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The creation of a content marketing plan for a new start-up in the financial sector

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The creation of a content marketing plan for a new
start-up in the financial sector

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The thesis was made in collaboration with a Dutch start-up company operating in the financial sector. The company House of Pips has been operating since August 2016. The purpose and objectives of the thesis was to create a content marketing plan to help the company gain brand awareness online and do better customer acquisition to the right target group. The content marketing plan will also help the company to plan their future actions and position the brand in the minds of the customers better.

The content marketing plan was created after doing consistent net scouting, reading discussion forums, doing customer and competitor analysis and research online on several topics such as Forex trading as a business field, signal providers and Forex trading forums. The intention of the net scouting was to find out what kind of people are doing trading and what are their needs and worries towards signal providers, who are the competitors and what kind of trends are already and will be emerging online in the future related to Forex trading. Also online research was done on customer behavior and content marketing trends.

Next to the research done online, a wide range of theoretical literature and online sources were used to ensure that the content marketing plan would give the best possible value to the company. The theoretical part of the thesis consists of segmentation, customer insight, membership acquisition, content marketing, digital marketing channels and online customer experience, social media channels, brand recognition and last, SOSTAC model, which was the method used to create the basic structure for the content marketing plan.

The main result of the study was the content marketing plan and all the valuable information in it. During the study, it appeared that many Forex traders had slightly negative beliefs towards signal providers. The company should focus on giving relief to those worries and build trust between the company and the customers. Based on the research, two suggestions were created; a Forex trading forum and a mentoring package. These suggestions are something to consider, since they are potential pain relievers for the customers. It was clear that many customers were missing the learning part in their previous experiences with signal providers, so the mentoring package would give personal and customized opportunity to learn about Forex trading. Also the Forex forum would be a way to follow up with trends, get customer insights and with the help of those; improve the service. A forum is also a good way to build traffic to the website and gain brand awareness. Customers will create the content themselves as they are the main characters of such social communities.

Keywords: Content marketing, Brand awareness, Membership acquisition, Social media, Forex trading

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1 Introduction

The thesis was created in collaboration with a Dutch based start-up company. The purpose of the study was to give new tools for the company to increase their brand awareness and customer acquisition. The thesis was created during the spring/summer 2017.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The era of social media and content marketing is here, and has been already for the last couple of years. Content marketing has become more known among different industries and many are already adopting it well, content rich websites, social media activity and search engine optimizing are for some companies already a familiar daily job. Everything changes, faster than ever before things are developing. Technology, social media behavior, consumer behavior, brands and business environment. This is the big reason why planning is essential. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 4, 5, 9.) Being aware where the business environment is going is initially important. Where content marketing will go in the future is in more and more visual direction. Traditional content marketing is in a turning point. Plain text is not enough anymore. Storytelling, video, live streaming, truly activating the customer, are things that consumers get excited about. (How Social Media Preferences Vary Per Generation 2017.), (Video Integration Is Next Step In Travel Storytelling 2017.) House of Pips should in their content marketing keep this concept in their minds.

The purpose of this study is to help improve the company's marketing actions and strategy, gain brand awareness, get more engaged customer relationships by creating an integrated content marketing plan. The plan is created by using PR Smith's SOSTAC model (the model will be fully introduced in the chapter 4). The company will be guided to the modern way of marketing; online marketing, inbound marketing leading to content marketing in a way which is up to date with the prevailing and growing trends. And additionally, the company will get new service suggestions to consider to bring into use in the future.

1.2 The objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were to create a content marketing plan to help the company gain more brand awareness online, get a useful marketing strategy and proper frames for the overall online marketing. Other objectives were to find out what kind of people are potential

segments for the company and to plan content marketing tactics for that specific audience, with the goal of getting new members for the House of Pips services.

The objectives were supporting the practical work of this study which are: the research on the current situation of the business environment and the company itself, creating content strategy and tactics and budgeting and marketing metrics to monitor the success of the content marketing. The objectives gave a direction on what to focus on with this marketing planning. The highlighting was on the brand awareness, segmentation, marketing actions and membership acquisition.

1.3 House of Pips

House of Pips is a Dutch based start-up company in the financial sector, to be more detailed: in Forex trading business providing Forex trading signals to their customers. Forex is a financial trading market where market participants exchange currencies in order to make profit (FXCM, What is Forex? 2017).

The company started operating in August 2016 but the traders in this company have already experienced in Forex trading for more than 5 years. The target audience of the company comes from all over the world and are regular customers instead of other businesses. (House of Pips 2017.)

1.3.1 Services

The services which House of Pips offers are Forex trading signals (kind of ideas or suggestions) and Autotrade (automated trading). Forex signals means that the company offers support to their customers for Forex trading by giving suggestions, ideas through a message (called signals) about what to do. So the signals are messages send by the trader to the clients by for example Telegram instant messaging mobile application. (House of Pips, FAQ 2017.) Forex trading can be fully automated too when the customer's trades are controlled by the company's traders. (House of Pips, Autotrade 2017.)

Like no other signal provider (from the list of competitors analysed during this study, see appendices 11-14) House of Pips offers a money back guarantee. This means that if the customer has not made profit during a subscription month, he or she will get their subscription money back from that non-profitable month. This makes it easier for the customers to choose

House of Pips instead of another company as nobody wants to lose money and alongside of that pay for the service which was non-profitable. Having a non-profitable month of course doesn't necessary mean that it is a bad service. Anybody can have a bad month of Forex trading. House of Pips wants to compensate that. The company offers their experience on trading and do their best to win, but in case that doesn't happen, the customer will get a compensation, considered as a service recovery. The customer will not necessarily have a bad feeling about the loss and can continue for the new month with better hopes. Without the money back guarantee the problem can be that the customer gets upset, blames the provider and gives bad reviews online.

House of Pips also offers a one week free trial period (House of Pips 2017). So a customer who is doubting can for one week try and see how the signals or Autotrade and the entire service works and then decide if to continue or not. So the customer is being offered flexible and valuable deals which is the way how House of Pips differentiate itself from the competitors.

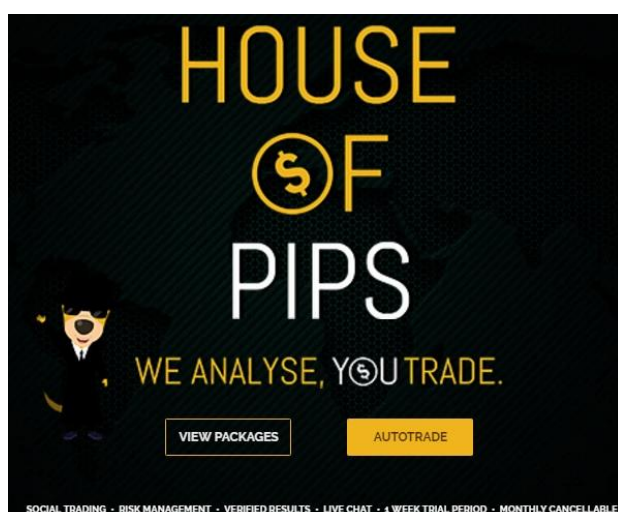


Figure 1: House of Pips promises high quality service with a one week free trial period and a money back guarantee (House of Pips 2017).

Because Forex trading operates online and globally, House of Pips itself operates fully online. Customer interactions and all of the services are delivered online through different channels, with only few things required; an internet connection and an interaction device such as smartphone, tablet or PC for example. This also enables House of Pips to attract customers from all over the world and not only from The Netherlands.

1.3.2 Forex signals

House of Pips Forex signals means a suggestion for entering a trade on a currency pair (House of Pips, FAQ 2017). Currency pair can be for example euro and the U.S. dollar (EUR/USD). Currencies are traded through a broker or a dealer and are always traded in pairs (Buying And Selling In Currency Pairs, BabyPips 2017.)



Figure 2: House of Pips signals on Telegram mobile application

The signals are generated by the traders from House of Pips. Communication happens via Telegram mobile application, so the message is available immediately to all of the customers, no matter the location. House of Pips offers two different service packages for Forex signals, Silver and Gold. The subscription times for these packages can be chosen from one month to one year. Prices vary based on the subscription length. (House of Pips 2017.) In the figure 2 above is an example of the House of Pips signals chat.

1.3.3 Autotrade

Autotrade means that the customer's trades are fully controlled by the House of Pips traders. The House of Pips traders will take care of all the action happening (for example: stop loss, take profit, positions and the total risk management). The intention of the service is always to make profit but that cannot be promised to the customer. Despite the fact that the customer's trading account is being controlled in Autotrade, there is always an ability for the customer to control his or her own trades, in any way. Nothing is ever locked or blocked from the customer.

