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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING FOR A BUSINESS

And a case company in Finland

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ABSTRACT

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This is a commissioned work for a medium sized business about to endeavor in the world of social media marketing. The company intends to increase their prevalence on the web and particularly to launch their portfolio on the social medias such as Facebook.

Social media has become such a big player in the daily lives of people, that companies of all sizes should pay attention towards whether to use it as a marketing channel. The culprit on this occasion is the case company, and their endeavor in the vast waters of social media marketing. This Thesis aims to illustrate clear view on the phases and actions a company must go through in pursuit of a more powerful online presence. This writing is the result of gathering information on the subject by the literacy available on the subject, both online and on ink & paper. The latter segments comprise the collaboration results the case company achieved with the hired help. Most points interrelate to the topics discussed in the theory portion.

Keywords:

Marketing, social media, improved visibility & business

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1 INTRODUCTION

The world of digital marketing and social medias is forever changing shape, and restlessly coming up with new forms of existing. Still at the same time the basic structures and functions have stayed the same. To put it in a simple way; a social media dweller wishes to see what others 'like' and create content for others to 'like'. The infrastructure to support these interactions basically is what social media is. This architecture allows it to be used as an amazingly powerful tool for marketing. The increase in the amount of handheld portals for social media (smart phones, tablets & small laptops) puts social media at everyone's fingertips. Such development make it impossible for a marketing person to not see the possibilities this provides.

This Thesis looks at the sole marketing aspect of social media, and furthermore, its use for a medium-sized business. Marketing in general (the most relevant components that apply) are brushed upon, with some extended emphasis on marketing communications, as well as integrated-, digital- and social media marketing communications. These are the bread and butter of any digital marketing endeavor, with the adding of the digital & social media derivatives.

This Thesis places utmost priority on covering the aspects of social media marketing. The second chapter goes over the theory (target groups, contents, phases of communications, execution of content & timing the content) -with some of that theory put to work in the field of social media. The notion that social media dominates the casual web browsing of most consumers at most countries with internet, points out that this is an important and pressing issue, and needs to be covered thoroughly. This Thesis aims to gather the most relevant content in good use.

Target group analysis goes over the types of social media users (much to the same extent at which one would go over any regular target group). Contents are looked upon with depth, as everything on the web must be proofed for a billion people to look at. Ways of communications goes over the basic implementation in the web/social media conditions. This means a few tweaks or a total makeover for the existing materials. Implementation, and timing of communications are discussed adequate depth, to ensure the best marketing performance on the social media.

2 MARKETING

"Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that create value for customers, clients, partners and society at large." (AMA, 2013)

The abbreviation 'marketing' is vast enough to produce difficulty in attempts of fitting it into one sentence. At the same time the explanation above arguably holds all truths of marketing in a sentence. The following is a listed approach to opening up the topic: Marketing has integrated missions, and as Bergström & Leppänen (2015, 22-23) state in their research, the missions can be divided up to four different sections and with the perspective of an entrepreneur/businessman:

Foreseeing demand

The act of measuring & forecasting demand whether it be in the initial phase of starting the business, or while the business has already grown mature. The process never changes, the markets need to be analyzed at all times. This gives a more firm ground for product development.

Creating and retaining demand

At this stage the company may wish to develop their product/service to stand out, with the credential of choice in order for it to fly off the shelves as fast as possible. Demand is also created/retained by coming up with compelling marketing communications for the existing market.

Fulfilling the demand

Demand is not of long duration if there is no resource to fulfill it. The existing customers may wish to alter the product/service to meet their liking even more. It needs to be taken into account, that the existing demand needs constant work in order for it to remain there. Customer feedback is sought after actively and systematically. The staff is trained with the customer needs and feedback in mind.

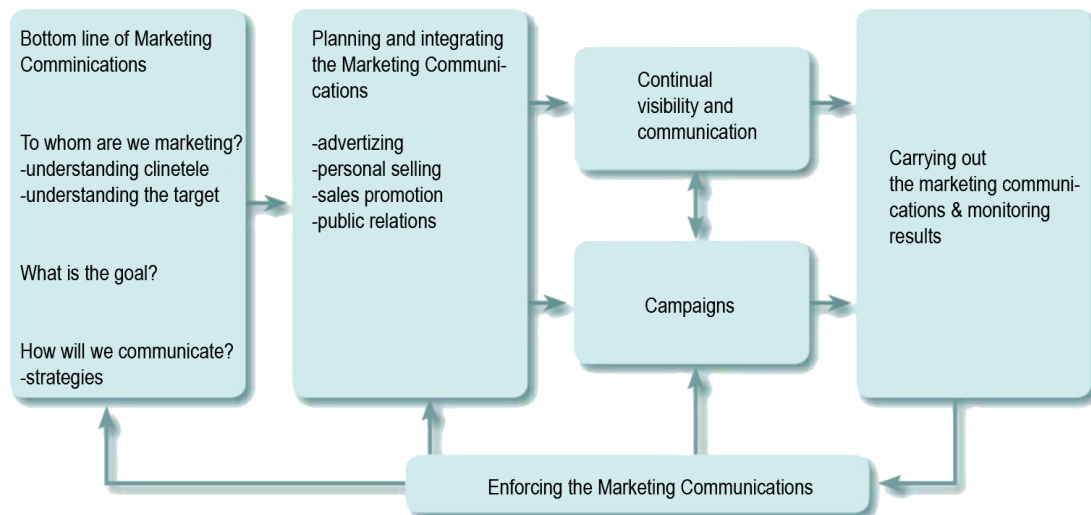
Adjusting the demand

The demand may need to be adjusted accordingly in times when the sales fluctuate. At some cases, the seasonal peaks need to be leveled out using pricing as a 'crude governor'. The peaking nature of demand is a resource as well. Old product lines can be emptied with the rush of Black Friday, and new ones can be brought in just in time for Christmas.

