposes.

### 2.3.1 Website

Website can be much more than just a window shop which allows people to see company's products, services and make purchases. Ryan (2014, 104) demonstrates that "A well implemented and designed website can be a place where company can communicate with its customers like having a virtual meeting point which enable to do real business, with real people, in real time." Therefore, before starting to create a website, company must know why they are building a website and who will be using it. Company should first think of building the usability and accessibility into their website design. A well-designed website should allow all users equal access to the information and functionality they deliver. The customer's point of view, a good e-commerce is clear and easy to use. The products will be featured with good pictures that give the most realistic image of the products for sale, as well as clear information on product features, maintenance and instructions. (Ryan 2014, 47-49)

When aiming to have an effective website companies must consider many things. Kotler and Keller (2016, 639) highlight, that website design must express company's purpose, history, products and vision. Website has to interest new visitors and encourage visitors repeating their visits. There are many ways how visitors can judge the site's performance. For example how easy it is to use, does the site download quickly and is it easy to navigate to other pages. Website's physical attractiveness plays also an important role. This means that website's

pages have to be clean and not packed with too much content. Companies must also know the competition and identify their competitors, analyze what they are trying to achieve with their website, where they are succeeding and where they are failing. This can be a great way of getting ideas and looking at different ways to compete online. (Ryan 2014, 51)

According to Ryan (2014, 46) "It is important to know business goals and the needs of the target market before company start to create website". When company is aware of those, it is much easier to start creating business website. Next the main digital marketing steps of building websites are explained.

1. **Planning.** It means that company establishes its goals for the site ; analyze the competition; define who target market is, how they will find the company on online and what they will be looking for when they arrive.
2. **Design.** This is the look and feel of the company´s site: colors, graphics, information, navigation.
3. **Development.** Putting it all together, taking the agreed design and constructing the actual pages of the site, crafting the content, links and navigation hierarchy.
4. **Testing.** The last but not the least it is important to make sure everything works the way it should before company lets it out onto the internet. (Ryan 2014, 46-47)

After knowing these steps, company can start to build its website. Overall, it is important that company knows its brand and products, the target audience and competitors well enough before creating the website. This way it is easier to plan how to build an effective online web shop.

### 2.3.2 Email marketing

In general, email can be one of the most powerful selling tools in company´s online marketing as it can deliver an excellent return on investment (ROI). Email is usually a simple form which contains a sales pitch and a call to action. Email campaigns can offer a very effective way for companies to get their brand well known. Also, email marketing lets companies communicate easily with the customers on a personal level universally online. One of the key elements in email marketing is that company chooses the right approach for its e-mail marketing communications as there are a lot of junk mails which arrive to people mail boxes every day. (Ryan 2014, 180-181)

Before company starts its email marketing campaign, there are numerous things that have to be considered from practical and legal aspects. Company´s website is usually the best place to ask people to sign-up for company´s opt-in mailing list. Many website servers offer pop-up

links which encourage visitors to sign up for the latest updates, direct to their inbox. If visitors like company's website and value its content, many will welcome the opportunity to hear from the company by e-mail with regular news, special offers and occasional one-off promotions. (Ryan 2014, 182-183)

Kotler and Keller (2016, 642) explain that there are five important elements how to maximize the marketing value of emails. First there must be a reason for a customer to open or respond to an email. This means that email cannot look or be read like spam mail. Second, the company must focus on personalizing the email content. Third, email should offer something that customer cannot get via direct post. Usually discount coupons, free gifts or first to be able to buy new things work well. Fourth, emails have to include an option to unsubscribe the emails because it is customer friendly way of marketing. Finally, it is important to combine email with other communications such as social media. Ryan (2014, 188) share the idea that social media channels like Facebook and Instagram should be connected to email and lead to competition where customers can win something valuable.

### 2.3.3 Facebook

Facebook has over a billion active users every month (Facebook 2016) and it allows companies to set up their own business page for free. According to Ryan (2014, 161) having a business page on Facebook makes the process of communicating with a large network of people easy and fast. Overall, it is good to remember that most of the people use Facebook only to get socialized and they are not really in the buying mode. This means that in Facebook companies should entertain or inform rather than try to sell direct. There are many benefits for companies to set up their own business page. For example, it is a great way to build a community around the brand and follow what consumers think about the company's business and learn more of their customers. Page content should be relevant and valuable to customers, also positively responding to the feedback company receives, is another way to boost company's online reputation. There are other meaningful ways too, like companies can actively participate to other Facebook social groups and that is how Facebook can engage consumers. Nowadays business page in Facebook has become a virtual prerequisite for many companies. (Ryan 2014, 162-163)

Setting up Business Facebook page can help companies to grow their business and it is the right place where to find new customers. Company's Facebook page is a simple way to tell what kind of business the company has and it can help companies to grow their product and service visibility all over the world. (Facebook for business 2016). Next is shown the basic steps of how to create a free business Facebook page.

## Marketing on Facebook starts with a Page



A Page gives your business a voice and presence on Facebook, and is designed to help you connect with customers and reach your goals.

[Create Page](#)

Figure 2: Create a business page on Facebook (Facebook for business 2016)

First step is sign-in Facebook as a private user and after that it is possible to start creating a business site (Figure 2). It is very simple and easy to start the whole process. Next step is to choose a business.

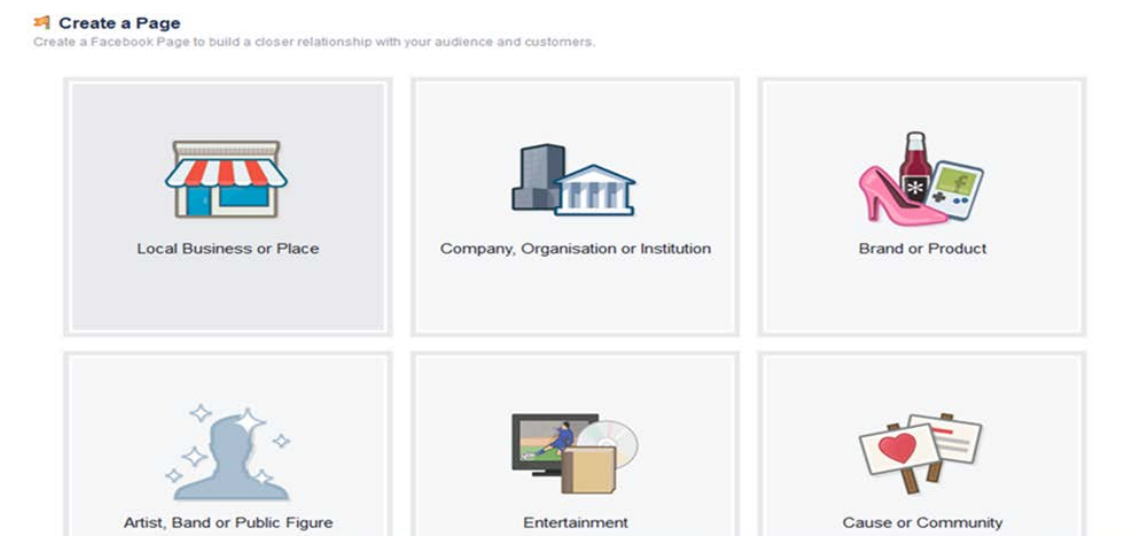


Figure 3: Choosing a business on Facebook (Facebook for business 2016)

Facebook gives six different options to choose (Figure 3) what kind of business the user has. It can be a local business, organization or institute, brand or product, artists or band, entertainment or community. This study focuses on retail business marketing so the next step would be to select the option - brand or product.



**Brand or Product**

Choose a category

Brand or Product Name

By clicking Get Started, you agree to the [Facebook Pages Terms](#).

Figure 4: Brand or product business (Facebook for business 2016)

Next step is choosing the category and add name of the brand or product (Figure 4). All of this information will be shown on front page. By clicking the “get started” button leads to next step.

1 About 2 Profile Picture 3 Preferred Page Audience

**Tip:** Add a description and website to improve the ranking of your Page in search.  
Fields marked by asterisks (\*) are required.

Add a few sentences to tell people what your Page is about. This will help it show up in the right search results. You will be able to add more details later from your Page settings.

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\*Tell people what your Page is about...

Website (e.g. your website, Instagram, Twitter or other social media links)

Choose a unique Facebook web address to make it easier for people to find your Page. Once this is set, it can only be changed once.

<http://www.facebook.com/>

[Need help?](#)

Figure 5: Filling the business information (Facebook for business 2016)

Filling the business information (Figure 5) shows following steps: about, profile picture and preferred page audience. At first it asks to fill the empty text box with business description, so people can see what the page is about. Then add the website address or other social media link that can lead people easily to get more information of the business. Company can also choose a unique Facebook web address which work as a straight link to company’s Facebook site in internet. After that company needs to add the profile picture that presents company’s

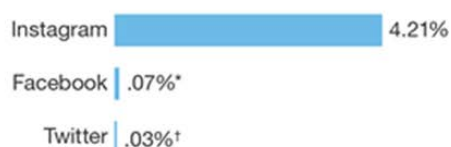
products, business or brand. The best way is to choose the logo which is easy to recognize. Next step leads to choosing the preferred page audience. This can be useful if the business is local or limited in specific countries. If it is left empty, the page will be available to all Facebook users around the world. Now the business page is ready to publish and the real Facebook marketing can start. In general this means adding photos, writing updates, sharing the page and liking other people's pages. The most important thing is to draw attention and increase brand visibility, which can then lead to increasing of the sales.

Facebook business page can be very useful earned media marketing tool for company's marketers as the set up page does not cost anything. To sum up all the above, it is possible to say that Facebook plays an important role in a company's online PR when the business Facebook page is made well and it is maintained constant.