1.4 The structure of the study

The structure of this study follows the path as shown in the figure 3 below. The first part tells the purpose and objectives of this study. Next part is the company introduction, to who this study is created for. After these background informations comes the theoretical background of the thesis which consists of segmentation, customer insight, member ship acquisition and community activities, content marketing, digital marketing channels, online customer experience, social media channels, brand recognition and last, SOSTAC model - creating a content marketing plan. These theoretical frames were the helping tools and the needed knowledge base to build the concrete content marketing plan for House of Pips.



Figure 3: Structure of the study

After the theoretical part of this study comes the content marketing plan written out but the plan itself can be found in the appendices. The last parts of this thesis are the conclusions and suggestions and the evaluation of the study. References and appendices can be found at the end of the thesis too.

2 Creating a base for the content marketing plan

Behind every successful marketing plan there is a careful and realistic planning, starting with a situation analysis. Without realistic planning and enough detailed situation analysis an organization is drifting without a direction and setting reachable objectives can get impossibly hard. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 536.)

Situation analysis consists of careful analysis of the following matters as “Where are we now and where do we want to be?”, “Who are our customers, why and how?”, “What are our competitors doing and who exactly are they?”. These specifically mentioned matters are parts of the situation analysis and will create a base for the content marketing planning. Before making any plans, it is important to know where we are now, and what is the current situation. Then we can take the next step to create realistic objectives and head forward to a strongly effective and feasible content marketing plan. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 538.)

2.1 Segmentation - How to reach the right online customers

To conduct business, buyers are needed. Markets consist of them. But not everybody has the same desires or nature, buyers are different and act differently. We all, as buyers, have our own buying behavior, different motivations which drive us to purchase. (Kotler, Wong, Saunders & Armstrong 2005, 391.)

To be sure that the company reaches the right customers who truly need and want their products or services, a market segmentation must be executed. Market segmentation means dividing heterogeneous markets into smaller segments to ensure that each segment is being offered the kind of product or service they need and find the most valuable. A segment is a group of buyers with at least one similar behavior or need related to buying action (Bergström & Leppänen 2015). The segments need to be measurable, the size of the segment, purchasing power and the features of the segment. The segment needs to be also reckoned, large enough, profitable and reachable. Also one important feature is that the segment should be differentiated, which means that the segment has its own way to react to the marketing actions compared to other segments. One segment is always homogeneous. (Kotler etc. 2005, 391-395.)

Market segmentation can happen at different levels. Mass marketing, (which means that the company does not practice any segmentation), when they are sure that their offerings are suitable for everybody. Micromarketing, (also called complete segmentation), means that the company's value offerings are tailored to suit specific needs of individuals and even specific locations. Then there is segment marketing which means that products or services are adapted to match the needs of multiple segments, this means also that the level of competition can be high. Niche marketing therefore means that the company chooses their value offerings to match the needs of a small sub-segment when the competition in that market is usually very small. (Kotler etc. 2005, 391-396.)

How to segment a market? There is different ways for that also. The most common ways for segmenting business to consumer (B2C) markets are the following: geographic, demographic, psychographic and last, behavioural variables. (Kotler etc. 2005,398.) In the figure 4 below we can see the segmentation method variables and what exactly belongs in each category.

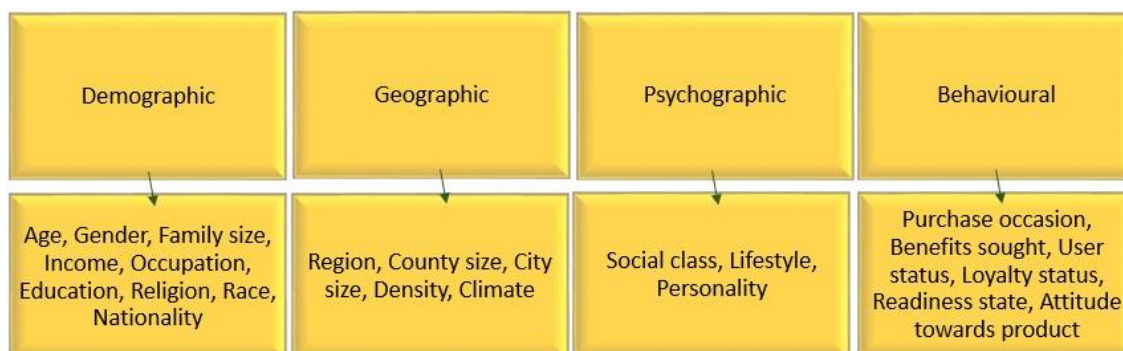


Figure 4: Market segmentation variables (Kotler etc. 2005, 399).

Markets can be divided into groups based on these variables mentioned in figure 4. For example: House of Pips should define their segment Demographically, people over the age 18, because children are not necessarily to be trusted with financial matters or perhaps not even allowed to do online purchases.

Since House of Pips is an online operating service, the customers will be so called “E-customers”. How do we reach those E-customers? First thing is to identify the E-customers, segmenting the market and analyzing the buyer behaviours. Who are they? What do they want? How do they buy? How did they find us? It’s a necessity to understand what are the needs of consumers searching online and what kind of content they want to see. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 198.) In the next sub-chapters we will deal with these factors, customer insight, customer profiles, customer values and motivations.

2.2 Customer insight

One strong reason which drives people to go online these days is the feeling of belonging to something, doing what others do too. Humans are social animals. Humans are devoted to watch other people’s behavior, communicate and wonder what others might think of us. For example in social media, a friend decides to attend an event. You can see it on their page. You get curious and want also attend to that event. Humans are good at copying. That’s why many companies use also brand ambassadors, engage customers who are willing to show and present the brand in good light to all of their followers in social media and why not also in offline. It’s an excellent way for a brand to get more known and more buyers because people

most likely will buy what their friends recommend to them. It's about trust and feeling of belonging. Going online can be about socializing, reading news, finding entertainment, product information or doing online shopping. Things which feels to humans easy to reach and easy do from a computer or like most do these days, from their smart phones. Internet and social media is always available and near when ever it is needed. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 165-166.)

2.2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

What are the common drivers that leads customer to buying behavior actions can be described with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It specifies five different need categories from basic needs to high level needs. (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler 2012,30-31.) In figure 5 below is shown the hierarchy of needs.



Figure 5: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Wilson etc. 2012, 30-31).

The hierarchy starts from the basic needs (the bottom of the figure 5), physiological and biological human needs like for example food and sleep. These are needs that occur often and cannot be denied. Next step on the hierarchy is safety and security needs. This means the need for humans to be safe and feel protected from bad things. For example: if in some neighbourhood is suddenly happening many robberies, a person would have the feeling of unsafety and go buy more locks and other safety systems to protect their house and themselves from the thieves.

Social needs are for acceptance and friendships. The need of being together and social. The need to feel accepted and make good affection to others. Ego needs stand for self-esteem, success and prestige. Especially in these days because of the social media revolution the ego needs and the need to look good for others are empazised. The last tip of the pyramid is self-actualization which means self-fullfillment. The need of feeling alive, doing exciting and enriching things in life, like skydiving, travelling, or writing poems and painting. It's about ex-

pressing feelings and feeling something stronger than basic needs, like hunger or thirst. (Wilson etc. 2012, 30-31.)

2.2.2 Value Proposition Canvas

To understand customer needs and to create value to customers a tool called Value Proposition Canvas can be used. The company's Value Proposition is a set of interests or values that it promises to deliver to fulfill the customers needs. Value Proposition Canvas has two sides, the customer side and the value creating side. Between these two we intent to find a fit, which is the ideal situation where the Value Map matches with the Customer Profile side of the Value Proposition Canvas, then the customers gets excited about the new value propositions and company has succeeded to create value-adding offerings. (Osterwalder, Pigneur, Bernarda, Smith 2016, 9.)

Customer profile defines and describes a specific customer segment. To make the analyse more detailed, the customer profile is put in three cases: Customer Jobs, Pains and Gains. Customer Jobs means the things that the customer wants to get done it his or her life or work. Customer Jobs can be functional, for example getting from place A to place B, or social, like impressing friends and family, or emotional, like for example gaining more happiness and peace of mind. (Osterwalder etc. 2016, 9.)

Pains describes all the bad possible outcomes or other fears related to the Customer Jobs. For example dissatisfactions, risks or obstacles related to the services or products which could help the customer to get the Customer Job done. Gains are the positive outcomes which the customer wants to achieve, aspiratons, or the actual, concrete benefit he or she is looking for. (Osterwalder etc. 2016, 9.) In figure 6 below is shown the structure of the Value Proposition Canvas.