Good marketing is a tool that can keep businesses afloat at rough times. The new millenium and the following 21th decade (accompanied by the stock market crash of 2008) have put many establishments to a recent test. All other operations of a company may be in check, but if the marketing fails to deliver a good image of the business, everything else becomes likely to fail too. This holds true to any other component of so called 'vitality'. (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman, Hansen, 2012. 5)

2.1 Marketing Communications

Marketing Communications is the act of making a business and its products/services visible to an audience/market. Whether be it in a favorable, or less favorable light, depends on the quality/content of the Marketing Communications. The sought after result usually is to create the best possible image for a company, so that the consumer associates desirable values to the company image. There are different ways that a company may carry out their Communications: advertizing, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations. (Bergström & Leppänen 2015, 300) Much of MC can be explained by the terms of just marketing, with the exception of the communications just being the actual output of the marketing. The communications part is the one seen by the markets. *An outside wall of a business tower block is MC.*



2.1. Marketing Communications flow chart

As seen by graph 1.1. the MC basic concept lays in three questions:

- To whom are we marketing?
 - ➔ What is the demographic that is targeted with the marketing communications? Who are the people we want to reach? Why?
- What is the Goal?
 - ➔ What do we want to achieve by communications? What is the best possible outcome?
- How will we communicate?
 - ➔ How will the communications be conducted? What do we specifically communicate in order to get the message through?

The preliminary concerns of these questions are as seen; the understanding of clientele, the target groups, the goals and the strategies.

In the second phase of the so-called marketing roll-out, the outlining (among/opposed to other actions and company vital organs) and integration of MC will be addressed. This includes the four above mentioned blocks of action;

- Advertising
- Personal selling*
- Sales promotion
- Public relations

Tributed as field work in some instances and may not apply to social media marketing*. Also in this phase the ideal is to turn MC into IMC, which means the harmony of all these four channels. Each of these channels need to match up to the desired company image in order to fill the expectations created by their counterparts. This is very important. At this very point MC turns to IMC.

The following phases are; the constant visibility e.g. Facebook page, web page. Next in line are the possible campaigns (you get a free bucket if you like this post). The initial phases apply throughout. It is a process of building an entity, and not doing any spot fixes. The campaign might have different nuances, but the overall language and graphic design are to be governed from the middle to preserve solid image.

The final step is to execute all the above-mentioned communications and bring about the desired company image. The box on the bottom of the graph applies to all the stages; the issues of any stage can and should be addressed if said instances occur. (Bergström & Leppänen 2015, 300)

2.2 Integrated Marketing Communications

"Integrated Marketing Communications is a simple concept. It ensures that all forms of communications and messages are carefully linked together. At its most basic level, Integrated Marketing Communications, or IMC, as we'll call it, means integrating all the promotional tools, so that they work together in harmony." (Multimediamarketing, 2016)

“We might briefly define IMC as the planning and execution of all types of advertising-like and promotion-like messages selected for a brand, service, or a company, in order to meet a common set of communication objectives, or more particularly, to support a single ‘positioning’. We believe strongly that the key to IMC is planning, and the aim is to deliver a consistent message.” (Percy, 2014 cited 4.4.2017)

Creating and sustaining a strong brand in the age of modern digital marketing is crucial. Back in the days of newspaper- and billboard advertisements the main point was to have a recognizable logo and perhaps a catch phrase that associated with the brand. This has translated rather accurately to the modern digital application of graphic design choices for a business image. This means that every company on the internet can have a sustainable and easily maintained design/look throughout. The ‘coherent design’ -aspect of IMC is important, as is the consistent communications. The internet as a universe allows the corporate user to have a close managerial position with their communications all around, essentially integrating it. The instant access is the key here. Management has instant control over the marketing decision being made real-time.

“Integrated marketing communications is the process of developing and implementing various forms of persuasive communication programs with customers and prospects over time. The goal of IMC is to influence or directly affect the behavior of the selected communications audience. IMC considers all sources of brand or company contacts that a customer or prospect has with the product or service as potential delivery channels for future messages.” (Percy, 2014 cited 4.4.2017)

According to Kotler (2003) the IMC as opposed to a planning approach, should be a way of looking at the entire marketing process at the viewpoint of the customer. This is a direct reflection on the real-time aspect of internet and of social media.

	Communication tasks					
	Build category and brand awareness	Create category need and initial brand attitude	Provide incentive to consider	Seek positive brand purchase intention	Act as intention	Reinforce decision
Primary medium television						
Secondary media magazines						
newspapers						
Internet						
point-of-purchase						
direct mail						

2.2. Integrated Marketing Communications task chart

2.3 Digital Marketing Communications

Financial Times in 2015 characterizes DMC as following:

“The marketing of products or services using digital channels to reach consumers. The key objective is to promote brands through various forms of digital media. Digital marketing extends beyond internet marketing to include channels that do not require the use of the internet. It includes mobile phones (both SMS and MMS), social media marketing, display advertising, search engine marketing, and any other form of digital media. Most experts believe that 'digital' is not just yet another channel for marketing. It requires a new approach to marketing and a new understanding of customer behavior. For example, it requires companies to analyse and quantify the value of downloads of apps on mobile devices, tweets on Twitter, likes on Facebook and so on.” (Financial Times, 2015)

In the characterization above DMC is attributed to having more to it, than just being a channel among others. This is largely true due to the different behavior of people online or on their phones for instance. When thinking about performance, an aspect of marketing ‘noise’ is to be accounted for. Noise in marketing means the over exposure of content visible on a medium at the same time. When consumers are bombarded with commercials and adverts, they immediately tune out any advertisements in their field of vision. As a point of reference, TV and the radio have a lot of adverts, but one at a time. When a consumer sees a Facebook page with five ads in every corner, and boosted posts in the timeline, they quickly become tuned out. This is to be accounted for in the development of the marketing communications.

“Noise” has a negative connotation in marketing, meaning there is so much promotional clutter, like advertising, that consumers tire of it and have a difficult time remembering specific messages. On the positive side, think of it like creating a “buzz” — when you hear that there’s a buzz about something, you know it’s being talked about, and if it has to do with your company, you’d rather have noise than silence. The key is to create a buzz that is different from the rest of the noise so that your customers pay attention and the correct information is communicated.’ (Johnson, 2015 cited 15.5.2017)

Three simple guide lines for efficient Marketing Communications in small ads on a social media page.