#### 2.3.4 Instagram

Instagram is a global community, built on the power of visual storytelling and it has more than 400 million active accounts. It is founded 2010 and since that the service has been one of the most popular social media channels. People use Instagram in order to have visual inspirations. Instagram has more than 200 million users monthly which makes it an interesting marketing tool for companies. Beside images Instagram users can add comments under the photos and use hashtags (#) to reach more audience. Using hashtags increases users' engagement for photos and Instagram accepts thirty hashtags in every update image. Instagram offers companies platforms as a way to showcase their business in a rich and visual context. On Instagram companies' marketers need to find an effective way to tell a story through captivating images, videos and engage users to follow their updates. (Instagram for business 2016) Next picture will compare interactions brand post between Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

**User interactions with brands' posts as a percentage of brands' fans or followers**



Base: 1,526,388 user interactions on 162 Instagram brand posts

\*Base: 1,405,249 user interactions on 329 Facebook brand posts

†Base: 98,298 user interactions on 910 Twitter brand posts

Source: Q1 2014 US Top 50 Brands Social WebTrack

113021

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 6: Instagram is the leader of Social Engagement (Forrester Research 2014)

Instagram has earned its place as one of the leading social media channels because it offers companies potential consumer attention and commitment. The recent study (Figure 6) by Forrester Research (2014) shows that “Instagram delivers brands 58 times more engagement per follower than Facebook, and 120 times more engagement per follower than Twitter”. Instagram is an ingenious way for companies to reach target audience without using money for advertising. According to Ryan (2014, 159), Twitter allows members to share, comment and discuss uploaded photos and videos that can last maximum 15 seconds. Although, it must be pointed out that Instagram is a mobile phone application and its version is more limited on the computer. There is no option to create Instagram account without mobile phone. Next it is explained in four steps how the company can set up a new Instagram account.

1. First download Instagram application on iPhone and start the process by register as a new user. Choose an account name which should present the company’s brand. This will be shown on the front page and other users can find the company by this name.
2. Then choose a profile picture which presents the page. Instagram recommends using a brand’s logo or graphic symbol. It will appear as a 150 x 150 pixel image which is quite small on most phones, so the simpler the better.
3. After that add a short text which main purpose is interest to company’s target audience. Best is to describe what kind of business or brand the company has.
4. Account is now ready and marketing via Instagram can start. It is important to download images with hashtags and start to follow other users. Main thing is to be active, engage users with questions and comments. That will grow company’s account visibility. (Instagram for business 2016)

### 2.3.5 Twitter

Twitter offers people the possibility to talk online about what is happening right now in the global world. It has more than 200 million active users and over 500 million Tweets is sent every day. People are using Twitter to discover what is happening right now and to share information with each other’s. Twitter also connects with people and businesses and that is why it is a great opportunity for businesses to build meaningful connections with a global audience and engage new customers. (Twitter for business 2016)

Ryan (2014, 36) points out that even smallest companies can benefit from Twitter. It can be an early warning system that permits rapid response because it scores highly questioning and listening abilities. Companies can use twitter account as a distribution platform and offer highly targeted advertising to niche social groups based on profile information they volunteer through Twitter’s sites. Like in most cases, business marketers need to know how to take the benefits from Twitter. Ryan (2014, 293-294) provides existing information of how and when to

Tweet. Best days to reach customers are Saturdays and Sundays and the tweets should be send at 9 am, 12 noon, 3 pm and 6pm. When starting to Tweet, it is good to know that the majority of retweets are for tweets than contain links. Tweets with less than 100 characters have a 17 % higher engagement and tweets with imagine links have 200 % higher engagement. Next picture presents the steps of how to establish a business Twitter account.

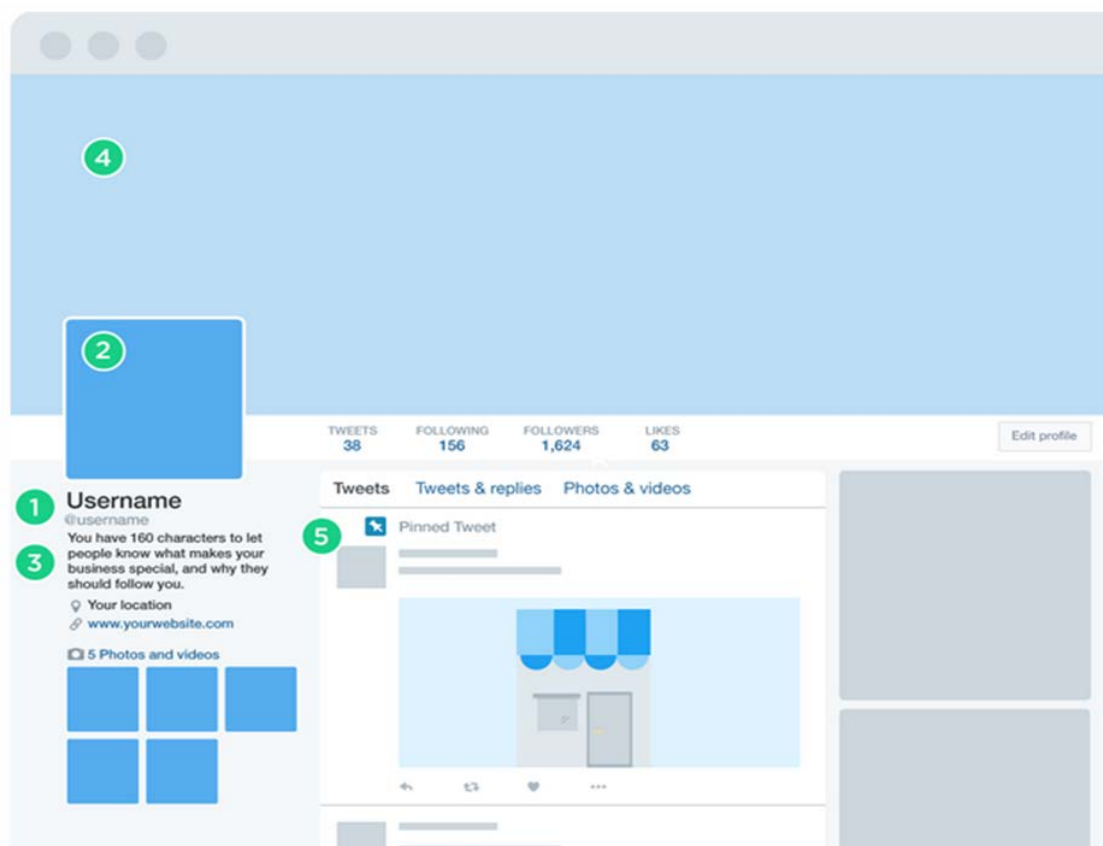


Figure 7: Steps how to establish a business Twitter account (Twitter for business 2016)

Figure 7 shows the steps to establish a business on Twitter. First (1) the company chooses a username which is a unique identifier on Twitter. It can contain up to 15 characters and should be connected to company's business. Second (2) step is choosing a profile picture that represents the brand and it needs to fit well in a small space. This icon will be shown every time the company posts a Tweet. Third (3) step is creating a bio which can include 160 characters. It is important to tell in the bio what makes the business or brand special and why other users should follow the company. Bio can have information like company's location and link to its websites. Fourth (4) step is choosing a header photo which is a billboard of the business. It can feature products or graphic with text or even highlight the companies' employees. The fifth (5) step is company's pinned Tweet. The most important Tweet should be at the top of timeline. This feature makes sure that visitors cannot miss company's latest news, offerings or promotions. After these steps company is ready to start using Twitter as a marketing channel. (Twitter for business 2016)

## 2.4 Creating an e-marketing plan

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 535) describe that “online and social media marketing plan is based on traditional marketing disciplines and planning techniques, adapted for the digital media environment and then mixed with new digital marketing communications techniques”. Nowadays social media is a natural part of the company’s marketing plan. Planning online and social media marketing can help company to make informed decisions and ensure that efforts are focused on the marketing elements that are most relevant to company’s business. Without a good plan of engagement customers through social media channels, the business can miss opportunities and worst, could be left behind the competitors which can lead losing the business. (Ryan 2014, 21-24)

Before starting to create the plan, company should think carefully about why they are going to online and why they start using social media. There are few questions which can help a company to understand if online business is the right marketing channel for them, such as is the company’s audience online or going to be online and are the products and the brand suitable for online marketing? Potential customers have to be able to use digital technology so they can research or purchase products that company provides. Also, it is good to remember that next generation might demand more online interaction from company’s business than customers now. Another thing to keep in mind is that the products should be easy to promote, evaluate, purchase and research online. Once these questions have been taken into account, the next step is pursuing some form of online and social media marketing. Every business makes their own, unique plan based on their own set of circumstances. (Ryan, 23-25)

E-marketing plan can be defined as a written document that summarizes all about the marketplace and indicates how the company plans to reach its marketing objectives. It should also contain tactical guidelines and be realistic. One of the most popular ways to ensure that the plan includes all the necessary elements, is to use a simple business marketing tool called SOSTAC®. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 535).