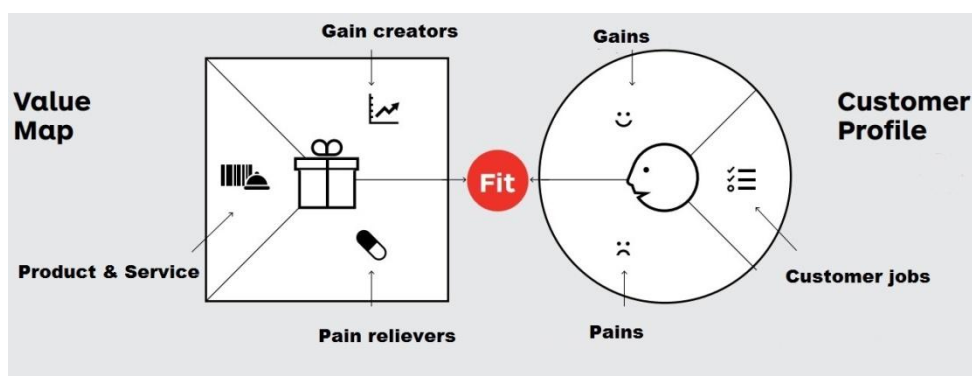


Figure 6: Value Proposition Canvas helps to create more value to customers (Osterwalder etc.2016, 9).

The Value Map side of the Canvas is about the company's value propositions, products and services a company has to offer for their customers. For the Value Map, company chooses a specific product or service and describes in detailed way the Gains and Pain relievers of the products or services. Gains are the value that the customer gets from the company's offerings. Pain relievers means how the company will ease or minimize the Pains that customers have on the Customer Profile side of the canvas. (Osterwalder etc.2016, 9.) For example: if a person is worried about online purchasing, doesn't trust that he or she will get their ordered goods, the company should focus on Pain releavers such as email confirmations, support numbers, around the clock customer service, tracking numbers for ordered products. Such things can help with creating trust and therefore ease the Pains a customer might have.

To know what kind of content customers see as valuable a company can create a persona and use scenario based design. Persona means that a company will identify a different predominant customer persona and make a description of them. A persona is used for example to help make a company's website more user friendly, from the customers point of view. A company can create scenarios which are to help identify the customer centricity of the website and how the processes work with different kinds of buyers. The purpose of both these tools is to get a better understanding of the customer and then create and develop better services for them. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 196-199.)

These days a lot of user data can be also collected. Companies are able to track how the customers act on their websites and social media channels, the length of the visit and for example from where they are from. (Kotler & Armstrong 2012, 100-101.) Customer profiles are also common way to present data gathered from research in the customer profiles, the motives, fears and thoughts are brought out to describe common or individual actions. These findings are used to design the services to match the needs of the customers and help ease their fears towards the offered services. (Tuulaniemi 2013, 154-155.)

2.3 Membership acquisition and community activities

To get new customers, a company must think for whom do they want to serve their products or services. Like mentioned in chapter 2.1, a company needs to do market segmentation to acknowledge the proper customer segment suitable for their value offerings and after this the next step is targeting their products and services to the right customers on the right segments. The right customers are those who the company can serve the most effectively and profitably. Another important fact is to remember: how does the company serve their customers and how to stand out from all the competitors. (Kotler, Armstrong & Parment 2012, 15.)

2.3.1 Customer relationship management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM), is a big part of successful marketing and sales actions. CRM is about understanding customer needs and buying behavior. A company must know who their customers are, building and maintaining customer relationships with by continuously creating value and satisfaction to the customers. In a nutshell, the key to long lasting customer relationships is to create value to the customers and meeting their changing needs. (Kotler etc. 2012, 19-20.)

Especially online CRM is challenging companies; customers can have very high expectations but less trust which makes it hard to keep customers from not falling into competitors arms. These days to just satisfy the customer, is not enough, there has to be something more that has true value. Effective customer service and support through all the channels is important. Online customers expect to be served fast and without problems. What makes serving a customer in a personalized value adding way easier: is collecting data about their online behavior and with the help of the data, creating messages, services and offers matching their needs, interests and behaviors. Personalized services gives the customer more intimate and “tailored service” feeling. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 416-418.)

2.3.2 Communities and forums

Virtual communities can be defined as groups of people who have the same interest, passion, concerns or problems. These people like to share their opinions on these topics related to the passion or concerns and want to hear other group members opinions too to deepen their understanding about the different topics. The communication can happen daily and the community members can have different roles. One can be active, one can be more silent but still present. (Bragge, Tuunanen & Marttiin 2009, 243.) Online communities are like a virtual meeting place for people. This community potential which virtual world enables is a key feature and distinguishes e marketing from offline marketing. Since virtual communities are (customer to customer) C2C, action, the key to a community success is customer-centred communications. Customers are a big part of creating the content of a community. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 192.) In figure 7 below, is listed some important questions to help with creating a customer-centred community.

1. What interest, passion or needs do many of your customers have in common?	2. What topic or concern might your customers like to share with each other?	5. What information or discussion topics generate the most interest/responses on similar social media communities?
3. What types of incentives or rewards can you afford to provide who recommend friends who make purchases?	4. What similar communities or groups already exists on social media platforms?	

Figure 7: Helping questions to ask when planning to create a community (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 192).

The benefits of successfully running a community is that it strengthens customer relationships, trust and builds brand awareness. Through a community, a company is close to the customers and can listen to their desires and worries. With the information and listening to the customers, company can develop their products and services better and better and also get new members with the interesting content and value adding service. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 192-194.) Creating a community is not easy and takes a lot of work in the beginning, but when it's done it is worth it because of all the benefits it offers to the company and in turn, to the customers too: better service, new products/services, content ideas and trust between the company and the customers. (Sipilä 2009, 178).

3 Content marketing

Content marketing is defined as a marketing technique which creates and spreads consistent, valuable and relevant content to attract a carefully defined audience and to create profitable customer action. Content marketing is about creating content which the customers truly find valuable to themselves. (Pehkonen 2016.) Content in this matter means that information which engages, helps, entertains or teaches its recipient. Good content is useful, goal-oriented and brings value to the customer. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 92.) Content marketing is listening to customers and finding out what content they find the most attractive and what is the information that they are seeking. By creating value-adding content, a company can build more stronger customer relationships. Content marketing can happen in all the marketing channels that the company chooses to use. (What is content marketing 2016.)

Content strategy is a view from business strategy and customer insight, of what value to create for the customers, how to concretise the value in content, for who to create it and in

which channels to distribute it. Content strategy is also about planning how to manage the content and how to measure the effectiveness of it. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24-25.)

Company must acknowledge their core competence and create realistic objectives. Content marketing is not just about social media advertising, short term campaigns or re-doing one old phrase from the company's website. It's more about continuously being active in chosen channels and conducting business with the company's objectives supporting the overall and integrated message of the content marketing in result: achieving the long term business goals. To guide customers through the online channels, three types of content is needed; reaching, engaging and activating content. A customer searching to fulfill a need is being guided effortlessly from one content to another and therefore it's easy for the customer to engage to it and to get back to it any time. In the figure 8 below is shown the three types of content needed and the path how the company can lead customers online with content marketing. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24-25.)

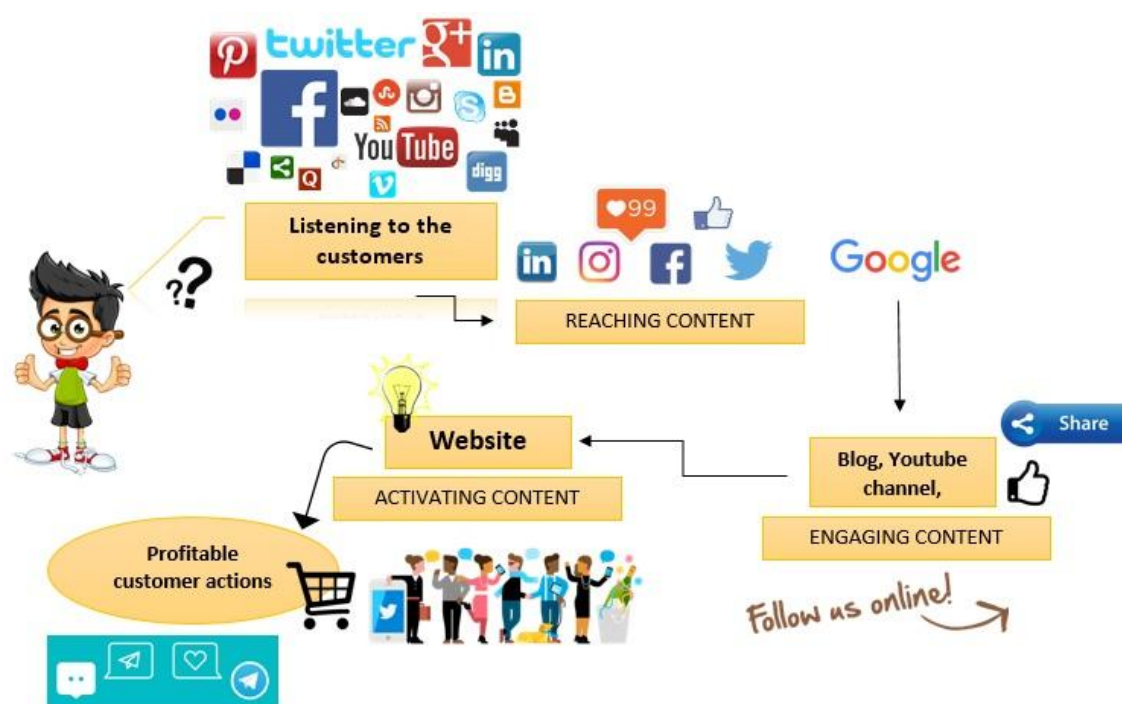


Figure 8: Leading the customer through the channels with attractive content (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24).