- **Not a wall of text with acidic content (technical manifestation).**
- **Favor short answer-like pitches that get to the point immediately.**
- **Easy-to-read quickly, like an answer to an ongoing chat.**

A few words on content marketing:

“Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action...” (Content Marketing Handbook)

The emphasis clearly shifts on the qualitative aspect of marketing communications. Gone are the days of mass-spread paperback ads and direct mail adverts, paints out the Handbook. The immediacy and powerful filtering/targeting options of social media and digital channels makes possible the use of clear and direct messaging. This is opposed to the ‘shooting in the dark’ approach. A different view on the importance of content marketing is that is it actually not advertising. It has the main focus on creating value for the consumer before the product has even been bought. “Unlike traditional advertising which interrupts customers to get noticed, content marketing provides content that customers want in exchange for permission to market a product or service.” (Putnam 2012, cited 30.5.2017)

“...content marketing is the opposite of advertising. It’s about engaging consumers with the stuff they really want, in a way that serves your brand’s purposes and ideals, rather than just trying to jam your logo into their periphery. It’s reaching the exact consumers you want, instead of a vaguely defined demo...” (CMEX 2015, 6)

Delivering value whether or not the prospect becomes a customer is the main point when it comes to good company image through marketing. The notion that a widespread mass-campaign can potentially (result-wise) be overshadowed by a more refined and smart approach within the same budget is arguable, but in many cases considerable. According to Forbes Magazine (2014), the most common-practice channels of content marketing in the digital domain are: Infographics, webpages, podcasts, videos and e-books.

Marketing noise & the fragility of marketing communications

When dealing with ‘marketing noise’, the best practice by far is to carefully manage the content of the adverts. What catches the eyes of people browsing a web page? There is no universal answer. The vision processes are rigged towards finding patterns of interest in the peripheral field of vision.

- In filmography, the act of placing peripheral- and non- focus points in an image to trigger sub-conscious responses is common. The vision center of the brain sees everything as sharp as we perceive the center of gaze. The process that gives peripheral visual stimulus its priority centers on a few very specific things. A very minute movement in the corner the vision field causes a reaction in the vision center and ‘automatically’ shifts focus to the area, until the source of the movement and the level of alertness needed is assessed. This is the reason some popup ads have a very specific type of jerky/jittery animation to them. A second way of using peripheral vision stimulus is to simply stack a right image along with the right content in the peripheral vision field of the right person. The vision center in the brain gathers information cumulatively from its surroundings. When the critical point is reached, for instance if a sound engineer sees a Fostex tracker deck in their peripheral vision, their brain may trigger an alertness assessment, thus noticing the ad carrying the tracker deck.

- “The visual resolution of motion is important both for indicating the presence of moving objects and for assisting locomotion and spatial orientation. Additionally, motion may enhance the visibility of low contrast features of the environment.” (The National Center for Biotechnology Information 1986)

Why you need Digital Marketing Communications:

“Formulating a digital marketing strategy will help you to make informed decisions about your foray into the digital marketing arena, and ensure that your efforts are focused on the elements of digital marketing that are most relevant to your business.” (Ryan 2014, 21)

“...it is often stated that the internet puts consumers in control like never before. But it is important to remember that the internet also delivers an unprecedented suite of tools, techniques and tactics that allow marketers to reach out and engage with those same consumers...” (Ryan 2014, 22).

As discussed, the internet for one thing is really just a big excel-chart full of useful data, waiting to be put to good use. This is not an upper hand. Everyone else is cunning, and everyone else is smart. There is nothing in the technology itself that is more useful to someone than to others (in the same field of business at least). The key is to harness every possible benefit just a little bit more thoroughly than the ‘neighbor’, to garner more success.

“Every company with a website will have analytics, but many senior managers don't ensure that their teams make or have the time to review and act on them. Once a strategy enables you to get the basics right, then you can progress to continuous improvement of the key

aspects like search marketing, site user experience, email and social media marketing.” (Chaffey, cited 25.5.2017)

Chaffey also points out the important notion that just because metrics exist, does not mean they are automatically retrieving results. A team to monitor and act upon the readings is to be placed in action.

It is not necessarily every field of business that will cash in on the advent of DMC:

“Whether or not your business is suited to digital marketing depends very much on the nature of that business...” (Ryan 2014, 22). A chicken farmer in Ohio may not necessarily need a direct social media outlet for his business to grow. It doesn't make (immediate) sense. Still nothing should be ruled out. No endeavor in marketing should be left alone just based on prepositions.

“...If, however, you're a Peak District butcher looking to diversify your product offering, broaden the scope of your business and want to start selling your quality organic produce to restaurants and hotels around the country... well then, welcome to the world of digital marketing.” (Ryan 2014, 22).

The digital market place knows very little bound or restrictions. The possibility to operate quite freely is prominent. Very quirky or completely different approaches to ancient marketing liturgy have been carried out by bold new companies (small to medium component manufacturers marketing by creating youtube channels on which they crush stuff with a hydraulic press). Some larger shifts by old companies have occurred – like Dell. “When a wave of mergers swept the tech industry in 2004, Michael S. Dell promised investors they wouldn't see his computer company anywhere near a negotiating table. “When was the last time you saw a successful acquisition or merger in the computer industry?” he asked at the time. Five years later, it's a different story.” (Edwards 2009, cited 27.5.2017)

A few inspirational insights on digital marketing:

– *“Is my audience online/is it going to be online? If your customers use digital technology to research and/or purchase the products and services you provide, then you absolutely need to embrace digital marketing now in order to engage with them and retain them...”* (Ryan 2014, 23)

“To put the size of the online advertising market in perspective, a comparison with offline advertising media is useful. According to the Internet Advertising Bureau (“IAB”), internet advertising is now second, only to Broadcast Television advertising, in the dollars spent in the medium, surpassing even cable television advertising.” (Gibson 2012, cited 27.5.2017)

- If the customers at this time aren’t online, a company should still have an online presence. Times change rapidly and the digital medium has an indisputable prominence.
- According to atthias Gibson from Vantagelocal, 2012, online advertising is the second most popular advertising means after broadcast television. There literally is no reason not to do online advertising.

– “If you have no paying customers yet, you’re dealing with assumptions and educated guesses based on your first-hand experience and anecdotal evidence.

Traditionally, defining a target audience involves determining their age, sex, geographic locations, and their needs. The data you need to know depends on the product and whether you have a B2B or B2C business.” (Laja 2012, cited 1.6.2017)

According to Peep Laja from conversionxl.com, the first course of action is to ‘fake it till you make it’. This means to start applying strategies that are assumed at this point to be correct. The data will come later. It should not be worried after. The quality and success of any business in in direct proportion to the quality of the questions the company management asks their core components. Marketing is no exception. The operating models of yesterday apply longer in technical instances, but the marketing spearhead should alter and react quick as a whip.