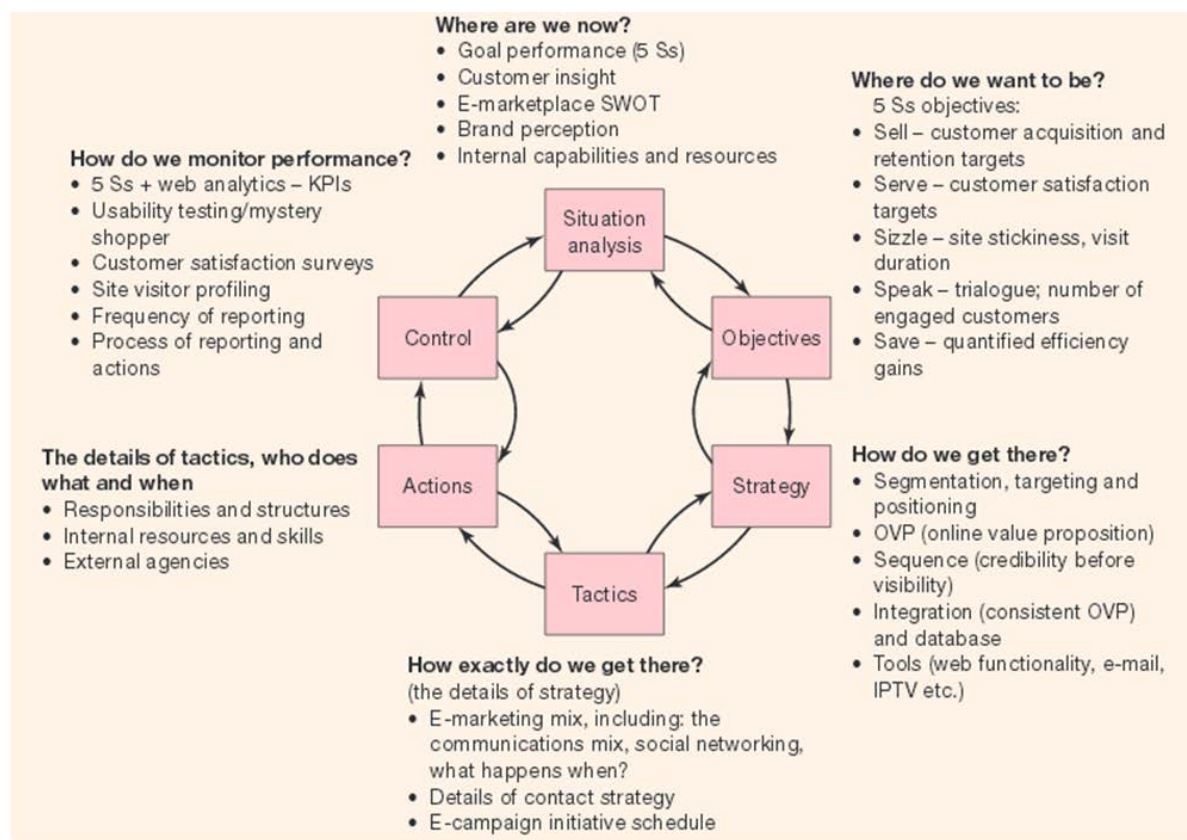


Figure 8: SOSTAC® - A generic framework for e-marketing planning (Chaffey 2009, 419)

SOSTAC® is a guide to create a digital marketing plan and it was originally made in the 1990s by PR Smith. As seen in the picture above, SOSTAC® (Figure 8) includes six different stages which are; Situation analyses, Objectives and Strategy, Tactics, Action and Control. The main purpose of this guide is to help a company to plan its digital marketing business. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 535). This study uses the SOSTAC® tool to create an online and social marketing plan for the case company. Therefore next chapters will open each of these stages more detailed and give guidelines on what kind of information should be included in the e-marketing plan.

#### 2.4.1 Situation analysis

SOSTAC® starts with a situation analysis which provide the overview of the company. It answers the question where the company is now? Situation analysis help to realize the current and future environment where the company operates. It includes elements like customers, market, competitors and partners which form the basis for defining later company´s objectives, strategies and tactics. (Toolkit: Digital Media 2013)

Understanding the elements how the company does business is the essential in the beginning of the e-marketing process. The consumer is always the heart of the business, so first it is important to know who the customers are.

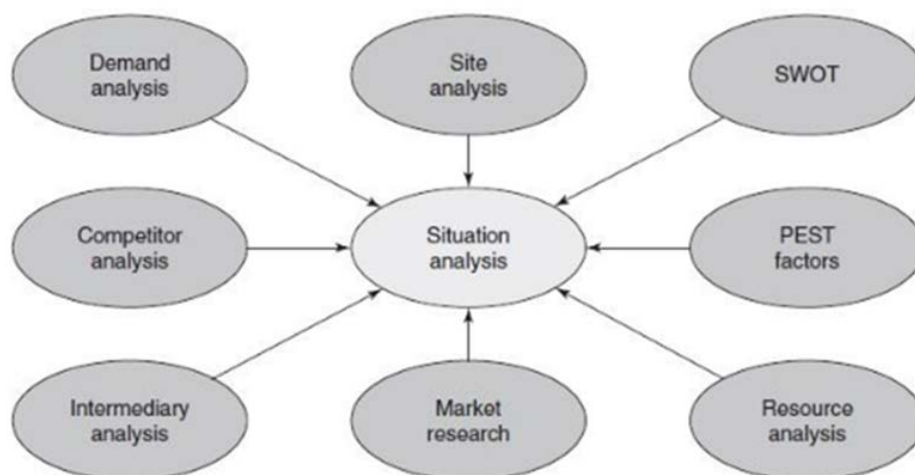


Figure 9: Elements of situation analysis for e-marketing (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 445)

Picture above (Figure 9) shows the e-marketing elements which situation analysis includes. Company's marketer can choose which of those elements to include in to the plan. Demand analyses relay the information of what percentage of company's customers are online and able to purchase company's products online. Are there some barriers to adoption among customers and how company can encourage adoption? The competitor analysis is the second very useful element as it helps to monitor who company's online competitors are. There should be a list of international and well-known competitors and explanation of how do they compete online and which channel they use. This will help to understand the online market competition. (Chaffey 2007)

Benchmarking is very useful tool to study competitors, especially to find out what is the competitors site effectiveness and the online customers experience. To enable it, the company has to have a standard method for reviewing its competitors. According to Chaffey and Smith (2014, 225) there can be five different ways to measure online competitors:

- Share of voice (how many people are discussing of the brand)
- Sentiment (are there positive conversation of the brand)
- Network size and growth (how many fans and followers the brand has on social media)
- Social sharing (How many likes, Retweets or followers the brand has on social media)
- Engagement (are the users generating the content for the brand sites)

Next element is the intermediary analysis which identifies major intermediaries for a special marketplace and helps to examine the marketplace and strategic online partners. Market research describes the company's online market possibilities. It gives information of target market and helps to analyze the online market needs. Meanwhile resource analysis can include for example the company's internal assets, online knowledge, human resources and experience of doing online business. Next is PEST which is an acronym for Political, Economic, Social and Technological factors and it helps company to analyze how these factors can affect its performance and business in long-term. (Chaffey 2007)

A SWOT Analysis is a tool that looks at a piece of a business' value chain, or the company as a whole, to identify positive and negative characteristics present in the environment. E-SWOT typically shows company's online strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats and it can be used as a company's toolkit. Chaffey and Smith (2013, 547) points out that "SWOT it is not only summarizing the current situation, but it can be used to help in developing strategy by placing optional strategies on". Company's strength can be based on the brand, customer data or existing distribution. Weaknesses can be the brand perception, technology/skills or churn rate. New company's opportunities lie for example on new market, cross-selling or new services. Threats can be new entrants or customer choice as the price can be much cheaper from the competitors. Each company creates their own and unique SWOT analysis based on their online business factors. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 539-540)

To sum up, the situation analysis' main purpose is to provide an overview of the company. It gathers important information of company's external environment, competitors and new entrants.

#### 2.4.2 Objectives

Online and social media marketing plan should include realistic objectives to clarify where the company is going and where they want to be in the future. SMART mnemonic is one way to represent the objectives. It can be defined; Specific (S), Measurable (M), Actionable (A), Relevant (R) and Time-bound (T). These SMART objectives focus to ensure that each of the 5S's goals are measured more detailed.





Figure 10: The 5Ss of online marketing plan objectives by PR Smith (Smart Insights 2016)

5Ss (figure 10) covers most important digital marketing points and it includes five objectives; Sell, Speak, Serve, Save and Sizzle. Purpose of sell is basically growing sales by using online marketing. Speak is getting closer to target audience by using social media channels to listen, monitoring and responding to online customers. Serve is adding value for example offer better online customer service or response to online dialogue to develop products. Save is no more than saving cost. Company can change their print and post to email marketing or switch telemarketing customer support to handle it through social media channels. That can be more effective and save a lot of costs. Sizzle extends to bring added value that can only be delivered online. It can be also new ways of extend the brand experience. (Smart Insights 2016) Chaffey and Smith (2013, 547) summarize that 5Ss ensure company to focus each of objectives as goals to achieve. Company can decide to choose all or only some of those 5Ss objectives which are going to drive company's online marketing plan. Overall, objectives are trying to help company to focus where they want to get. Next step is finding out how the company can get where they want to go.

#### 2.4.3 Strategy

Strategy answers the question "how the company can achieve earlier measured objectives?". It includes available recourses and it should identify segments of the online market that the company is indent to target with the plan. According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 555) "Online and social media strategy guides the choice of target markets, positioning and propositions which in turn guide the optimum mix - the sequence of e-tools, service levels and evolutionary stages". Company's sequence e-tools are web sites, email marketing and viral mar-

keting. Another very important part of online strategy is the development the dynamic dialogue via the integrate database. It includes the question of how company´s website is processed and accessible. Second, the strategy regulates the use of social media which main purpose is listening and engaging customers. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 555). Ryan (2014, 24) summarize that e-strategy includes everything what it takes to achieve the objectives.

Formulating e-marketing strategy can help the company to make informed decisions about foray into the e-marketing arena. It will also ensure that company´s efforts are focused on the elements of e-marketing that are most relevant to the company´s business (Ryan, 2014, 21-25). E-marketing strategies are often searching for how to increase the online sales by different tactics. Most popular online strategies are based on the customer engagement, managing different e-channels and processing the content. (Interactive Marketing 2013)

To sum up, the e-strategy explains how the company will achieve marketing goals and what the selected way to market company´s products is. It is important to keep in mind that in order to implement the strategy, the company has to have enough time and recourses.

#### 2.4.4 Tactics and action

When the strategy summarizes how the company can achieve its objectives, tactics are the details of the strategy. It answers the question of how company can exactly go there. Tactics are usually short-term and flexible when strategy tends to be more long-term. Company should detail its online marketing tactics because those support the strategy. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 562). Tactics contain the communications tools which will be used in the plan. The main marketing tactical tools are; Website, Social media platforms, and opt-in email, e-newsletter and display ads. The strategy often helps to choose the right tactical e-tool. (SOS-TAC Model of Marketing 2016)

Tactics should always be controlled in the company by marketers who also take the responsibility of implementation. Marketers can develop new online tactics through customer relationship management tools. This way companies explode new ways to contact customers. Company can start to invite customers to enter contests or run free tickets to event that company is sponsoring. These online marketing tactics can create ongoing relationship with customers. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 563)

Action stage is focused on how the company can bring their online plan to life and create actionable measures. It explains who does what and when. It also tells how the company handles its online queries or responses and which the best way is for the company to setting up these actions. In action stage, the company has to pay attention of good project management

skills because each tactic is like a mini project which requires a series of actions. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 564-565)

#### 2.4.5 Control

The final part is the stage of control that shows how the company is monitoring its performance. It includes the plan of controlling measurements. The key questions are:

- Who is the responsibility of measurement that company is achieving its objectives?
- How often company is measuring its performance?
- How company measures its reviews and qualitative feedback?