To be able to create valuable content that the customers want to consume, it's initially good to listen to the customers. Social media is good for that. Researching where the customers are active, what kind of content do they search or share and therefore find valueable. Defining a customer segment and understanding the customer personas helps with researching the customers minds. So in the centre of content marketing and content strategy is the customer

and the information and values that the customer is seeking online. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24, 36.)

3.1 Listen to the customers, be easy to find

To be able to create valuable content that the customers want to consume, it's initially good to listen to the customers. Social media is good for that. Researching where the customers are active, what kind of content do they search or share and therefore find valuable. Defining a customer segment and understanding the customer personas helps with researching the customers minds. So in the centre of content marketing and content strategy is the customer and the information and values that the customer is seeking online. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24, 36.)

Customers decide on their own where and how they act online. With content marketing a company is consistently creating attractive content in different channels where also the customer is being active. With the content, the company can lead the customer to profitable actions in a way which does not make the customer feel over fed with advertising, but with pleasant, valuable information or content which the customer finds useful and interesting. As shown in the figure 8 (in the previous sub-chapter) company uses different channels to create a path for the customer to end up from the reaching content in social media channels to engaging content like for example blog writings or YouTube channel, to eventually to the company's website where the customer receives activating content and makes a purchase decision. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 24, 36.)

Nowadays it's not just about being the number one on search engines and paying enormous amounts for it. It's more about creating content which is useful for the customers. Customers will talk and recommend good content to their friends and family. A positive thing is also that the search engine will reward the good content with a good rank, so then the company doesn't even have to pay for high search engine ranking. With the content, the company should aim to decrease the customers reasons not to buy. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 96-98.)

3.2 Content creation

Content creation can be based on the following factors: the ease of finding and the differentiation of the content. Each of the mentioned factors supports one another and can be a consequence of each other. The ease of finding creates awareness. And with the ease of finding,

customers faces the company's content. Finding and searching is the customers point of view and with this, the company's brand awareness can grow in more positive direction. Understanding the actions happening before the customer enters the company's own forums is important. Between the company and a customer who is trying to find something is either search engines or social media. A customer who is trying to find something and is not so familiar with what he or she is looking for, doesn't necessarily search immediately with the exact name of the company's products or services, but with the problem he or she is trying to solve. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 42-43.) For example: A person who is interested in trading but is not too confident about it and hopes to get support and help with it. He or she tries to find on Google search with the words "Trading help online" or "Forex trading assistance" then finds other websites and forums where he/she notices that there is such thing as signal providers and Autotrade possibility. When finding out that information, he or she can type in a new search with more advanced keywords. So the path to find something can be long and difficult that's why it's important to be as easy to find as possible. The company can also decide to serve a segment who is more enlightened with the keyterms of the business field so then searching doesn't start from the so called beginners level but with more advanced search terms like "Forex signal providers" or "Autotrade Forex trading".

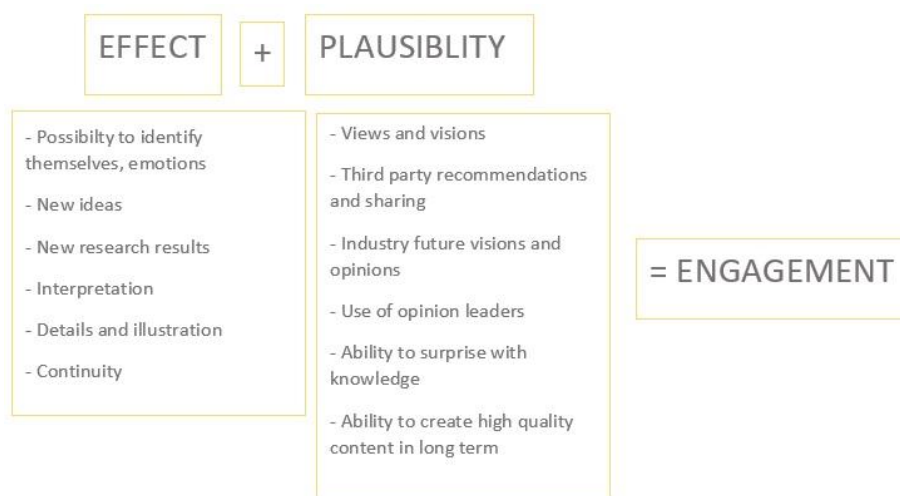


Figure 9: Effective and plausible content creates customer engagement (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 59).

In figure 9 above is listed some examples of what kind of content can be effective and what is plausible. Together these create customer engagement. By making sure that the chosen segment is being served in an excellent way and constantly developing the service better and better, the company will get the most value to their business (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 99). Below in figure 10 is a basic model for content path.

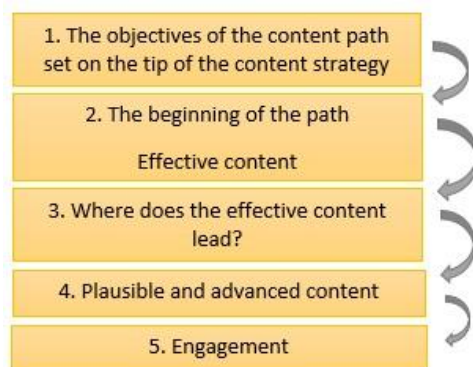


Figure 10: Content path guides the customer in different channels (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 87-88).

Content path guides customers logically but does not prevent customers from entering the path at different points, as the function of each channel is to engage the customers. Effective content guides actively to the engaging content, for example in Twitter the company posts short texts and information, from where the customer is being lead to the company's website or to a blog post to read more about the subject or theme but with different touch and with by giving the reader the feeling of realization. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 87-88.)

Content strategy ties up together the purpose of the company, company values and its awareness to the customers, goal setting and measuring of the performance and also constant improvement and development of the actions. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 100). Content strategy is also meant to support the sales work. The figure 11 below visualises the relationship between these two, on the left is content strategy and on the right is sales work. The basic idea is that the desire to buy awakens after the engagement of the customer.

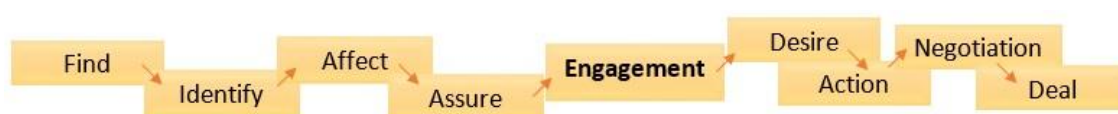


Figure 11: Content strategy supports sales work seamlessly (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 70).

In the future, companies will be built more for the customers. Companies will be like a customer oriented media, answering to the customer's questions, helping to find solutions for problems and sharing interesting and timely content which has value to the reader. Companies will tell their opinions and their insights about future and different important subjects affecting the industry or its target customers. The leading companies in the future will be the ones who are able to create social communities around the brand, with embracing the values that the company has. As explained in chapter 2.3.2 previously, community actions can be hard work but are a big part of future business and extremely valuable when they are built well. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 103.)

To close the chapter and summarise, content strategy is about doing and communicating what is valuable to the customers and therefore profitable for the company's business aswell. Every post published should communicate the company's content mission which answers to the questions "What is our vision and mission, what do we want to tell with each post we publish, what do we want our customers to think and how do we want them to act?". (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 120.)

3.3 Digital marketing channels and online customer experience

Marketing is a business action which for example enables the companies to recognize invisible and visible customer needs and desires, even create them. It's also about knowing which customer segment the company can serve the best and most profitably. Nowadays digitalization is a huge part of marketing because of the constantly developing technology and the use of internet belongs to people's daily life including social media, which is like a second world to many of us. New social media platforms are adopted rapidly. For example: Pinterest and Snapchat. New things seem to occur fast so it's important to be aware of the digital and social media solutions available. (Leino 2010, 14.)

Digital marketing channels bring new opportunities for companies to reach potential customers even better. Email marketing, banners, search engine optimizing, company's website content, mobile friendliness of website and other content, blogs, videos and social media, these are all examples of digital marketing. (Leino 2010, 14.) In today's online marketing the meaning of social media has grown and also the awareness of content marketing has grown and has resulted in that more and more companies embracing it. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 187-200.)