– “ ...bear in mind that as the next generation of consumers start to become your new customers, they are likely to demand more digital interaction from your business. If you’re not in a position to deliver that, they could well choose to spend their money elsewhere.” (Ryan 2014, 23)

- Keeping up with and preferably ahead of the times is quite relevant. Even more so today, paints out Understanding Digital marketing, as stated by infoforentrepreneurs.org.

– “Market research isn't something you do as a one-off when you launch your business. Business conditions change continually, so your market research should be continuous as well. Otherwise you run the risk of making business decisions based on out-of-date information, which can lead to business failure.” (infoforentrepreneurs.org, cited 22.5.2017)

- Market research should be a forever ongoing investigation on how to perform even better amongst the competition.

– “ *While some products and services are obviously more suited to online purchase and fulfilment than others (digital files, such as e-books or music, spring to mind), you will also find being marketed effectively through digital channels plenty of items that few people would ever dream of actually purchasing over the internet.*” (Ryan 2014, 23)

- According to Understanding Digital Marketing, consumers make purchasing decisions based on the quality of their experiences online.

– “...then head to a bricks-and-mortar store to hand over their cash. Boats, cars, houses, apartments, horses, tractors – you name it – they are all being actively and successfully marketed online.” (Ryan 2014, 23).

“Stores are no longer stores, they are distribution points for products,” says Morris. And retailers like Restoration Hardware (RH) understand that. RH has showroom stores to provide inspiration and style guidance but “they’re not really selling anything there,” he says. “It’s like a giant 3D real-time catalog.” (Forbes, 2017)

A mutual agreement among Understanding Digital Marketing and Forbes. Brick and mortar shopping centers are but distribution points for the online stores.

2.4 Marketing Communications in Social Media

Marketing communications in social media are made easy and potentially powerful with the right use of metering options, low cost and high performance. Performance in this case meaning the spread and yield in getting the messages across. According to Linda Coles in her book Marketing with Social Media (2015), the (potentially) high performance of social media marketing has some properties that should be taken into consideration:

- “getting your content absolutely right”
 - **Focusing on the IMC side of things. Always accurate / correct.**
- “connecting with the target audience”
 - **Use features given to you by Facebook advertisements.**
- “keeping in touch throughout”
 - **Always respond to private messages as soon as possible.**
- “applying good manners”
 - **Some frugality may be in place here.**

In her publication, Linda further explains the importance of getting the content right: “Everything you post online stays there forever and is a direct reflection on you, so beware of posting things that you wouldn’t want your mother to see!” Which as a statement should be obvious, but as advice, noted. (Coles 2015, 44)

The step of connecting with the target audience (getting there in terms of spreading online) is what needs the X-factor which rather brilliantly was discussed in the book by Jonah Berger from Stanford University: ‘Contagious: Why Things Catch on’:

The 6-step guideline by Jonah Berger:

1. Social currency- does it make you look good?

People like to share what ever makes them look good. If sharing your idea or product makes them look good, they are much more likely to share it.

2. Triggers- how are you reminded of the product?

Jonah Berger uses as his example the song *Friday* by *Rebecca Black*. There are many reasons as to why it got very popular. The youtube stats on the performance are interesting: there is a spike in views every Friday. Kit Kat is another good example. Their sales were gradually going down up to 2007 and they decided to start marketing their product as a side to coffee or hot chocolate. The point was to link Kit Kat to something that was consumed all the time, utilizing the connection that has now been established. Kit Kat's sales had been decreasing 5% every year, but after the campaign the sales went up 33% during the first year of the new strategy.

3. Emotion- strong emotions = sharing

Susan Boyle's performance on Brittain's got Talent is a prime example of the effect of sharing based on strong emotion. Strong emotions in terms of marketing campaigns are good overall, but according to Berger, strong emotions of sadness should be avoided.

4. Public- what is everyone else doing?

Our decisions are affected by what everyone else around us is doing. For example whether someone will buy a new car or not is greatly affected by other people around them doing so. If everyone else is buying a new car, they are much more likely to do so as well. Apple actually switched their laptop logo upside down so that other people could see the logo upright. This was due to showcasing their brand outward directly from the people using their product.

5. Practical valu- is it actually helpful

The most logical part of the 6-step-guideline is the part whether there is practical value in order to be shared. The simple act of offering something valuable by sharing something is a powerful method of getting something out there.

6. Stories- is your product a relevant part of a cool story

Blendtec is a blender company that makes a youtube series called "will it blend". They make videos where they put weird things like brand new electronics in their blender and blend it to powder. That is a cool story, and the important thing is that the blender is an integral part of the story. Stories are contagious and likely to be shared.

Social media marketing tools

Social media sites give some tools for a marketer. For example Facebook has 'insights' is a free tool. It presents such information as the mix of the page likers and fans, and their level of activity. It also gives information such as the demographic of the followers. Insights lets you know the dominant age and gender of the followers. This in effect helps to tune the adverts should this route be selected says Coles (2015, 44).

Important steps of Social Media Marketing:

1. Conducting a Proper Target Market Selection

“Social media is a marketing channel, and as with any marketing channel you need to focus on your target market. Think about who your customers are, think about everything you know about them, where they live, what their lifestyles are, what their interests are, and so on.” (He 2014, cited 12.5.2017)

The importance of focusing on a specific target market varies in importance. Some products suit wider market scopes. As stated here by Chloe He, a business should always seek who their most important target group is.

Facebook Business Guide -web page concludes “Targeting specifically essentially means that you're giving us a relatively strict set of parameters to work within while finding the best people to show your ad to. These parameters can take the form of demographic targeting or Custom or Lookalike Audiences. They may lead to a potential audience that's smaller, but hopefully also to one that's more interested in what you're advertising than a larger and broader audience would've been.”

2. Applying the Professional Approach

“Like everything else with your business name on it, your social media pages are an opportunity to strengthen brand awareness. It goes without saying that they must look professional and accurately tell people who you are and what you do as succinctly as possible” (He 2014, cited

12.5.2017) No amount of refinement is too much when tidying up a business page on Facebook. Having a sharp & crisp look and a clean layout with well-organized posts & pictures goes a long mile. “Choose photos that represent your business well. You can use your logo as your profile photo and an image of your shop, products or one from a current marketing campaign as your cover photo.” (Facebook Business Guide, cited 12.5.2017)

3. Updating Content on a Regular Basis

“To engage followers and build a loyal community, you need to keep your profile updated. Share your recent achievements, relevant news, photos, menu updates and seasonal offers.” (Chloe He 2014). Keep the visitors coming back by creating content. This is a no-brainer.