Answering to these questions will help company to summarize its control process and correct possible problems on time. (SOSTAC Model of Marketing 2016) Control stage also aims to measure which e-tools are giving the best return on investment and based on the findings, the marketers can improve or even change the tactics and strategies if something does not work properly. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 45).

What the company needs to watch?	How often (daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly)	Who will do it? (Agency or stuff?)	What does it cost to measure this?
Sales - Units - Revenue - Market share			
Enquiries (number of) - Visitors? - Registrations - Actual enquiries			
Churn rates - Attrition rate - Unsubscribe			
Affection levels - 'Shares' - 'Likes'			
Engagement levels - Sum of 'Shares', 'Likes' & Comments to total			
Social network analysis - Finding networks of influence customer satisfactions			

Table 1. Control of the metrics (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 568-569)

A very useful tool for managing the online business is the list of controlled metrics (Table 1). This practical list ensures that company is monitoring the right data and it is reviewed by the right people. It contains at least 6 metrics which companies need to watch out; sales, enquiries, churn rates, affection levels, engagement levels and social network analysis. Next the company describes how often it is necessary to measure these metrics and who will be the responsible one of that. The last it includes the part of measure of each metrics cost. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 568-569)

To conclude this chapter, SOSTAC® is very useful digital marketing tool for companies to develop and implement their online marketing plan. It helps company to consider their business through marketing objectives and especially, it can support start-up companies to measure their online strategies, actions and tactics. SOSTAC® includes all the elements that every company should have on its e-marketing plan and it is a simply way to build a well-structured and comprehensive e-marketing plan. All these stages will be included on the case company's e-marketing plan.

### 3 Research approach

This research was conducted by using qualitative methods in order to get a deeper insight of the online and social media marketing as a phenomena. Qualitative research can be defined as a broad methodological approach that encompasses many research methods. It aims to get a better understanding through firsthand experience and it involves looking in-depth at non-numerical data. Qualitative research can be valuable when a company is coming up with new marketing initiatives or want to develop new products. It can help to test reactions and refine the approach. The purpose is receive more insight and understanding what is driving peoples' decisions. (Market research 2016)

This research was conducted by observations and benchmarking. Next sub-chapters introduce chosen approaches and justify the chosen research methods.

#### 3.1 Case research

This study is a case research which is so called an empirical research strategy. The purpose of case research is to explore contemporary phenomenon in a real life situation by using a number of different sources of information and data sets. Often, it aims to produce detailed and intensive information about the selected case. Next it is shortly explained the six steps which case research often includes and these steps can be found in this study as well. (Soy 2006)

1. The first step of the case study is that there is a company which establish research to which researcher can refer over the course of the study. Researcher will form the research questions and the purpose of the study. Often, the case study questions start “why” or “how”. It is very important to determine and define the research questions in the beginning of the study, because it will help later to determine the methods of analysis which will be used in the study.
2. Second step is that the researcher defines what approaches will be used in the study. The researcher must select whether to investigate a single case or multiple real-life cases and which data gathering approaches and instruments will be used. Collecting data is generally qualitative, but it can also be quantitative.
3. Third step includes the preparation of data collection. The researcher must be aware of the amount of data used so that the original research target and questions will not be forgotten. Careful data preparation includes categorizing, sorting, storing, and retrieving data for analysis.
4. Fourth step is collecting data in the field. This is a comprehensive and systematic way to collect data from multiple sources of evidence.
5. Fifth step contains the part where the data is evaluated and analyzed. Between the evaluation and analysis process, the researcher continues to open new opportunities and insights. It can also open a new set of circumstances to triangulate data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusions. The data can be categorized, tabulated, and recombined many different ways.
6. Sixth step contains the preparation of the report. The research data should be reported in a way that the reader can understand it. Throughout the report preparation process, researchers must examine the document critically and looking for ways the report is incomplete. (Soy 2006)

Because of the nature of this research the case study method was selected to be the optimal method. Case company has an unique case, which needs a deeper insight and detailed examination of the phenomena with company`s point of view. Case research method was also chosen as it answers best to the research questions and can be used to meet the objectives. The idea for this study was to find out how to start developing an effective e-marketing plan through online and social media channels and then utilize it in the case company.

### 3.2 Participant observation

Participant observation is a way of collecting information about people and processes in qualitative research. It can be a very useful method to gather data that cannot be collected any other way. Participant observation can be used to provide an answer to descriptive research questions and then generate hypotheses. Usually the researcher observes the phenomenon of the study certain period of time in the community and that way the researcher enables to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The data can be collected through surveys and interviews. Before the researcher starts observations and collecting data, he/she needs to be familiar with the setting of the study. Throughout the observation, the researcher writes down the findings and field notes which can be analyzed later in the study. (Kawulich 2005)

In this study, the author works in the case company as a marketing assistant for the whole time of writing the case research. This will help the author to have a better understanding of the case company and its business activities. It also provides to collect different types of data as the author has access to all marketing information on any time. Participate observation in the case company allows the author to do constantly interviews and keeping field notes which can be analyzed in the empirical part.

### 3.3 Benchmarking

Briefly defined, benchmarking means comparing one activity to other similar activities, often the compared against to the best one. However, even though the basic idea of benchmarking is the comparison, it does not intend to imitate or copy other activities. Benchmarking activities are often used in the business world as its aim is to gain knowledge and skills that can be converted into effective improvements in companies. Benchmarking can help to identify the weaknesses of company's business activities and find out the critical success factors in the same business industry. Based on that company can develop its profile, economic success, and products quality and customer satisfaction. According to Housley (1999) "benchmarking method offers a simple but effective means to measure the performance and costs and it provides an opportunity to improve the functioning especially when the market surveys are not suitable for exploration activities."

In this study it is essential to benchmark other online clothing companies and their online and social media marketing. Social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, are not anymore new marketing platforms. Many companies have social media sites where users can discuss the company's brand, products and business. When a new company wants to start develop their social media marketing, it is very useful to understand what the current situa-

tion on the social media is and how competitors present there. Benchmarking can help to develop company's online action and lead to better social media performance. (Alton 2015)

#### 4 Empirical part

The empirical part was constructed by benchmarking competitors' online and social media business, using the knowledge base from the chapter 2 and observing the case company's internal and external marketing processes. The purpose of the empirical part is produce an e-marketing plan to meet the needs of the case company.

##### 4.1 Smokart Ltd. and the e-marketing plan

Next sub-chapters gathers the theory and research part together and the outcome is a practical e-marketing plan that gives information of Smokart's online business for the first time. E-marketing plan is made by following the elements of SOSTAC® and the data is collected by benchmarking and participate observing. The plan also includes the building the main online and social media channels which enable to bring Smokart's online strategy to life.

The plan begins with analyzing the Smokart's current business situation and determining the marketing objectives. After that the online marketing strategies, tactics and action will be presented. In the end the Smokart's control metrics is shown and the research validity is analyzed.

##### 4.2 Situation analysis

Smokart business started from a vision to create a unique, tattoo designed t-shirts with high quality materials. This has been a long time project for brothers Smokov, who have been professional tattoo artists for more than 20 years and both of them have an art education background. Smokov brothers have visited and participated in many tattoo conventions around the world and based on those experiences and they noticed that there is a niche in the market for more specialized t-shirts.

In the end of 2015 they established a new company called Smokart Ltd. which owns the rights of S.L. First S.L collection includes t-shirts for male and women, ages 16-40. Smokart's mission is to sell t-shirts on online shop and market clothes mainly through social media. The target is that 90 % of the customers purchase their t-shirts online and the rest 10% buy their t-shirts from the flag shop. The market environment includes the European and North-America's geographical areas.



Figure 11: S.L Men 2016 collection (Facebook 2016, S.L album)

The above seen t-shirts (figure 11) are the products of Smokart and those are designed by the company's owners. T-shirts are 100% cotton and starting from the size S to XXL size. There will be approximately 10 new men's designs coming between May to July 2016. Female t-shirts are still on the production and owners have ordered three different models with black, grey and white t-shirts colors. The prices of t-shirts are starting from 30 euros.

Beside the clothing business, Smokov brothers own the famous tattoo shop in city center of Sofia, Bulgaria. Smokov Tattoo shop includes S.L flag store and it is open for customers every Monday to Saturday 11am to 7pm.



## 4.2.1 SWOT analysis

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialization and niche selling</li> <li>• Already existing social media followers</li> <li>• Direct consumer communication</li> <li>• Clothing business is extensive on online</li> <li>• Ability to compete with other companies global and locally</li> <li>• Low overhead cost and low barrier to entry</li> <li>• Online suppliers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing clothes through online is growing trend</li> <li>• Online and social media is easy and inexpensive way to market and sell products</li> <li>• High Availability: a 24/7 business</li> <li>• Target customers use online and social media almost daily</li> <li>• Engaging customers through online and social media</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owners do not have so much experience of online business</li> <li>• New brand will need a lot of visibility before people will find it</li> <li>• High Customer Expectations</li> <li>• Human resources as online and social media marketing require updating all the time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Technical problems like virus, hackers or system fails</li> <li>• Supplier problems like tax changes, delivery fails or unsatisfied products</li> <li>• Social media can turn against the brand</li> </ul>

Table 1: SWOT analysis of Smokart Ltd. and online business

The Smokart Ltd. operates online through a web shop and social media channels which means that the SWOT analyses (table 1) is done based on the online factors. Smokart has unique products which are designed by the owners. Online markets offer for the case company a large customer data base even they products are more specialized for the certain group. Social media platforms enable direct consumer communication and it is marketing without costs.