How to do content marketing in practise and in which channels can the company do it? In the following text parts is explained some effective examples of where to be active and how to do it right. A thing to remember though is that the company should not be in every channel and do everything, it all depends on where the potential customers are active. The company should not go where their customers are not active, it's a waste of time. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 196-197.)

3.3.1 Blogs and articles

A content creation channel which is gaining more attention among companies and starting to be very used and popular and a way and place to do content marketing is blogs. Blogs are one

of the greatest ways to bring up opinions and thoughts. It's also a way for the company to show their professionalism by creating credible blog texts related to their industry. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 188-190.) With House of Pips the blog would naturally be about Forex trading. In their blog, they could bring up their opinions about Forex trading, strategies, trends or news affecting the industry. Blog posts don't have to be daily, even 1 per 2 weeks speed would be a good start. Professional looking blog is an excellent way of marketing the company and their professional service. A well written text will affect on the readers thoughts and wake up emotions. A text about "the best product in the whole world just because it's the best" does not give any thoughts or added value to anybody but perhaps the company itself and that's not how the modern marketing is done. Customer is who the company should care about. So better example of a useful blog post would be "5 common reasons why Forex traders fail and tips how to avoid mistakes".

Another positive thing about blogging is that it helps customers to find the company more easily and then also increases the brand awareness to a positive direction. A blog can be a place to create a persona to the brand, an image, face which will help the customers feel more alike to it and find it interesting and trustworthy. Search engines also reward good content, a blog will be ranked well if the content is informative and valuable to readers. Blogs require a lot of time and thoughts, but it sure will be worth it. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 188-190.)

If blog writing doesn't feel an appropriate solution, the company can try writing informative articles which serves the customers well and as well works similarly in the ways as a blog does, but is usually not as personal as blog writings. An article is more informative and formal. They can be about problem solving, solutions or anything which is useful for the reader. A good tip for writing articles is to collect the questions customers ask often and then write about those subjects. This helps the customers with their thoughts and problems in a form of an informative article. This also saves time from answering to many similar questions. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 203-209.)



Figure 12: Infographics gives value to the customers. Educative, inspiring and interesting content is worth sharing (Creative Bloq Staff 2017).

Another effective content idea is infographics. Visuality is modern and most of the people need to see things, instead of just reading, to catch interest. Infographics can be about “how does it work” or “Forex for dummies” type of things to teach and show something in an interesting storytelling way. It’s also proven that infographics are easily shared forward in social media channels. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 203-209.) In the figure 12 above is an example of an infographic picture.

3.3.2 Search engine optimizing

Service guides, videos, vlogs (video blogs), e-books, research, surveys and only the imagination is the limit with today's digital marketing opportunities and content creation options. But to make sure that the company is easy to find, it's also initially important to have some focus on the search engine optimizing, which is almost one of the most important digital marketing channels for customer acquisition. (Kurvinen & Sipilä 2014, 201)

Search engine optimization, SEO; means the actions to achieve high ranking in the search engines. For example: Google or Bing. A good position can be achieved in organic ways or then with paid search marketing deals like Pay Per Click. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 352.) In figure 13 below is an example of Google's paid and organic ranking.

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Figure 13: Example of organic and paid search engine ranking (Google 2017).

Organic listing means that the company naturally without paying for it get's a good position in the search engines. This happens when the company has its website well designed with informative and useful content and with the use of the right keyphrases. To know what are the right key phrases or words, the company can conduct a keyword analysis. Google offers free tools for the analysis. The company needs to know which words are important for the industry and test the demand of those with the free Google tools for example. It's important to know in what words does the company's desired customer segment search, so the company can reach the right people. Keyword analysis will answer to the question, how often is the word being searched and is it relevant? (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 155-156.) In the figure below is listed 4 common factors affecting on search engine ranking.

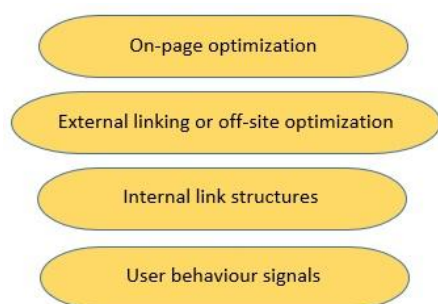


Figure 14: Common factors which affect on search engine rankings (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 359.)

One page optimization means the number of times a phrase appears on a page. Search engines will test the relevance of it and hardly ever can these search engines be tricked by re-

peating words with unclear content. So the content needs to be good and actually on the page to be seen as relevant content worth a high rank. (How search engines operate 2016)

External links and external optimization means the actions out of the company's website. So for example: some other website would have a link to the company's website, this would be an external link. Internal links are hyperlinks on the company's own website to another page on the same website, this helps users with navigating on the website. (How search engines operate 2016.) Last factor on the figure 14 is user behaviour signals, which means how often the customers click and go to the website, duration of the visit, navigational paths and so on. Click Through Rate (CTR) can be used to measure and monitor the behavior. CTR is the ratio of users who click to a link, to the number of users who view a page; so the total impression. (Petrovic 2015.)

3.3.3 Mobile marketing

One digital marketing channel worth a thought is mobile marketing and the adaption of mobile friendliness to business and for example: to the company's website design. In the figure 15 below is shown the growing amount of smartphone users worldwide. Smartphones are a big part of today and the future, that's why companies should also take notice in mobile marketing opportunities. Content marketing, value proposition and mobile walk hand in hand these days. In mobile, the content is more useful, more reachable and easy to access. Smart phones offer companies new ways to add up their content marketing. Mobile applications for example are great way to do that. The best applications are the ones that become an initial part of the customers daily routines and lives (Wheeler 2013, 74). Let's have an example: A sports clothes company wants to do mobile content marketing so they decide to create an application. What kind of application should it be then? Not a list about the products if we want to do content marketing. But a useful, fun and easy to use training tips guide and sports forum for customers. Another example would be a training tracker or goal setting program where the customer can play against themselves and get's tips and challenges from the application. But not everybody needs an application, only if it fits with the business and during the planning and testing appears to create significant value. (Rowles 2017,18.)

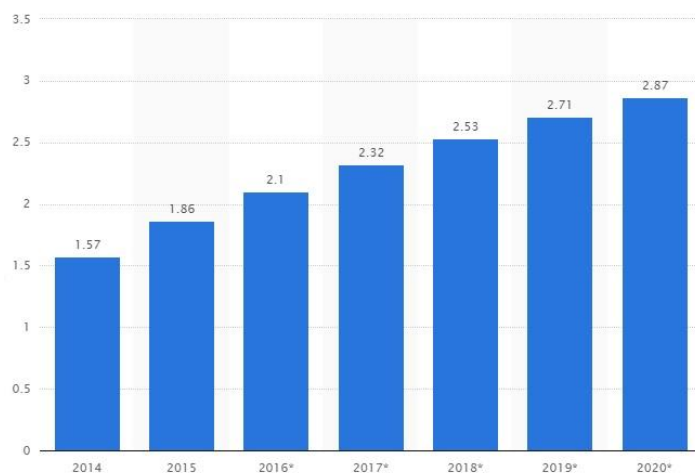


Figure 15: The number of smartphone users worldwide from 2014 to 2020, in billions (*Estimated) (Statista 2016).

The easiness of having a smart phone in your pocket always available and the amount of people worldwide owning them is enough of a big reason for companies to focus on being mobile friendly. Website should fit on any device otherwise the slow loading time can drive away many customers. Social media is also in our smart phones. More than 80 per cent of all social media time is spend on a mobile devices and social media seems to be the biggest reason for using mobile applications. The company should make sure that the customer will always get a good feeling about the company in any channel and with any deviced used. Also the privacy of the customer should be taking into account. Research shows that more than 65 per cent of Facebook users are afraid and a bit concerned about the privacy issues social media and internet brings with its use. A Company should be social but not interrupt customers personal space, even though social media is seen as more personal and friendly platform for marketing. (Rowels 2017, 8, 121-122.)

Communication in social media channels should be adapted in a way that it is a place that you can relax in. Old-fashioned, “corporate tone” hardly works. Openness and willingness to engage is the key. Some good questions to think when concidering mobile marketing is for example the following: What are the company’s objectives and how to boost them with the marketing possibilities of mobile devices? How does mobile solutions fit into our business? Which channels do our customers use actively?. (Rowels 2017, 8, 121-122.)

3.3.4 Online customer experience

Online customer experience can be defined as the sum of the encounters, perceptions and feelings that the customer is forming from the company's online content and activities. Customer experience starts before the customer enters the company's website content or social media channels. Customer experience is the whole entity of the online content, the path from search engines to Facebook or other social media channels and to the company's website. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 60.)

Content strategy work means developing the web content through a well built planning and to make it fit the customer, using any possible devices through the customer's journey. The company's content online is one of the big factors for customers and other companies to evaluate how professional and good the company is and seems like. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 60.)