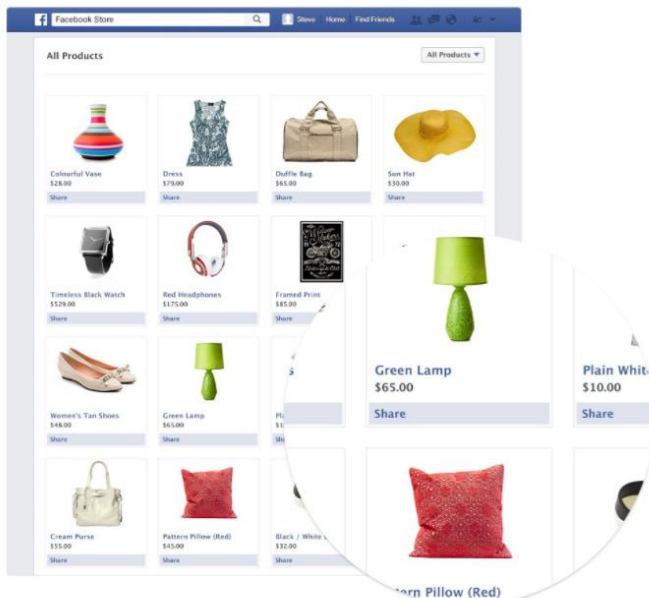
4. Acting as fast as possible

“The thing about social media is that it is constantly evolving. If you don’t move fast, you can miss out on a huge opportunity to promote your business. It’s all about being timely, relevant and clever. A great example is Kraft during the 2013 Super Bowl. When the lights went off unexpectedly at the stadium for 34 minutes, Oreo’s social media team didn’t miss a beat. They responded almost immediately with this tweet: “Power out? No problem.” It was retweeted 16,000 times.” (He 2014, cited 12.5.2017) Using moments like this to interact with people when they are in the same state of mind may result in some level of sympathetic reaction. It’s powerful when someone is thinking the exact same thing and brings it up.

3 MARKETING IN SOCIAL MEDIAS

What is the difference between marketing in social medias and marketing via traditional routes? This chapter aims to give insight as to what may need altering when translating content from the company website to a social media page.

Social media itself should not be considered a marketing tool, but an addition to a marketing strategy. It can be an aid, but is should be not considered a workhorse in most instances. It can aid in contacting with recipients and building more peronal relasiotships with them. (CMEX, 34). However, in some instances when the business is small, and has limited customer relations management resources (for example a home bakery), there is nothing wrong with making a Facebook page the main channel for communications. It doesn't charge server-fees, and all the relevant information can be found directly under the bio-section of a page. This being said, facebook is not an online store, and you can only sell products via landing pages that you may place on a page feed on facebook. Nowadays, by means of external app-service providers, the page layout can be look very much like an online store. (Shopify.com, cited 12.5.2017)



3.0 Facebook eCommerce app by Shopify

“Unless you’re in the pageview business, what you should first and foremost care about is conversions. Conversions take place when targeted traffic meets relevant offer. It all starts with knowing who is your target audience and what they need or want.” (Laja 2012, cited 29.5.2017) Conversion in digital marketing means the conversion of site traffic to committed followers, or to actual interaction. A high traffic-to-conversion ratio speaks of well-adjusted filtering options. A low ratio may mean the opposite. When speaking of conversions with Facebook, the main type of conversion that we are looking for are page likers, post likers and sharers. All types of social media make it possible for people to have a reaction to a post. This is the basis of how a media becomes a social media.

Facebook is the largest social media ever to this date (Facebook 2017, 29.5.2017). Facebook started to spread to the public knowledge in 2004 and was initially established by Mark Zuckerberg. The initial use was to allow for college alumnae to converse with each other on the internet after graduating. On the web site itself a single user usually has a personal profile under their own name, with pictures. As the community gained size, it became possible to start establishing groups and pages on the platform as well.

Groups are smaller and more personal platforms for socializing with people on the subject. It is possible for anyone (with a Facebook profile) to create a group on Facebook. A group can have multiple admins and often incorporate an autonomous (under Facebook guidelines) set of rules. (Facebook.com/page_guidelines)

Pages are what the run of the mill business should be establishing for its online presence on 2017. A page can be established on Facebook without a personal Facebook profile (some features are removed). (Coles 2015, 44)

Quick stats from www.facebook.com:

- There are over one billion users worldwide
- 50 per cent of active users log on daily
- the average user has 130 friends on facebook
- the fastest growing demographic is females over 55.

(Facebook 2017)



More than 1.8 billion people use Facebook every month.



1 of every 5 minutes that people in the US spend on mobile is on Facebook or Instagram.



500 million Instagrammers use the app each month.

3.0. Impressive numbers of Facebook

A word on other Social Medias

Even though Facebook is the dominating giant among the Social Medias, there are a lot of other types of traffic-generating sites available. Pinterest, Flickr, YouTube, Blip and Vimeo facilitate video & image sharing (Ryan 2014, 36). The media files can be commented on and rated (upvoted & downvoted) but not directly shared or duplicated on the site. The media may further be shared on an actual social media, like Facebook or Twitter. The sharing works in the fashion of embedding it as a media player that derives the content from the original site, using for instance the html5-player of YouTube.

Marketing on all social medias has similar characteristics. Just adapt to the surroundings. What is the communication profile for the site (160 character post restrictions & 30 second video lengths e.g.). Other than that, even pushing boundaries is permitted. Maybe it could even differentiate a business from the rest.

Dave Chaffey's RACE on the Social Media

While using any given Social Media site, the **RACE** principle of planning marketing can be used. RACE means: Reach, Act, Convert & Engage. According to the RACE digital marketing plan template, the best practice to start implementing marketing communications is to start with the customer, and build the plan around their needs and insights. It is important to keep the plan & implementation as flexible as possible, while setting realistic goals. Simplicity is key.

Chaffey proposes the use of competitor benchmarking in the stage of initial planning, before any of the actual RACE components. A competitor benchmark analysis shows how well 'we need to do' in order to sustain ourselves. → It does not by nature encourage to anything spectacular. It should be implemented, but not into the margins or as an excuse of lower performance.