Company's owners also have many followers on Facebook and Instagram (more than 9000 followers on Facebook and over 15,000 followers on Instagram) which certainly is a strength as the company can use that social data base for its online marketing purposes. Smokart has made its products for the international markets and the online business enables ability to compete straight away with other companies global. Another major strength is the growing online shopping trend as the Internet has made online buying process easy and simply. The

online business provides for Smokart the possibility to sell their products with low barriers as there are no taxes for the company when they send their products for example to the USA. In these cases the end user pays all the custom costs. Communication with suppliers through online helps Smokart to get fast garment orders and it supports that the collections will arrive to the markets on time.

Beside the strengths, Smokart has weaknesses which help the company to understand its limitations and improve those factors which are possible. The case company's human resources are limited as the company is new and they still do not have many employees. This means that the owners need to handle many business processes at the same time. Meanwhile, the owners need to develop their online knowledge as their experience of doing online business is still quite short. Online customers often have high expectations and they easily demand the same level of service from business with few employees as they would from industry with 100 employees (E-Commerce 2007).

Smokart needs to plan well how to grow its online visibility as the new brand does not get it automatically. Online markets are full of different clothing brands and it will need a lot of effort and good planning that people will recognize the S.L as a tattoo design brand.

As the purchasing products through online is the trend now, it gives many business opportunities for the Smokart. Developing the online and social media marketing can bring many new customers without high marketing costs and finally increase sales. Smokart online shop is open around the whole day and gives opportunities to sell any time. It is easy to find target customers as they are using online and social media every day. Social media channels can engage the customers' relationships which opens more marketing and selling opportunities.

Threats are something that influence negatively for company's business and it can lead to end the business. Even the online business is growing; the competition can be too difficult. There is always a possibility that online customers never find the new brand or there are too many similar brands with better online recourses. When the business is also depending on the internet, the online business is vulnerable for viruses and system fails. Smokart's website and social media platforms can be attacked by outsider hackers and it can stop the business for a while. There is also a change that suppliers disappear from the online markets and Smokart cannot get their paid orders.

Another threat comes from the social media as the people can turn against the company. Online users can start to abuse the brand or the company by spraying negative information through different e-marketing channels. This can easily affect the brand image and sales.

#### 4.2.2 Competitive analysis

Competitive analysis is created by collecting online information of the competitors. Smokart chose two clothing companies to benchmark; Rebel8 and TFB Clothing as the first one operates in the U.S markets and the second one in the European markets.



Company	Basic information	Web site	Facebook	Instagram
Rebel8 	Established in San Francisco 2003  The clothing is comprised of graphic tees, fleece, wovens, outerwear, bottoms, headwear, and accessories for both men and women.  The designs are heavily inspired by classic skateboard graphics, vintage tattoo art, and graffiti  Annual Revenue \$340 000,00  3 Employees	<a href="http://rebel8.com">http://rebel8.com</a>  Estimated Website Traffic Worth \$10,487 US Dollars  4,789 Page views for daily  Recent traffic trend shows a 50.08% Negative growth  Rebel8.com's page load time for 90th percentile measures at 2 sec.  Servers are located in the Canada  Rebel8.com is popular in the United States and 10.0% of users comes from this Geolocation	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/rebel8/">https://www.facebook.com/rebel8/</a>  291,361 likes  Approx. 1 200 likes of each photos on the site  Approx. 95 shares of each photo on the site  Approx. 55 comments under each photo on the site	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/rebel8/">https://www.instagram.com/rebel8/</a>  1 968 releases  169,000 followers  Approx. 2000 likes of each release  Approx. 2-100 comments under each release
TFB Clothing 	Established in Krakow 2009  T-shirts are designed by different tattoo artists  TFB purpose is to show skills of artists with whom their cooperate but also diversity and versatility of a concept of modern tattoo  No information of employees or revenue	<a href="http://www.tfbclothing.com/page/tfb-clothing">http://www.tfbclothing.com/page/tfb-clothing</a>  Estimated Website traffic worth \$240.00 US Dollars  310 Page views for daily  Servers are located in France  TFB Clothing web site is popular in European online market	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/TFB-clothing-144051472471954/">https://www.facebook.com/TFB-clothing-144051472471954/</a>  16,799 likes  Approx. 2-300 likes of each photo on the site  Not more than 10 shares of each photo on the site  Approx. 0-10 comments under each photo on the site	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/tfbclothing/">https://www.instagram.com/tfbclothing/</a>  568 releases  7,672 followers  Approx. 50-200 likes of each release  Approx. 10 comments under each release

Table 2. Benchmarked data of Rebel8 and TFB Clothing (FreeWebsiteReport 2016 & Sixtat 2016)

The data of the competitors (Table 2) shows the basic information of the Rebel8 and TFB Clothing online business through Web site, Facebook and Instagram. Both companies are producing unique, tattoo designed t-shirts.

When analyzing the data, it can be seen that Rebel8, which has over 10 years of experience in producing street style clothes, succeeds well to grow its online visibility. The company has more than 290.000 likes on the Facebook and almost 170.000 followers on the Instagram. The engagement level is good as the each of the photos consists hundreds of shares and thousands likes. Also each photo includes almost 55 comments. Beside the social media channels, Rebel8 web site has almost 5000 views daily. Interesting is that the recent traffic trend is negative. One reason can be that the customers of Rebel8 follow the brand through social media rather than checking the clothes on the website. Website can be seen as the place where the purchase process happens but the marketing is more connected on the Facebook and Instagram. Rebel8 sales come mainly from the United State even the company has followers all over the world.

TFB Clothing has produced tattoo designed t-shirts for more than five years and the company focuses on the European online market. The website traffic and social media engagement are not as strong level as the Rebel8. TFB Clothing has more than 15.000 likes on the Facebook and more than 7.500 followers on the Instagram. What is more important than the number of followers is the visitor engagement. There are less than 10 shares and comments for each published photo and the website has 310 views daily. Both of these companies', Rebel8 and TFB Clothing website, social media channels and email marketing are benchmarked when the S.L's social media marketing is developed. Special attention was given to the website's visual outlook and the ways they engage the social media users.

### 4.3 Objectives

SELL	SPEAK	SERVE	SAVE	SIZZLE
Grow t-shirts sales	Creating a two-way dialogue through web, email and Facebook	Give good customer service through online channels	Marketing costs as email marketing is free of charge, same with the Instagram and Facebook	Extend the brand online
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achieve 600 sold t-shirts through online shop in 6 months (June to November 2016)</li> <li>- 90% of customers purchase their Snake Legend t-shirts through online shop in 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collect email database through web site from 0 to 100 until the June 2016</li> <li>- Increase Instagram followers from 50 to 500 in 3 month (June to August 2016)</li> <li>- Increase Facebook likes from 300 to 1000 in 3 months (June to August 2016)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Answer all the Facebook messages in one day</li> <li>- React all the comments and feedback in one day</li> <li>- Send the online orders to the customers next working day</li> <li>- Create customer friendly purchase process through online shop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online and social media marketing generate 80% of company's overall marketing</li> <li>- Email marketing campaigns more than paid campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add extra value for online customers like free delivery offers or discount coupons</li> <li>- Create t-shirt competition through social media 2 times a month</li> <li>- Improve the online and social media actively</li> </ul>

Table 3: Summarize of Smokart Ltd. 5Ss (Smokov 2016)

Smokart's e-marketing objectives are summarized through 5Ss (Table 3) and these findings are driving Smokart's online marketing plan. Objectives have been analyzed by interviewing the owners and the main focus is to grow the online sales and extend the S.L brand online and social media visibility. The summary includes also more targeted goals for each objective which have been analyzed by using SMART mnemonic. As the Smokart objectives are now measured, the next stage is to define the strategy how to achieve these measured objectives.

### 4.4 Strategy

Smokart e-marketing strategies are based on the engagement, email communication and content. Engagement strategy includes building long-lasting customer and fan relationship through social media communities. Main strategic channels are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter which are used for launching new campaigns, setting up competitions and showing new products. The main focus is entertaining audience by publishing interesting photos, videos and news almost every day. Facebook visitors will be collected by sending the like request

from the owners Facebook accounts. Instagram followers will be found by using the hashtags which arouse the interest. Engagement aims to grow brand visibility and loyaltiness and it enables more targeted sales opportunities.

Email communication strategy explains how the Smokart can enhance its email objectives. Before starting email marketing, S.L needs to collect customers' data base by using different marketing tactics on the web site, Facebook and Instagram. S.L website is the place where visitors can subscribe their emails through pop-up link or Join the Legend button. Collected emails will be used for newsletter and promotional campaigns. Emails always include something that is not possible to get any other ways like discounts or free delivery. S.L newsletter design has to be visually attractive and following the brand image. Email campaigns are monitored regularly. The outcome of this strategy is increase sales and save marketing cost, as the email marketing is free.

Third strategy is based on the content. S.L website has to present the brand image and include all the necessary elements of online shop. Website is the place where customers buy the products, so the purchase process needs to be safe, simply and easy to use. Home page content needs to be enough effective to encourage visitors to spend time on the site and finally buy the products. The online and social media content is updated weekly or even more often if needed. Content is measured by using SEO (searching engine option) to find out how people find the web site, Facebook and Instagram. Website pictures and text are connected to Google search, so when people look for word "tattoo design", S.L website will show to the search. This SEO tool is not available in the beginning of the online business as the web site takes three month time that the search starts to work on Google.

#### 4.5 Tactics and action

This sub-chapter presents how the Smokart e-marketing plan has put on the life as implementing all the needed e-channels. It includes the tactics which are details of the previous strategies. The tactical tools are built by following the guidelines of sub-chapter 2.3. The action part shows what has been done and how.

##### 4.5.1 S.L website

Smokart has chosen to use the Wix platform to create its web shop because it is very easy and simple to use and it has online drag and drop tools. The Wix is a cloud-based web development platform and it allows to users to build-up their own web and mobile sites. (Wix 2016) S.L web shop was created by following digital marketing step and benchmarking Rebel8 and TFB Clothing web sites.

1. Planning. Web shop is the main channel for S.L that provides opportunity to sell online. The main goal is to make the shopping process as easy and safe as possible. Also, the web site presents the brand image, products and it is a channel to collect customer feedback and emails.

As many clothing companies have moved to online markets the competition is getting tough. Most of the competitors of the Smokart come from the United States like Rebel8 which has created very effective and visually nice web sites.