To create positive customer experience a tool of 4 different factors can be used, see the figure 16 below. This tool contains the following: promise, redemption, evidence and activation. The purpose of the tool is the contextuality of the web content. This means that in the content there is other content linked to it which is said to be valuable for the customer who is reading the content. To each link, there should be a reason why is it useful for the reader. And it's initially important to remember that this reason explained in the content will create expected value to the next content inside the suggested link. This is cause and effect relationship. There should be "a story" lightly moving through the channels. The customer is the one who interprets the content so it should be built nicely and indeed for the customer, not for the company. We could say that content planning is like planning where and how the company wants to guide the customer. Good and effective content will lead the customer forward without causing confusion or dead ends. With a clear path comes a good customer experience in digital channels. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 61.)



Figure 16: Four factors tool for web content creation (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 64).

Customer is in the center of this tool. Everything is thought through the customer's point of view. The promise part means that the company tells about their offerings through the customer's situation. So the content needs to be effective and affect the customer's feelings, creating an interest to continue with the company's web content. Redemption is the next step,

it's job is to show how the company carries out their promises. How does it change the customer's situation? What does the customer need to do? Next part, evidence, is to illustrate and visualise the promise and redemption. This can mean a picture, graphics or a video for example. The last part of the tool is called Activation. The job of this is to lead the customer to learn more about the subject or to order the company's email news letter or for example to lead the customer to get in touch with the company. (Keronen & Tanni 2013, 64.)

3.4 Social media definition

Social media can be defined as an internet-based interface and software which enables individuals to communicate with each others. A person can share their personal data, feelings, pictures, videos, location information and much more. Social media lives continuously and it's growing fast. There exists different social media channels like for example the well known ones Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Besides these two mentioned, there do exists many more and for different uses. (Leino 2012, 250.)

Social media channels gives the opportunity for an individual to express themselves, network and belong in to community activities (McStay 2010, 62). In the next section is introduced a few of the most common used social media channels suitable for content marketing. Channels are chosen in the perspective of a company operating in the financial sector.

3.5 Social media channels for the content marketing actions of House of Pips

The chosen social media channels for House of Pips's social media activity will be presented in the following sub-chapters. The channels are: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. These channels were chosen as a result of the research done on the potential customers, competitors of the company and the prevailing social media channel trends.

3.5.1 Instagram

Instagram was launched in October 2010. Ever since then it has been building its success world wide among users of different ages. Today it has around 400 million daily active users. Instargarm is meant for sharing pictures and videos and that's why it can be used well with content marketing. Instagram also offers great options for businesses to analyse their Instagram success and follow daily statistics of their own profile, getting insights about the

followers, what pictures and videos are the most viewed and liked. Online shopping can also be used and integrated with Instagram. With attractive pictures the companies try to get new buyers to their website. It is a game of quality content, not just text but each post will be a matter of catching the attention of the viewer by using pictures or video, also using hashtags as well is a way of targeting the post to some specific subjects. (Instagram business 2017.)

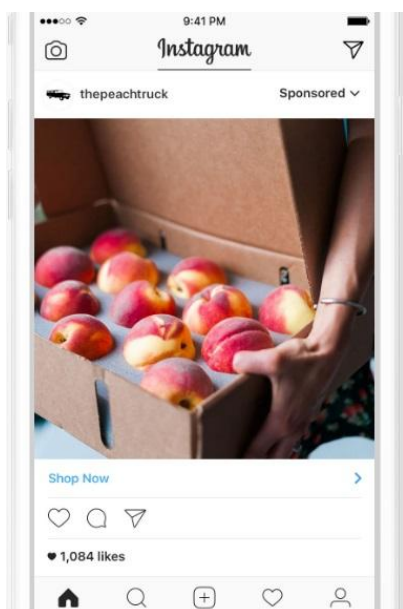


Figure 17: Instagram can be used for paid advertising to boost the amount of views and gain brand awareness (Instagram for business 2017).

Instagram works well as a content marketing tool because of its nature of posting pictures and videos daily and because advertising has been made more personalized, it's possible to target the advertising to a specific group of customers depending on what the desired segment of the company is. (Instagram business 2017.) In figure 17 above is an example of the Instagram advertising function.

3.5.2 Facebook

Over 1,8 million people are using Facebook today. Facebook was founded in February 2004. People come and use social media sites to connect with other people and to find things that they find interesting, useful or entertaining. Just like in Instagram, Facebook offers tools for target marketing. What ever the objectives of the company is; Facebook has a business platform for creating advertisements for different uses and needs, also together with Instagram and Facebook Messenger mobile application, which works for example with peronal customer service. On Facebook, it's possible to post text, pictures, videos or send live-video to the

people who follow the company's site. It offers many useful tools to create exiting content weekly. (Facebook business 2017.)

3.5.3 Twitter

Twitter was founded in March 2006 and it works as an community and a micro-blog service, since it allows the user to publish texts consisting only 140 marks. Twitter has over 313 million monthly active users and 82% of the active users use the mobile version. These days Twitter is also used as a customer service, communication, commenting and-as a review channel for companies and public media. (Twitter, about the company 2017.)



Figure 18: House of Pips Twitter feed

In the same way as Facebook and Instagram does, also Twitter offers tools food businesses to advertise their posts called Tweets and to target the marketing to a specifically chosen segment. (Twitter, about the company 2017.)

3.5.4 YouTube

YouTube was founded in February 2005 and it works as a video streaming channel for people who like to listen and watch music videos, entertaining videos, vloggers (video bloggers), advertisements or product reviews. Alongside these mentioned facts, much more can be found on YouTube, like for example free language education. (YouTube for business 2017.)

YouTube is a good way for a company to gain brand awareness because it has over billions of users and it's a place to reach people globally. According to YouTube statistics, more than half of the YouTube viewing comes from mobile phones. A company can create their own site and start gaining new interested followers and future customers with attractive video content. (YouTube for business 2017.)

3.5.5 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social media for networking and business matters. It was founded in 2002. LinkedIn could be called a work life Facebook. Individuals create profiles with information and details about their experiences, current positions, education and subjects of interests. People can share things to their connections and follow company pages. (LinkedIn for business 2017.)

What a company can do on LinkedIn is to have an official page and publish and share articles or other content to their followers or to different groups. It's also possible to promote the brand and get new followers in that way. LinkedIn has currently around 106 million monthly users. (LinkedIn for business 2017.)

3.6 Increasing awareness and brand recognition

When the competition is high, companies search for ways to connect with the customers and have a good impact on them. A strong brand always stands out from the crowd. (Wheeler 2013, 2.) Brand image means the picture that customers form in their minds about the company and its products or services. Brand identity then again means a description of how the company wants the customers to see and feel the brand and its products or services. (Grönroos 2009, 386.)

The greatest brands always stand for something. Values, an idea or perhaps a strategic position. Company should set their values and think of what their brand truly stands for and what kind of things are important for their business. (Wheeler 2013, 32.) A brand can also have its own value. Brand value means the customers idea of how valuable a specific product or service is compared to other options or solutions. If brand value is low, the customer is more likely to search for alternative options and other solutions from other companies. If the brand value is high, it can be expected that the customer will be loyal and engaged to the company. (Grönroos 2009, 389-391.)

The brand's value for customers is important because it creates the base for the company's sales work and creates value to the company itself. The more valuable brand, the more sales is likely to occur. A brand can be a lifestyle for somebody, acknowledged decision to choose a specific brand instead of other companies selling the similar products or services. A loyal brand advocate can even choose to keep buying from the brand even though their products and services would not be as good as competitors products. So building a strong brand and engaging brand loyal customers is extremely valuable for the company. (Grönroos 2009, 389-391.)

Building brand awareness and recognition is a process and requires active work. Brand's recognition levels can be divided in 4 parts. In the figure 19 below is shown these different levels. (Laakso 2003, 125.)



Figure 19: The pyramid of brand awareness and recognition, does the customers know who we are? (Laakso 2003, 125).

The pyramid starts from the bottom. The first and naturally the beginning for brand awareness building is the situation where the brand is not yet known. After active marketing actions and being active in online and offline channels, the brand gains more awareness. The next step of the awareness pyramid is aided brand awareness. This means that when the company is doing research on how well the brand name is known. For example: when showing names of different brands from the same business field to the respondent, the respondent should name the ones who he or she remembers hearing or seeing before. This type of research (aided brand awareness) tells if the consumers remembers the brand at all. (Laakso 2003, 125-126.)

Spontaneous awareness is the next level of the awareness pyramid. Through research this information can be gathered with by asking the respondents to name different brand names of some specific business field without showing them any logos or texts as a help. Spontaneous awareness requires that the consumers know in what business field the brand is operating in.

After spontaneous level of awareness comes the desired level of recognition, the brand is the most known in its category or business field. This means that when asking respondents to name brands, this brand is the top of mind brand and the only or the easiest to remember from the specific business field or category. (Laakso 2003, 126-127.)