Reaching refers to growing a larger audience online (on social media for instance). Obviously, a substantial fan-base will aid in all endeavor. The process of growing a fan-base is not a simple task, the minimum requirement is great dedication. Chaffey mentions a content marketing approach to the challenge. As stated before, content marketing actually outputs value, since it actually delivers something useful to the receiver, thus commanding their attention to the marketing.

Acting in this case by Chaffey means for instance creating video marketing for a product / brand in order to further push it. At this phase landing pages and more defined content marketing is planned.

Convert obviously means to convert the site traffic into valuable interactions. At this stage Chaffey hints it is important to review the conversion funnels by which the landing page hits and other conversions arrived.

Engage is the final step by Chaffey, where he lists the reviews of customer loyalty, satisfaction and effectiveness of communications. On these ground the customer engagement plan, customer contact plan and online personalization plans are created. (Chaffey 2016, 1-10)

Google AdWords

Google AdWords is an advertising & marketing service offered by Google. Google has a good privileged position to offer such services, since it is the most popular site in the history of the internet. (weforum.org) This amount of traffic makes it a no-brainer to start selling marketing visibility for the inclined. This is an opportunity no entrepreneur should overlook. A few key things about how Google search works: “The search process may seem simple: A searcher visits a search engine, enters a search query, and receives results. Every step of the search process, however, is accompanied by the searcher’s thoughts and expectations. Understanding how your keywords and ads align themselves with the search process can help bring more visitors to your site and achieve more conversions from those visitors...” (Geddes, Brad, edited by Brad Geddes, John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2014, 37). Geddes mentions that any online advertising gives very transparent data on conversions, click-through rates, cost per conversion, total conversion and bounce rates. There literally is more data than it would even make sense to analyze. Search engine / online advertising gives excel-like statistics on its performance.

Keywords is a concept that Google Adwords uses to trigger specific ads when certain keywords are entered into a search. “Keyword match types help control which searches can trigger your ad. For example, you could use broad match to show your ad to a wide audience or you could use exact match to hone in on specific groups of customers.” (Google support page) It is worth to note, that some keywords are reserved, or are more expensive than others. The key is to focus on distinguishability when selecting the set of keywords for your company.

“While numbers tell the story of your marketing, it is the actual people who can make your advertising profitable.” (Geddes, Brad, edited by Brad Geddes, John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2014, 37). It is important to note that the actual people at home on their computers / cell phones will make the campaign a success or a flop. The human element of these endeavors should never be overlooked. Not everything is mathematical.

Geddes goes on to say: “Ads are the only part of your AdWords account a consumer will ever see. When a searcher sees your ad, the ad needs to stand up, wave its arms, jump up and down, and shout, “I have the answer to your question!” However, there are many subtleties to writing ad copy. The messaging, value proposition, editorial requirements, and information need to be tightly wrapped into just a few characters.” As is made clear in the marketing communications portion of this thesis.

3.1 Finding target groups

Defining the target groups on the social media platform is a breeze. Facebook has marketing tools that let you search how many 30-year-old men on this area are into golf, for instance. Here are three steps on how to start finding a target market for a business.

Identify the Ideal Customer

“John Lee Dumas has famously talked about identifying your business avatar. This means you’ll want to create a fictional persona of your ideal customer, to the point of naming it, knowing how many kids it has or what it does on the weekends. The clearer your avatar is, the easier it is to find people on social media who resemble the persona.” (Brooks 2016, cited 28.5.2017) The key advice by Rich Brooks here is to identify yourself as your own customer while developing targeting strategies. What is the avatar you wish to appear to the customers as?

Determine the Size of the Audience

“Once you have a good sense of what your audience looks like, you can use Facebook Ads Manager to estimate the size of your audience.” (Brooks 2016, cited 28.5.2017) The ads manager gives direct insight as to how many people have listed what as their interest on Facebook. This in term translates as a data reading when the corresponding variables are selected in the Ads Manager. (facebook.com/business) Advertising on Facebook can be set up to be as niche-oriented or as wide as desired, depending on what the product or goal is.

“According to recent research, almost 60% of Americans are on Facebook. That number may be more (or less) depending on where your audience lives, their age, gender and household income, but it’s a good starting point.” (Brooks 2016, cited 28.5.2017) The point here is that even though majority of people are on Facebook, 40% of people aren’t. For some instances, social media cannot be the only marketing channel put to use. It is good practice to add filling elements to the overall marketing spread for example personalized e-mail letter marketing in the latter stages of a customer relationship. The case company has been using e-mail letters as a marketing tool from the 1990’s and has a large amount of recipients.

Survey & Poll the Customers

For the purposes of optimizing your social media campaigns, wisely spending your ad dollars and targeting guest blogging opportunities, you need to know where your audience hangs out online. (Brooks 2016, cited 28.5.2017). For instance, Facebook has launched a create a Poll -feature that can be used on a group, page or even a private feed. This can be put to good use on a company web page, so that the actual people on the page can give feedback. The questions can be a predefined set, or the poll can be set up in a way that lets the page likers add options too. The author of socialmediaexaminer.com, Rich Brooks points out that surveying clientele, both potential and existing, gives precious insight with very little cost. Of course once the customer has made the purchase, they have already affiliated with the company, and are more prone to give insights as to what they valued the most/least about the process.

The data acquired from the polls gives a picture of the target group the business might actually want to be after. Some clever questions may give high-quality insight on the demographic that is being identified.



Who's your favorite musical legend? ✕

- Elvis Prseley ...
- Michael Jackson ...
- The Beatles ... 1,498 people
- B.B. King ...
- Frank Sinatra ...
- Johnny Cash ...
- Stevie Wonder ...
- Jimi Hendrix ...

Asked By 4,667 Votes • 80 Followers

3.1 A Facebook Poll

3.2 Contents

Nowadays it is reasonable to expect that any large company has an online presence, both in social media and on an own website. The kind of marketing content the company distributes through internet may vary in style. According to the Content Marketing Handbook, traditional marketing is considered one-sided, and 'talking at' people, while content marketing is 'talking with' people.

Content is an important part of all marketing communications. Even when marketing with a spread as wide as possible, the key is still the content itself. High quality content can even spread by itself on the social media, and may require very little boosting. The quality of online content can somewhat be measured by its proneness to spread around by itself.

Whom should do traditional marketing?

Content Marketing Handbook suggests that the most drastic difference between traditional- and content marketing, is the means of distribution. Traditional marketing therefore should be used when employing a channel that makes real-time conversations impossible (TV & physical advertisements). The idea is solely to talk about the product or service. The advert itself does not provide value. The popularity of traditional marketing is declining, says DigitalMarketingStrategy.com.