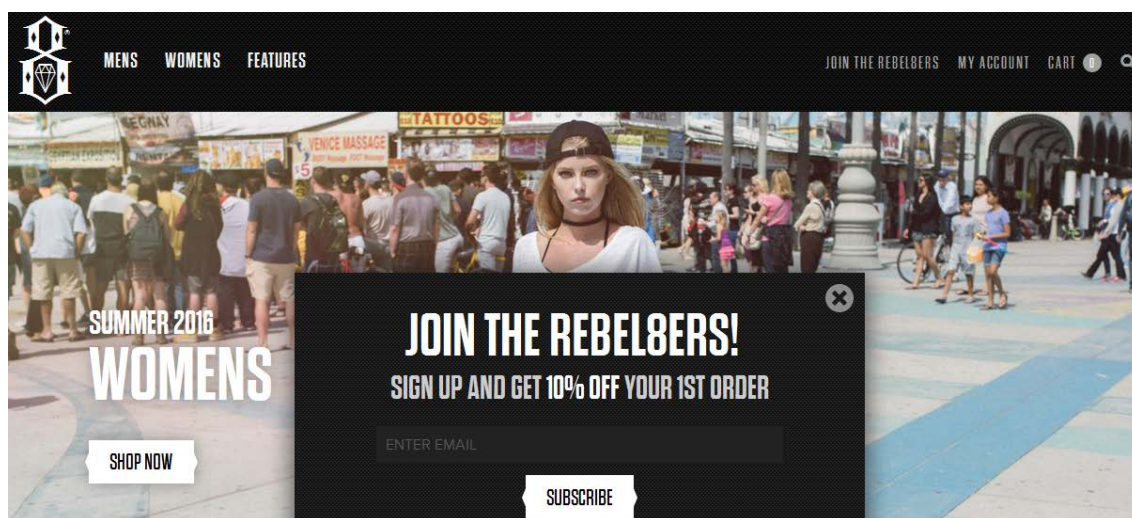


Figure 12. Rebel8 home page (Rebel8 2016)

Rebel8 homepage (Figure 12) shows the elements that web shop should have. Recognized logo on the left, clear picture that presents the brand and discount offer which target is collect visitors emails. All these elements are included the S.L web shop as well.

2. Design. S.L website is designed to look and feel like tattoo a clothing web shop. The brand is made to follow the style of Smokov Tattoo shop which includes Japanese style skulls, dragons and art drawings.

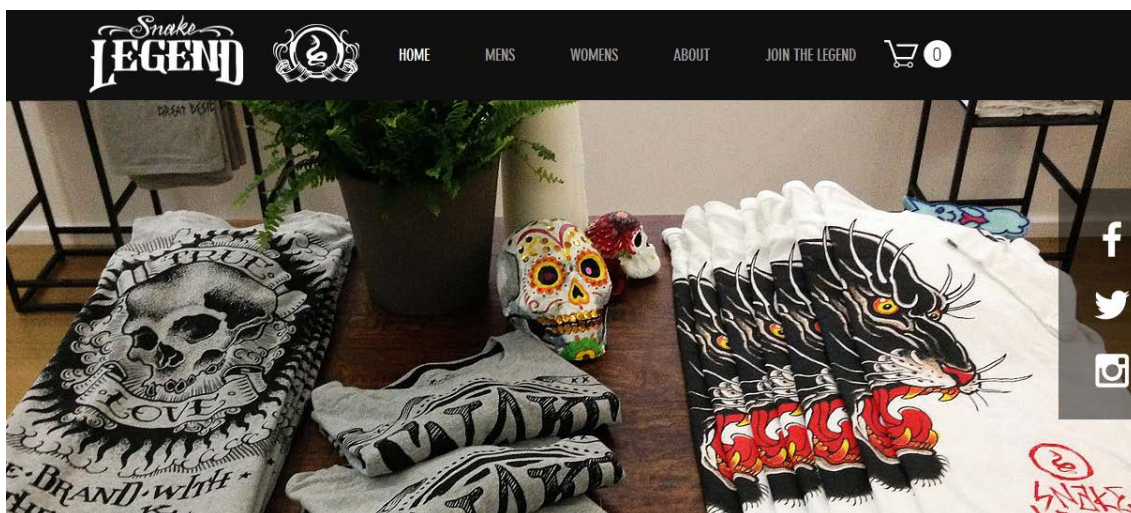


Figure 13: S.L front web page (2016, S.L web site)

S.L home page (Figure 13) shows the design which includes unique logo and lettering. All the necessary elements are seen on the above. Social media icons connect visitors to S.L's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram sites.

3. **Development.** After the design was ready, it was time to develop the content on the site. The text part included t-shirt info, purchasing process, company's details and additional information. Also, under each page can be found legal notice, FAQ and contact us form.

## CONTACT US

Phone: +359 888 230 765  
 International Sales: [sales@snakelegend.com](mailto:sales@snakelegend.com)

Feel free to contact us for advice, help or other enquires related to Snake Legend Web shop

Name
Email
Subject
Message

Figure 14: Contact us form (S.L 2016)



The contact us (Figure 14) form is made to collect feedback or other brand related questions from the web site visitors. The target is offering customers more ways to communicate with the company.

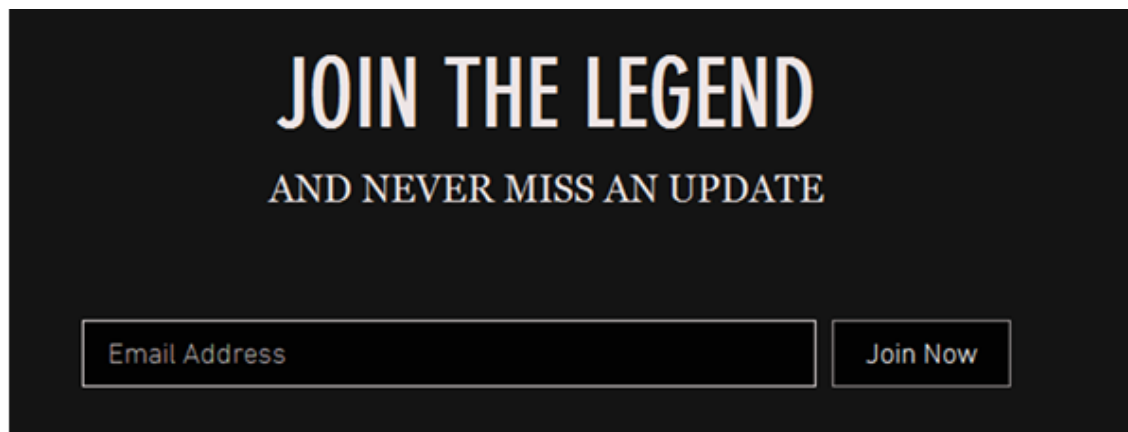


Figure 15: Joint the Legend - collecting customer e-mails (S.L web site 2016)

Join the Legend (Figure 15) is another tactical tool on the web site. Through this "Join the Legend" pop-up link customers can add their e-mail addresses and be involved of the brand's updates, competition, promotion and news.

Part of the content marketing was also the adding the metatags on the webserver which offers the search engines on Internet. Search engine optimizing (SEO) was part of the Wix tools and it was easy to add words which can be found later on the Google search. The used words were "tattoos", "design", "and t-shirt", "fashion", "street style", "urbanfashion", "S.L", "smokov tattoo".

4. **Testing.** It was important to see how the website tools such as contact form and Join the Legend opt-in mailing list worked. The test showed that both applications had same process. First the Wix send a notice to the company's private e-mail that customer has send a message or email and then it can be read on the company's website account. Other tested process was testing the payment methods. It is possible to purchase S.L products by credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) and through PayPal. Both of these worked properly and the order message came again to the company's website account.

#### 4.5.2 Email Marketing

Email marketing is part of the Smokart online strategy. The first step is to start collecting customer data. Without any special marketing, S.L has got 23 emails through website pop-up tool. The target is to collect 100 emails before the end of the June. This will be achieved by promoting website on Facebook newsfeed by message "check out our new online shop - leave your email address and receive free delivery in Europe". Same message will be on the pop-up link which will be shown to all website visitors who have not yet left their email.

We just want to say thank you  
for joining our Snake Legend Club!

# 20% off

your next purchase

Enter this promo code during checkout : ABC123

**GET IT NOW**

Valid until the 31th of July 2016  
www.snakelegend.com

Share Via:  
f t

Check out my website →

Figure 16: S.L discount campaign 2016

The first email campaign starts in end of June 2016 with sending the discount coupon to the people who have subscribed their emails until that time. The promotion message is “We just want to say thank you for joining our S.L Club” (Figure 16) and the email contains the 20% off for next purchase. Also, the email includes the discount code, the valid date and info of S.L website. The message is linked to Twitter and Facebook and it includes unsubscribed button. The campaign starts end of June 2016 and it is valid one month.

The purpose of this first campaign is monitoring how many used the discount coupon and how much it increased the online sales. Another important reason for the campaign is start to communicate with the fans and followers by emails. Second campaign will be heading straight after the first ended.

#### 4.5.3 Facebook

S.L Facebook page is published by following the steps of “how to create a business page on Facebook”. Everything started by choosing the right business. S.L is a brand and the business category is clothing. After that it was possible to add text what the business page is about. *“S.L clothing reflects urban tattoo lifestyle fashion and the brand is created by famous tattoo artists Smokov brothers”*. This text is shown all the time on the front page. The next step was choosing a unique Facebook address which help people to find the page. S.L address is on Facebook *s.l.clothing* and it can be changed only once more if needed.