There are different ways to create awareness to the brand. Brand awareness is the first initial thing to take place for business to work and for the company to create a real brand image. A strongly build brand will also add value to the customers and differentiate the company from other competitors. The concrete ways to build more brand awareness are for example the following facts listed in the figure 20 below. (Laakso 2003, 137).

- 
1. Be different
 2. Slogan or a brand song
 3. Symbols and logo's
 4. Sponsoring and events
 5. Create links
 6. Repeat the actions

Figure 20: Examples on how to build more brand awareness with by being different from the competitors (Laakso 2003, 137).

Being and doing the same things as competitors will naturally not make the company stand out from the crowd. What are the typical ways for the industry palayers to advertise their products or services? In what creative way can the company do something different? Doing something different compared to others will build brand awareness, being different is almost always remarkable and noticed. Using a slogan or a theme song created for the brand helps also with giving the brand its own colours, sounds and looks. A slogan can be a short but effective sentence or a word which shows the company's brand identity or vision. Symbols or logos are commonly used and effective way to create a figure, font or colours which will make the customers remember a specific brand when seeing something similar to those details. For some companies it can also be a specific scent or a physical feeling, a touch which makes the customers remember a brand. There are multiple ways. (Laakso 2003, 137-147.)

Another example on how to build brand awareness is going for sponsoring or attending events which fit with the company's business field and more importantly, the desired customer segment should be reached from the event. Being seen in events and representing the brand with good spirit can make people remember the brand with a positive feeling later on and even bring new customers to the company.

In what other ways can the company use to make them worth remembering? The answer is: links. Creating links between campaigns and the company's products or services means offering someone to remember connected to the brand, for example: a cartoon figure or a real celebrity person. The product can be a new sports drink, and then with advertising the company can use a famous athlete person to speak on behalf of the brand. This makes people feel connected and they also want to try the product if this famous athlete also uses it. The linking method with by using celebrities is very commonly seen and used among company's marketing communication campaigns.

No matter what method is used, one thing is for sure; repeat the actions. Once is not enough, especially in today's extremely living environment of social media and the world of internet. A word can disappear in seconds if not repeated often enough. Campaigns, events, everything should be planned well and then repeated to make sure the company wins a place in customers minds. (Laakso 2003, 137-147.) In the figure 21 below is visualized the brand development process of services.

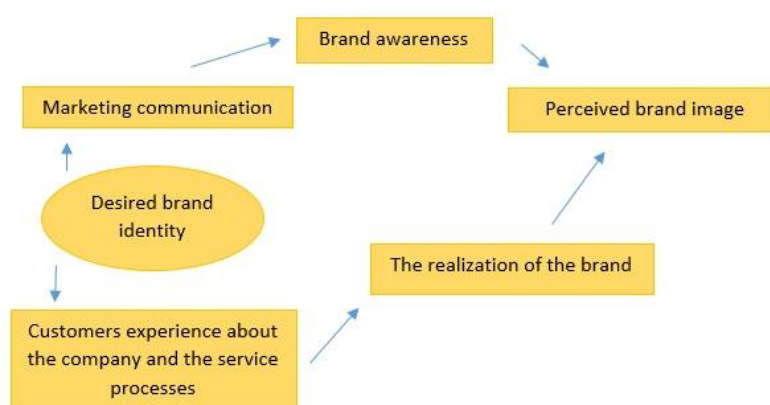


Figure 21: Brand process for improving the brand (Grönroos 2009, 392.)

The process starts from defining what is the desired brand identity that the company wants to own in the minds of their customers and other stakeholders. Based on this desired image, the company creates a plan for their marketing communications, which has the result of creating brand awareness, so the first steps are to make people aware that the brand exists. The customers will try the services and get their experience with the brand and its services. A well working service process is initially important because if it's not working properly and not giving a pleasant experience for the customer it's a big risk to ruin the brand's name. The experiences the customer has with the brand creates the realization of the brand and this realization leads to the image customer forms from the brand. (Grönroos 2009, 392-393.)

If the brand identity is internalized through all the employees of the company, vision and values of the brand will drive the company's actions in positive direction and lead to excellent

customer service and in long-term the gaining of brand awareness and reaching the desired brand image. (Wheeler 2013, 198.)

4 Creating a content marketing plan - SOSTAC model

Planning is essential. It helps with reaching the desired objectives and puts the company's activities in control. Content marketing plan is part of the entire business plan and for House of Pips, it will work as a full marketing plan, covering all the online marketing. It will all be integrated as one consistent package. Marketing planning can be for a short-term, medium-term or a long-term. In long-term planning it's important to remember to observe the company's macro environment, what are the upcoming trends? And how does the future look like? (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 536.)

Creating a content marketing plan follows the same pattern as any other good planning. One well known and very comprehensive planning system is PR Smith's SOSTAC planning system which can be used for any online marketing planning. SOSTAC model consists of 6 different parts to make sure the planning is realistic and measurable. And as the frames for the plan are followed by the SOSTAC, the content of the plan will follow the effective ways of content marketing, so creating posts which are valuable for the customers and leads them in the channels consistently and profitably. (PR Smith SOSTAC planning 2012.)

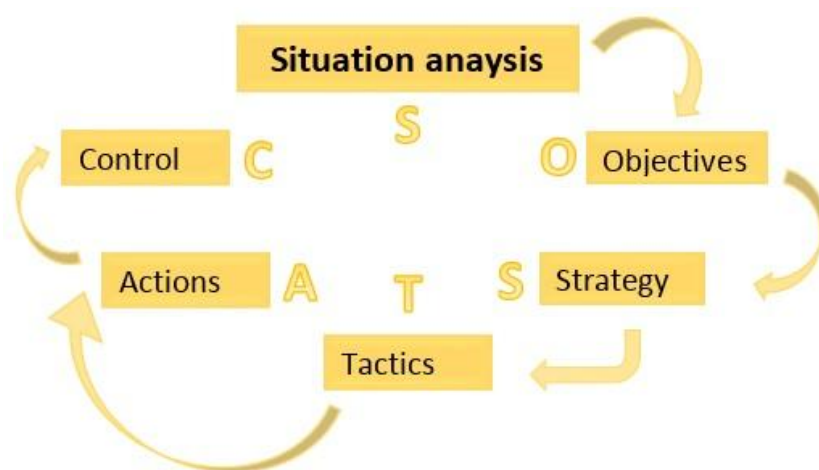


Figure 22: SOSTAC planning tool consists of 6 different parts (PR Smith SOSTAC planning 2012).

SOSTAC marketing planning tool consists of 6 parts (see figure 22 above), starting from Situation analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions and last, Control. Situation analysis answers to the question "Where is the company now?". Current customers, market situation and

competitors are analysed as well as the company and its actions itself. In situation analysis the company needs to analyse their internal and external environment; what are the things affecting to the business environment or to the company itself. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 541-546.)

4.1 SOSTAC model situation analysis

Commonly used tools to analyse internal and external matters are for example PEST analysis, SWOT analysis, competitor analysis and customer analysis. PEST analysis means the analysis of the business environment. It consists of the following parts: Political (for example laws or regulations), Economic, Social (for example the trends which can shape the markets and customer behaviour) and Technological variables. These are the areas which can possibly shape the company's marketplace so it's important to do research on each part and think how can they affect and how can the company prepare for those in the future. SWOT analysis means the analysis of the company's internal and external facts. Strengths and Weaknesses are the company's internal facts and Opportunities and Threats are the things outside of the company but having an affect on it. For example new technology solutions can be a good opportunity and a big threat can be new market entrants. Internal strengths can be for example strong brand, professional employees or existing good customer base. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 541-546.)

Competitor analysis and customer analysis is about doing research on the existing competitors and on the existing customers that the company has. In competitor analysis, the company also compares the prices, products and services to get a good overview about what the competitors are currently doing and who seems to be strong and who is failing and how. The customer analysis is more about the existing customers (as mentioned before). The company collects the data of the current customer base and evaluates the situation; who does the company attract and what kind of needs do they satisfy?. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 541-546.)

4.2 SOSTAC model objectives

The objectives part of the SOSTAC tool answers to the questions "Where is the company going?" and "Where does the company want to be?". Objectives should be realistic and measurable. Strict timescales should also be set to maintain consistent progress work. (PR Smith SOSTAC planning 2012.)

Objectives gives the company a direction, like a goal to reach. A tool to set realistic objectives can be used; this tool is called the 5Ss. The company can decide to use all of the 5Ss or just to pick out few of the parts. The parts are; Sell, Serve, Speak, Save and last, Sizzle. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 547.)

The objectives of the Sell part can for example be the growth of sales. The company decides how much they want to grow it, for example in percentages, 20% or perhaps 50% growth. Serve objectives can be for example: better customer service. :Speak objectives can be about collecting customer insights. For example asking questions, implementing online interviews, monitoring social media forums or groups, communicating with the customers in online channels and so on, to listen to the customers and get valuable data and insights. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 547.)