Whom should do content marketing?

Content marketing is the more modern option, greatly made possible by the advent of digital mediums. Content Marketing Handbook states, that 92% of content marketers are using Social Media. Therefor content marketing is the option for the somewhat savvy business owner, as an aid to growing their following. The idea of content marketing is to offer value to the customer already at the stage of marketing.

What Kind of Content to Have on Social Media?

There are a few types of contents that should be used in Social Media Marketing to create value.

- Infographics. According to Neil Patel from CoSchedule.com, Infographics are the most shared form of content in Social Media Marketing. Slideshare reported in 2013, that Infographics are more prone to virality than documents or presentations.
- Interactive Content. This may include small games, motion graphics and sound cues that engage the prospect. "Content marketing is becoming less about the words you put on a page, and more about the experiences you create for the consumer." (William Comcowich 2015, cited 3.6.2017)
- Content that provokes strong positive emotions. According to Patel, if a social media site does not have any emotion to it, it isn't likely to get shared all that much. Patel states that positive emotions are much more likely to share than negative. This conclusion is backed up by the research done by Jonah Berger from Glasgow University.
- Image Content. "Reading is hard, seeing is easy." Content rich in imagery gets more attention than plain walls of text. Leo Windrich from ConvinceandConvert.com states that their Twitter research shows a difference of 18% more interaction to posts with images, than to those without.
- List posts. Informational posts that aim to be helpful. According to Patel, the best performing list posts include How-to posts (educational content), What-posts (News articles etc.) and Why posts (explanations to something).

"Sometimes, when we speak of Content Marketing, one is led to think that it is something new and innovative designed especially for the internet, but history says that this is not so." (Content Marketing Handbook) Content marketing is not a new invention, despite its wide use in the Social Media. "The story of Content Marketing spans the past 120 years, beginning with a baking powder manufacturer that published a revolutionary practical cookbook." (CMEX 2014, 10)

3.3 Stages & Ways of Communications

Short crash course on stages of marketing communications in Digital Mediums

Stage 1:

Masses-to-masses. Begin by the promotion of webinars on social medias with a goal off reaching as many people as possible. Also a YouTube video works well when shared on a big social media site. Use publishing tools to help the content reach multiple platforms simultaneously. This gives a consistent look and a professional feel to any interaction on line. This is the point at which the target market is still being selected. “Start by analyzing your current clients and why they chose your products or services. Don't have enough data to get the full picture? Put a research plan in place to help fill in any gaps relating to demographics, purchase patterns and other insights into when, where, why and how people purchase your products.” (Provost 2014, cited 4.6.2017)

Stage 2:

Precision-to-masses. When masses-to-masses aims to communicate to the world that you have information to give, precision-to-masses is to give the information itself to the wide audience of people. When the informational content is given, a report on it afterwards is good conduct. It should not be just a 3 hour stream video without captions. The report is now the actual content. Recap the highlights of the webinars and interviews with a newsletter. Link everything everywhere. Interconnect everything automatically (all social media account to each other).

Stage 3:

Precision-to-precision. Do some reaching out to individual likers and attendees. At this point personalized emails are useful. Notice that the email is always better when solicited. Agree on follow ups after presenting. Have demos and information. Face-to-face is still a powerful tool after the initial contact is made on social media and webinars etc. Uphold the established connections at all times, as they are of high value when it comes to proneness of future business. A loyal

customer is the best one. At this stage CRM is in place. “A CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system is a database of your contacts (customers, prospects, others) that allows you to organize information (contact info, records, files, calls, emails, etc) to streamline and scale sales and marketing processes.” (Provost 2014, cited 4.6.2017)

Customize to suit.

Short crash course for Social Media Marketing Communications:

There are a few steps to adhere to when modifying an online/social media presence for a company.:

- The key point is to not get ahead of yourself when in the communications/sales process. The best advice is to treat every phase of customer interaction with the proper/corresponding conduct. An inquiry of product compatibility should not be prompted with an inquiry of delivery option selection. An overly forward attitude when it comes to sales is an easy way to ruin a sale, not to undermine the effectiveness of forward sales tactics. A modal approach as to when inviting customers and followers to learn about something new is key.
- Applying limits is useless when maximizing contact quality this. A smart approach is to use the correct approach for every client. A company with a dedicated buying staff, do go through the direct offers sent to them, as it is a full-time job for them to search for offers, and to optimize the company cost of goods sold. A manager who is a buyer at the same time may appreciate personalized advances when you are presenting the deal of the century.
- The way to build successful online presence is within the refinement of strategy and clarity of communications. Use the leverage you have on the clientele/followers to drive more interaction → more new engagement.
- The prospect should be able to choose the channel through which they will receive the information about the company/product. Make all channels available and easy to

reach. Have logical consistency among all the channels. Pay close attention to the Integration aspect of your marketing communications. It is 100% critical, that the product line is always the same, everywhere the prospect may look.

- Personalized emailing is common practice today. It is most effective to use on existing clientele, that have a prior commitment on the company. Not nearly as effective when used on cold contacts or page likers. It all depends on the sheer rating of the offers. A good offer is always a good offer. This is why giveaways spread like a wildfire. (searchenginewatch.com 2015, cited 1.6.2017)

3.4 Timing of communications

- According to Chloe He from Business2Business.com, The big buying decisions to be made on Monday: The letterbox advertising campaign you have planned needs to be launched just in time for Monday as it might help with getting the sale.
- Social media quiets down during the weekend: Still, though fewer people are checking their social medias, those who are checking it are prone to be more active than they would be during the work week. There is a great opportunity to get attention. People are most likely to watch long videos & read articles. There simply is more time.
- Chloe He states that Budget-savvy shoppers hit the shops on Thursday: It is possible that this trend is driven by the timing of payrolls & government handouts. If the budget-savvy are the target, it would be advisable to use Thursday and Friday to advantage.
- He claims weekends to be about DIY: The big DIY brands are heavily advertising from Thursday to Sunday because of the weekend mindset and possible infiltration of the DIYers. They are also sponsoring key sporting games during the weekends, allowing them to better tap into their male target audience.

- “Sunday is supermarket day” Woolworths Trolley Trends 2013 Reports that Sunday is definitely becoming the new Saturday when counting the trips to a supermarket. The study states that “18% of Australians made Sunday their primary shopping day in 2013 compared to 15% in 2012”.