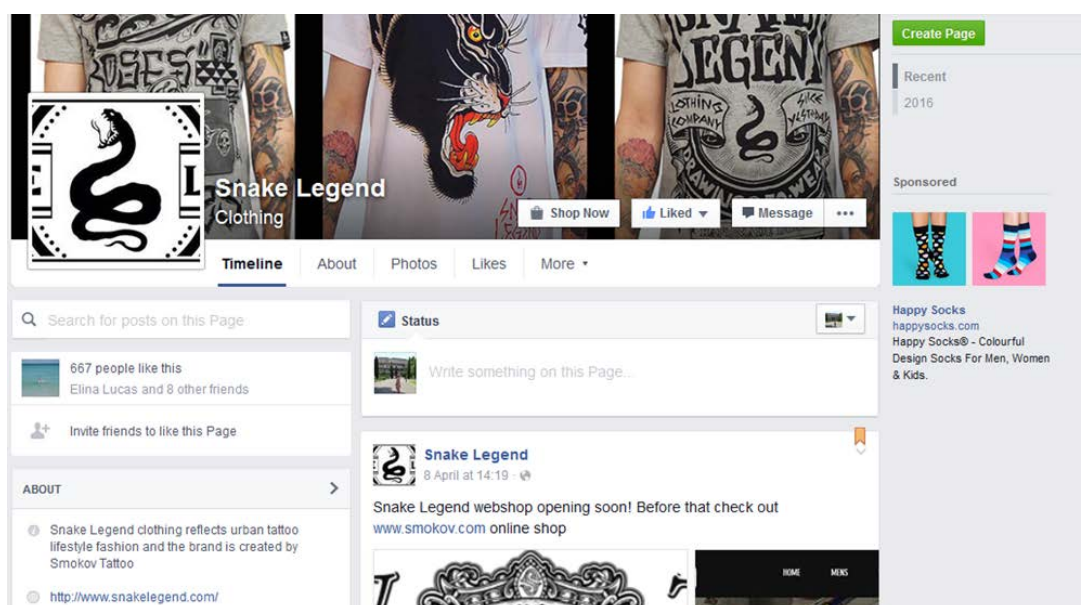


Figure 17: S.L business Facebook page (2016, Facebook)

S.L Facebook site (Figure 17) started to have many followers when the owners invited their own fans to like the S.L page. The main mission of the S.L Facebook page is creating a community that enables two-way communication. This means building relationship with the followers by different tactics. More the people follow S.L's newsfeed, photos, attend to competition, share and comment the post; it will be growing the brand visibility and engagement level.

S.L tactical Facebook campaigns were developed by benchmarking Rebel8 and TFB Clothing Facebook newsfeed. The goal was to see how these companies boost the engagement with followers. S.L first Facebook competition starts when the page has passed over 800 likes. The marketing message is "S.L has currently passed the 800 likes mark. To celebrate this we are giving out a new S.L t-shirt to who named it best" and the under the text will be the picture of the new t-shirt. This will encourage people to comment on the post. Similar campaign has been used in the TFB Facebook sites.

Second Facebook marketing campaign is sharing the S.L post. The message is "We are giving 50 euro voucher to S.L online shop for a person who shares this photo". The text is written in the photo and it includes also promotional pictures of S.L t-shirts. When people share the post, it will show up in their personal Facebook newsfeed. Many of their friends can notice this post which can lease new likes or at least grow the brand visibility. Both companies, TFB and Rebel8, are using this kind of marketing.

S.L can create Facebook campaigns every week. More action on the page keeps people awake. Best way to find new ideas for the campaigns is to follow the competitors and other companies, even from totally different field which can offer new and fresh marketing tips.

#### 4.5.4 Instagram

Beside the Facebook, Instagram is another very important marketing channel for S.L It allows showing photos and growing brand's visibility. First step of creating Instagram account is decide the account's name which is S.L. From now on, if someone tags on Instagram a photo with @ S.L, this photo will be shown in S.L photo gallery. Next step was uploading the brand's logo and add the short information text. "S.L Webshop opening soon! Unique hand-drawn and art driven tattoo design T-shirts by Smokov Tattoo [www. S.L.com](http://www.S.L.com)".

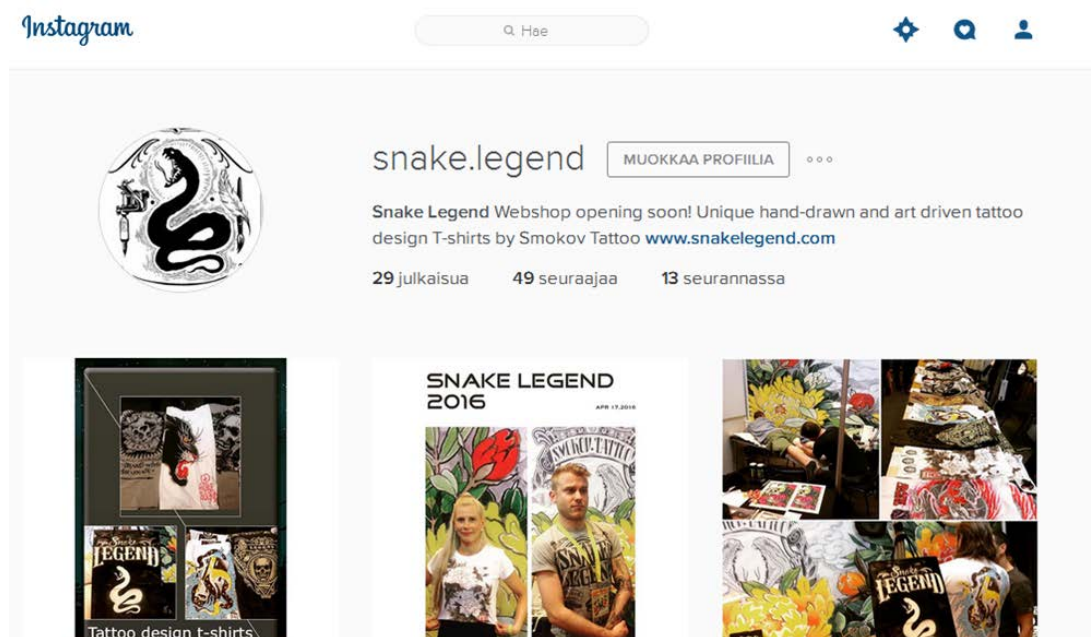


Figure 18: S.L Instagram account (2016 Instagram)

Figure 18 shows the ready S.L Instagram account. Marketing actions on Instagram includes growing the brand followers and likes by using specific hashtags. The Smokart should use S.L Instagram daily and be active. In the beginning, the most important is collect followers. This will happen by inviting people through Facebook as S.L has more followers there.

The first Instagram tactic is to promote the S.L t-shirts. This is done by adding well photographed photos of the t-shirts in different situation. The idea is not to publish only photos of how the t-shirts look like, but to create a fresh atmosphere around the photo by including people, places and action on it. S.L photos should provide the street or urban style atmosphere which means that the people wear t-shirts on this kind of environment. Graffiti and urban city streets are good backgrounds for the photos. People in the picture should be around 20 to 30 years old and they can be covered by tattoos. The action part in the picture can be skating on the asphalt, listening rock concert or just hanging out on the city center around many people. Rebel8 is using mostly tattooed people in their Instagram photos and the photos are shot in very urban atmosphere.

Also, right hashtags are important so that the users can find the brand. # S.L is the hashtag that needs to be always when Smokart upload photos. Also it is good to check the hashtags popularity before adding them.

Second tactic is to host an Instagram photo contest. The purpose is to attract and convert potential S.L customers. The first contest is a photo campaign where followers are asked to

submit personal photos with S.L t-shirt and adding the campaign hashtag #snakelegendandme. Then the best photo will be rewarded with a free t-shirt or a gift voucher. Another contest idea is discovering a new S.L model and reach a wider audience. The Smokart can ask fans across the Twitter, Website and Facebook to post Instagram photos of themselves wearing their favorite S.L t-shirt. The followers need to use tag #iamsnakelegend to participate to contest. These contests are popular and used by different brands, like Nike and Pepsi.

Third idea is creating images that feature promotional codes. This happens by promoting exclusive discount and coupon codes for new S.L t-shirts. Posting a single photo that attract followers can boost the sales. When Instagram users notice that S.L has this kind of campaigns often, they start to follow the releases more actively and it will gather more followers. Facebook and Twitter can drive people to Instagram by reveal that S.L has a "secret" code in Instagram, go and find it.

#### 4.5.5 Twitter

Building the Twitter account started by choosing the username *snakelegend1*, then the brand's logo was placed on the profile picture and under it was written the short explanation of the brand "S.L clothing reflects urban tattoo lifestyle fashion and the brand is created by famous tattoo artists Smokov brothers. Shop unique hand-drawn T-shirts". After these few steps, the S.L Twitter account was complete.

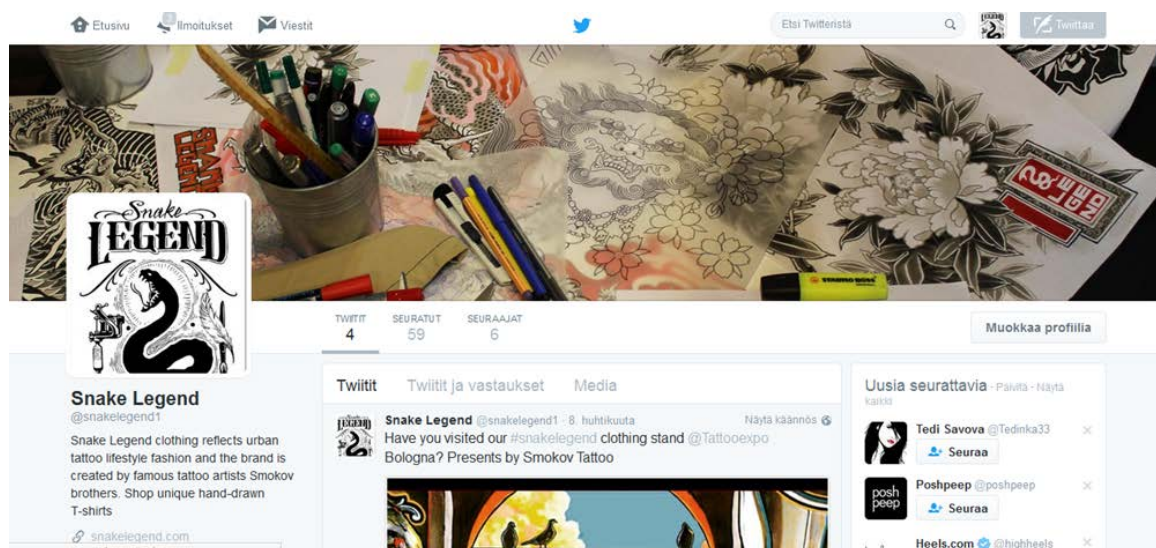


Figure 19: S.L Twitter account (2016 Twitter)

Twitter account (Figure 19) is a tactical tool for turning S.L followers to customers. Before starting any campaigns on Twitter, S.L has to collect people who start to follow the brand.

People will be reached by using particular keywords on Tweets and these keywords can be found by following first the other conversation and taking a part of them. In the beginning is very important that S.L is active because that way it can start to reach out the people with similar interest and can focus on more niche audience.

S.L 's marketing campaigns on Twitter are based on offering special offers that followers do not want to miss. The action part includes using tweet engagements campaign around the brand, such as launching new t-shirt design on the market. It is a place to share similar promotion as on Facebook and Instagram. The goal is to drive higher levels of engagement and guide followers to web site where they can buy t-shirts. S.L tweets should always include a photo or video and the hashtag of the topic.



Figure 20. S.L tweet (S.L twitter account 2016)

The example of one of the first established S.L (Figure 20) tweets includes the message of tattoo convention in Bologna, Italy where the Smokart where promoting their products. The showed picture is an ad of the convention and the @tattooexpo link guides followers to tattoo Bologna Twitter account and vice versa. Clicking the hashtag S.L shows all the conversation connected to that name.

#### 4.6 Control

Control is the last part of the Smokart's e-marketing plan and taking into account that company just started its business, there is no way of measure its online and social media marketing results yet. But there is a possibility to make a control plan of who does what and when.

What the company needs to watch?	How often (daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly)	Who will do it? (Agency or stuff?)	What does it cost to measure this?
<b>Sales</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Units</li> <li>- Revenue</li> <li>- Market share</li> </ul>	Online sales are checked daily and reported by monthly	Owners of the company will take care of the online sales but is supported by the accountant	Online shop gives information of unit sales and it is part of the web site
<b>Enquiries (number of)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visitors?</li> <li>- Registrations</li> <li>- Actual enquiries</li> </ul>	Online enquiries through web site, Facebook and Instagram are handled daily	This will be done by the company's marketer and then reported to the owners	Enquiries through web site contact form is a part of company's website and messages and questions through Facebook and Instagram are free of charge
<b>Churn rates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attrition rate</li> <li>- Unsubscribe</li> </ul>	Unsubscribed emails and newsletters are reported weekly	This will be done by the company's marketer	To measure emails and newsletter are free of charge as the web site server support the email marketing process
<b>Affection levels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Shares'</li> <li>- 'Likes'</li> <li>- Sentiment analysis</li> </ul>	Facebook statistic of shares and likes are followed weekly and same with Instagram followers and likes	The marketer will print the statistic out from the Facebook and then reported to the owners. Instagram information will be done same	Business Facebook page offers free statistic of its users/visitors. There are possibilities to buy more option but for now, the company stays in this free option
<b>Engagement levels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sum of 'Shares', 'Likes' &amp; Comments to total</li> </ul>	The total sum of Facebook shares, likes and comments are reported monthly	Owners of the company will handled the monthly report	This can be easily printed for free from the company's Facebook sites.
<b>Social network analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finding networks of influence customer satisfactions</li> </ul>	Analyzing customers' satisfaction through e-channels is check out weekly and reported by monthly. Also finding new ways to grow positive feedback from customers and social network users	The marketer will present the findings in the company's monthly meetings	Facebook offers customer satisfaction analysis for certain amount of money but for now, the company stays the information that can be gathered without costs

Table 4. Smokart control metrics (Smokov 2016)

Smokart control metrics (table 4) shows detailed information how the company takes care of its online and social media marketing. For now, Smokart concentrates on following social media engagement levels, such as how many shares, likes and comments the company has. This



information will be checked regularly and it will also be analyzed which post has worked and which not. Another metrics to measure is online sales and enquiries. It is important to check the website order list every day in case customers have done online purchases and then send the orders on time. Also, all the messages from customers through Facebook and website have to be answered within a day. Most of the control part is taken care of by the owners and the author of this study who is the marketer assistant.






















Published Posts					+ Create
Search...		Actions ▾		◀ ▶	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Posts	Reach	Likes, Comment...	Published ▾	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 #snakelegend #fashion #tattoodesign #	1K 	50 	9 May 2016 at 16:35 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 #snakelegend #clothingbrand #clothing	1.7K 	108 	9 May 2016 at 16:28 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Snake Legend Online shop is open now!	47 	5 	9 May 2016 at 16:09 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Snake Legend thanks for all visitors, artists	611 	55 	26 April 2016 at 23:05 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 #snakelegend #shirt #presents #by #sm	504 	39 	17 April 2016 at 20:19 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 #greattime #tattooconvention #snakeleg	831 	63 	17 April 2016 at 19:32 Anna Flykt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Super day to do shopping at #bulgariat	453 	36 	16 April 2016 at 16:56 Anna Flykt	

Figure 21. Published S.L posts analysis (S.L Facebook page 2016)

Facebook offers free analytics for companies to control their published post. Smokart can easily measure its post by Facebook published tool (Figure 21). This tool shows metrics like; how many post has reached people and how many likes, comments and shared S.L has. Through this tool Smokart can control its customer affectional and engagement levels.

To sum up the Smokart e-marketing plan, the company has now a ready plan on how to start marketing through online and social media channels. The most popular e-channels are built by following the instruction and benchmarked by other competitors. Also, Smokart knows now its online strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Another important part of the plan was set the detailed objectives of S.L online business. Based on these objectives were created the strategies, tactics and action. The control part showed how the company manage and measure its online and social media.

#### 4.7 Validity of the research

As this study is a qualitative research, the research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher. Golafshani (2003) emphasis that research validity relates how good the concept in the research is and how well the concept generating understanding. Smith (2015) continues that "in qualitative research for establishing validity is depending on the researchers and how they aim to design and incorporate methodological strategies to ensure the 'trustworthiness' of the findings". Also, the validity in the qualitative research can be higher if the information in the research has been described with details and all the information can be demonstrated, proved and justified. Qualitative research`s validity can be also improved by detailed reporting of executing the process. The circumstances in data collection should be clarified and possible distractions pointed out. (Smith 2015)

This case research has started by defining the research questions, purpose of the study and used methods for collecting data. Whole research process was then followed by the case research steps and the research`s validity has been improved by reporting the executing process as detailed as possible. The author has started the research process by getting familiar with the theory and literature of e-marketing and exploring recent studies of marketing communications through online and social media channels. This has enabled to get better knowledge of the research topic and guide the researcher to choose suitable data collection methods.

The online and social media strategies, tactics and action have been developed for the case company by benchmarking competitors which have already got excellent results of these marketing procedures. Also, researcher`s own positive motivation to study online and social media marketing has affected the quality of study. As the researcher has worked in the case company, it has given more realistic perspective of company`s available online marketing resources that have been used in the development of the e-marketing plan. Based on these criterial this study meets the research validity.

## 5 Discussion

This is the discussion part of the study and it begins by presenting the feedback that the e-marketing plan has received from the case company. The last part of this study is conclusions that sum up the made research.

### 5.1 Company's feedback

The purpose of this sub-chapter is to explain if the e-marketing findings were understandable and useful from the case company's point of view. E-marketing plan was made to meet the Smokart's online needs. Owner who read and gave the feedback was mr.Smokov who is the responsible of Smokart's marketing performance.

According to Smokov (2016), the e-marketing plan was one of the most important marketing project for the spring 2016. It was very useful that the researcher was able to work in the company while making the research which gave her better understanding of the company's internal and external business. The made e-marketing plan was easy to follow and it included important data such as online details of the competitors. Also, the e-SWOT analysis provided many insight that the company did not think before and those need to be consider more deeply.

Smokov points out that planning of online and social media tactics were extremely important as the company does not have time to search for so detailed information. The company intends to implement all the planned campaigns and promotions. Small ideas like email pop-up link was something that the company did not consider before but see it now as a very important tactical tool for collecting emails. Smokov continues that it was useful that most of the data was found by benchmarking competitors as these companies have developed their online marketing many years. Also, finding the guidelines on how to build the e-channels and then implementing those channels was one of the best part in the e-marketing plan as now the Smokart can start its online business and develop it by following the plan. Smokov summarizes in the end, that the e-marketing saved a lot of company's marketing recourses as it gathered all the necessary online information together in a clear report form.

## 5.2 Conclusions

This study has showed that the online and social media marketing can offer for clothing companies a way to save marketing cost and increase product visibility. The found online marketing benefits were unlimited. Especially, it provides opportunities to move from mass communication to more targeted two-way communication and engage customers on more personal levels. Based on the study findings, the most popular social media channels were the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter in the beginning of 2016. These e-channels were utilized in the case company's marketing and now the Smokart can start to create social media communities around the S.L brand.

Online marketing channels such as website, provide for the case company a chance to sell online every day around the clock. Websites also enable the possibility to collect customer contact information through pop-up links and the data can be used on email campaigns. Email marketing can be considered as one of the most powerful online marketing channels for the case company as it lets Smokart communicate easily with customers on a personal level without any cost.

In conclusion, online and social media marketing possibilities should be taken as an option for expanding business and customer communication level. No company should overlook today's importance of being active among the communication channels where its customers are spending time and searching information about companies' products and services. Companies should place their channel selections and decisions according to the marketing objectives. Researcher recommends companies to constantly scout online marketing possibilities and choose to use only those channels that are seen profitable or advantageous for them.

Besides exploring online and social media marketing opportunities, the purpose of this research was to study how to create an e-marketing plan. In conclusion, the e-marketing plan is a written document that indicates how the company plans to reach its online marketing objectives. It contains elements such as company's online situation, objectives, strategies, tactics, action and control. The made e-marketing plan for the Smokart provides a strong view from Smokart's current online marketing field and it aims to help the Smokart to choose which online and social media strategies and tactics they should exploit. It also includes information on how Smokart can control its online performance. Once the plan was done, it is important that the Smokart update it frequently as the online and social media are constantly changing.

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