“...that said, the timing of your campaign needs to fit with what your business is trying to achieve.”
(Business2Business Community 2017, cited 1.6.2017)

The frugal point pointed out by Chloe He here is to use cold measured facts on when people on social media are on the move. Sunday around noon is often concluded to be the focal point of activity on the social media. It's the weekend and people have time to read longer content than usual. This is the time to launch new activities. According to Business2Business Community Monday is the big decision day. This is the day when to launch offers that may lead to sales, promotional discounts and so on. Also the likelihood of getting posts noticed is higher, as less people are updating their statuses on the weekend days. They are more prone to reading content.

- Payroll days 1st , 15th & 30th in Finland are the days are also a great point at which a direct offer / promotional sale can be made on.

The key is to find the day for the business in question, on which the communications deliver the best impact with followers & clientele.

“The right time to interact with consumers will also depend on the channel you're using. So the timing of your social media campaign should be different from your direct mail and email marketing, and so on. For example, according to Marketing Magazine's 'Digital Down Under' report, 71% of Australian consumers check their email as soon as they wake up, compared to 17% who check Facebook.” (He, 2014, cited 2.6.2017)

4 IMPLEMENTATION FOR CASE COMPANY

The research gathered in this thesis was used in conjunction with the social media campaign for the case company. The company hired an advertising agency to aid the launch. A social media account for all the managerial staff was established by yours truly. Some briefing was also held to further familiarize the management to the use of social media. The briefing also included some advice on the overall conduct one might expect in social media.

In October of 2016 a meeting was held in order to establish the plan of social media entry. In the meeting the overall strategy was discussed in detail. The beginning of the program was agreed to be immediately. The agency had prepared an entry strategy, and an offline version of the site layout. Present in the meeting were the CEO of the case company accompanied by yours truly, the CEO of the advertising agency, head of the graphical department, head of programming and the content manager for the site. The meeting mainly focused on the site launch, and the new marketing apparel affiliated. The case company had a pre-existing campaign that was translated into a social media version. The affiliated material was presented, observed, cultivated, and then selected for use. The material was selected by the case company CEO with the assistance and youthful touch of yours truly.

The meeting was concluded in an agreement to launch the site immediately, and to have the site manager start delivering weekly content. A structure of a post/week was established to have a somewhat standard frequency of content for the consumer. The post/week structure also allows for somewhat measurable performance of the posts. This feedback in term can be used with a deduction/addition fashion to use the best performing formula on all posts. Though a very standard structure was selected, a wiggle room for example announcements instead of standard content exists. The key word for implementing was consistency.

The site launched in a week after the negotiation, as agreed on. The daunting start from 0 likes to the optimistic 499 as of this moment commanded the effort of weekly well thought out posts from the page manager. The performance of the posts have been elementary, and expectable. The real performance of the page can be measured by the use of a campaign code. This in term lets the sales director get an idea as to where the sales traffic is originating from.

Putting the theory into action:

The case company has been operating since the late 1980's and has a vast and diverse customer base. The kind of customer that the company makes the biggest profit on, is the large enterprise type with their corresponding large orders. The social media aspect of the game comes in handy when applying content marketing. The case company Facebook page from day one boasted informational graphics and list-posts. This in terms of viewer engagement causes actual interactions.

The conversion in this case may be considered the update likes. The number of many people liking the different posts that the administration posts on the page. We noticed a correlation between interaction prompts and the post like count. When we were able to foster reactions from the followers, they were more prone to share the content. The interactivity was conducted in terms of sharing contests that the page likers could participate in in order to win prizes.

The best results were obtained with content marketing:

The highest level of interactivity and reactions were fostered with the use of content marketing. Traditional marketing has a certain off-putting tone when used on a Facebook wall. It looks and feels like a 100% advertisement. In a conversation between yours truly and the case company representative, we concluded that the traditional advertisement will be slowed down to a minimum, and the content approach will take its place. The traditional routes or marketing are carried out as seasonal (product brochure). The printed brochures are still accounted for, and will be sent to clients along with the larger orders.

Thoughts on the timing:

Timing of the communications proved to be of importance, since the April-fools-day post has the most likes on the entire page. Also a May 1st (a celebration day of Finnish labor) themed post got very good responses.

5. ACHIEVEMENTS INTERVIEW WITH THE COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES

This chapter concludes the results achieved in the eyes of the company management. This is the first-hand feedback the entrepreneur has to give on the newfound endeavor in social media.

Where did the idea for a social media campaign come from?

The modern times force an entrepreneur online because the majority of the clientele already resides in social media.

Has it yielded something positive?

Mainly imago boosts at this point. It is hard to measure anything further at least when it is so early on. We are seen as a more modern company when we are visible on social media.

Something Negative?

Nothing yet!

What has the reception been like?

Positive. Some clients have brought up some prior posts on social media.

Have the existing customers paid any notice?

The campaign (giveaway) side has been very well received! Weekly posts are performing better and better at a steady pace.

Have you yet yielded new customers?

We get constant new customer forms because of the social media page → web store funnel. We have seized all paper- and direct mail advertising. We are currently utilizing an email-campaign alongside with the social media one.

6. PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION INQUIRY

This section comprises the inquiries made by yours truly to the professional collaborations partner in this case of social media marketing endeavor. This is input from the professionals.

What is the main modification from existing marketing material to when using social media?

“The biggest individual change is generally the graphical formatting. The imagery needs to be sized suitably for social media posts. The content of the communications needs to be altered slightly as well. The web site generally has a more formal tone, as compared to the casual tone in social media. The text content needs to be translated to something that is easy to approach.”

How cost effective is social media marketing when compared to traditional (direct mail)?

“Direct- and newspaper advertisement generally has a higher cost due to material and logistics. One newspaper ad that may get consumed once, can be very expensive, when in social media the target groups can be altered, and the contact/conversion price is a lot lower. Well-made social media marketing is definitely more cost effective than traditional advertising.”

How to keep a consistent image on the web overall and on social media?

The graphical guidelines and looks have to be carefully followed to make sure, that the image stays consistent. This indeed has a lot to do with the term integrated marketing communications. The conversational style of the business cannot differ too much from what can be seen on the web site. Social media and the web site are- or should be complementary, rather than rivalry. Websites are used as an information channel, and social media a distributional channel (marketing-wise). This results in an overall clean consistency for the marketing communications.

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