Next part of the 5Ss tool is Save. Save objectives are for example: saving costs like calling or text message costs, switching those to online for example Facebook messenger customer care. Or it can be any other way of saving: time, costs or efforts. After the Save part, the next step of the 5Ss tool is Sizzle which means something extra, a value adding factor which is possible only online and creates something exiting around the brand. The company can create something to their website, like a 360 video or game to give the customers nice experience while viewing their website. Together with the 5Ss tool the company should aim on keeping their objectives Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and finally, Time-related. These 5 factors to remember are called SMART objectives. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 547-548.)

4.3 SOSTAC model strategy

The next part of the SOSTAC tool is Strategy which answers to the question “How does the company get there”. Strategy tells how to reach the objectives that the company has set and also how to deliver the brand promises, sales goals and online marketing plans. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 555-558.)

Strategy is about embracing the companys strengths and building a competitive advantage. The company should put all of their resources available to the strategy in order to achieve the objectives. In the figure 23 below is listed a few question tests to help with making the company’s strategy better. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 555-558.) For House of Pips, the strategy will be answering to their objectives; how to reach the objectives with effective content marketing and being active on social media channels.

TEST 1: Will your strategy beat the market?
 TEST 2: Does your strategy tap a true source of advantage?
 TEST 3: Is your strategy granular about where to compete?
 TEST 4: Does your strategy put you ahead of trends?
 TEST 5: Does your strategy rest on privileged insights?

Figure 23: Strategy answers to the question "How do we get there?" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 556).

During the strategic planning, the company must decide how they are going to succeed in the market field. Positioning the company and deciding how to act. Are there possibilities for "blue oceans" meaning new innovations on the markets that nobody else has yet discovered. Or is the company going to differentiate itself in some other way to stay competitive? In service design it's initially important to satisfy the customers and add value to them. The base of service design is also to know the customers well. So before building the strategy, the company should be aware of what the customers desire and see valuable. (Tuulaniemi 2013,174-175.)

4.4 SOSTAC model tactics

The tactics part consist of detailed explanation of how to implement the strategy, including list of all the events or tools needed during specific time period. Tactics are to tell when to do things for example when is it time for a specific campaign and how is it going to be done. The difference between strategy and tactics are that strategy has more long term character than tactics. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 538, 564.)

4.5 SOSTAC model actions

Action part of the SOSTAC tool means the detailed look of the tactics part. So it answers to the questions "Who is going to do this?" "What kind of processes are required to make things work and happen on time?". Because each campaign and action is like a small project, they all require good managing and planning. Project management is needed to make schedules, evaluate risks and control the implementation of the actions. If the company is lacking of ideas, a different but effective cross-industry benchmark can be done to gain new ideas for new actions. It's possible to find something great from another industry player and transfer it

to the company's own actions; this can lead to great success. Something what other industry sees as dull can be revolutionary in other industry. (Chaffey & Smith, 559-561.)

4.6 SOSTAC model control

The last part of the SOSTAC tool is called control and it is about the measuring and controlling of the plan. Control answers to the question "Is the company failing or succeeding?". The company chooses which measuring and monitoring tools are needed for their actions. Subscriptions, sales, ROI, visitors, followers, likes, and so on. Controlling should happen more often than only at the end of the year. What if something is not working and the company notices it too late? That's why it's initial to also recognize which factors needs to be monitored more often, monthly or even weekly. What metrics and analytics to use, this all depends on the companys actions. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 566.)

5 Content marketing plan for House of Pips

The content marketing plan creation for House of Pips followed the PR Smith's SOSTAC framework to be sure that the planning would be realistic and measurable (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 538). The objectives and purpose of this study were to create a content marketing plan to help the company gain positive awareness among the desired customer segment and as a result increase sales with new and the existing engaged customers. The planning started with a situation analysis.

5.1 Situation analysis

To get an overall picture of the whole Forex signal provider business, a small market research was conducted in a form of net scouting, searching information online, previous research and studies about Forex trading industry and signal providing as a business. It seems that as Forex trading can be done from any place in this world (with only an internet and an interaction device required) it's highly attractive to many people. See in the appendix 3, another finding was that the volatile markets which allows multiple revenue opportunities makes Forex trading exiting to the traders. (Kaus, Analysis of Forex industry 2010.)

Especially in United Kingdom and in United States Forex trading is more commonly known and more significant amount of people are doing it compared to any other countires (according to BIS 2010 Triennial Central Bank Survey). This leads to the fact that House of Pips should more

strongly target to the people from United Kingdom and United States. But because House of Pips is a Dutch based company wanting to do a breakthrough in the Netherlands as well, it's initially important to know who are the people that the company should target, what are their needs and desires. House of Pips operates online and serves globally so the content marketing needs to be attractive and effective to acquire customers and differentiate the company from the competitors.

After researching the Forex trading industry the next step was to find out the situation of signal providing as a business (appendix 4). Signal providing can be unknown for those who are not familiar with Forex in general, so the customers of this business are most likely to be already well aware of Forex instead of complete newcomers. The competition in the signal provider business is high due to the the similarity of the offered services. This leads to cost competition. It's important for House of Pips to be known among Forex traders so as to result in profitable customer acquisition and the desired social media success. (Kaus, Analysis of Forex industry 2010.)

In this market field there are scammer companies who are not operating in the customer's best interests. Because of the scammers and the unfortunately high amount of them, many Forex traders have negative beliefs towards the signal provider business. To make a difference, House of Pips should take these worries and concerns that the customers have into account and try to offer a relief. As indicated in the theoretical part of this study, Value Proposition Canvas is a good tool to examine customer's behaviour, worries and needs. Building good trust between the company and its customers is important because the better the trust is the more likely it is for the customers to engage themselves to the service and brand.

5.1.1 PESTEL analysis

To clarify what kind of things have an effect on House of Pips's business environment, a PESTEL analysis was conducted, the table can be found in the appendix 5. Forex market is global, but still political factors of different countries have impact on the trading success. The traders of House of Pips should always be aware of the overall situations in the politics, globally.

In order to do successful trading House of Pips should follow the political changes and happenings actively. To be aware of different situations around the world is also a part of a good service; to know what is happening in the countries of the company's customers and in the countries of the traded currencies is also good.

Just like political factors, economical factors have their own impact on the business environment too. Economical uncertainty and overall situations of different countries and for example cost competition are factors that affect the environment rapidly. Socio-cultural factors worth taking into account are for example the changes in customer behaviour. Customers want to experience more; visuality, activity and feelings. This customer behaviour change is important to take into account when doing content marketing. Customers want more activating content like for example videos or moving pictures instead of only big amounts of text to read. (How Social Media Preferences Vary Per Generation 2017.), (Video Integration Is Next Step In Travel Storytelling 2017.)

These days customers rely on other customers. Meaning that reviews, forums and other customer to customer (C2C) channels are important for communication and information search. Experiences about products or services from one customer to another are an example of customer to customer action online. Next part of the PESTEL analysis is environmental factors. House of Pips operates fully online so the business is not dependend for example on natures raw materials or big polluting factories. Business can be well conducted by any device with an internet access. So as long as internet is working, House of Pips can deliver their service without problems. The final part of the analysis is the legal factors. Signal providers doesn't need a license or any certificates to be allowed to operate (Kaus, S. 2010 Analysis of Forex industry). Perhaps in the future it can be different because the objective of the regulation is usually to ensure fair and ethical business behavior. Currently anybody can become a signal provider and therefore there are many scammers and negative prejudices (found during reading deveral Forex discussion forums) towards the signal services. So the need of license or certificate to be able to operate would eliminate the scammers in this business field. (

The situation analysis consists of the anlysatation of the current service offered (appendix 6), social media situation (appendix 7) and current customers (appendix 9-10). Competitor analysis consisted of analysing the most known and easy to find companies (appendix 11-19). After researching and benchmarking the competitors; it's clear that House of Pips has a good chance to stand out from the crowd if the content marketing is done in the correct way and targeted to the right audience. Since House of Pips is new in this field, it will require a lot of work in the beginning, with social media marketing and search engine optimizing.

Things that House of Pips could learn from the competitors is for example: building a member area to their website, a log in option. This way it's also possible to collect data from the website's users, more personal contact information and see which things attract people to the website. Also the subscription form could have a part "Where did you find us?" so House of Pips would be more aware from which channels do the customers find the company. Or where did they heard about it.

5.1.2 SWOT analysis

To finish the situation analysis, SWOT analysis was conducted to evaluate the current internal Strengths, Weaknesses and external Opportunities and Threats (appendix 20). The strengths of House of Pips is that it's a global business, the company has potential customers in any country in the world. The company operates in 2 main languages, English and Dutch. The traders of the company are experienced in Forex trading for over 5 years, so they can offer a professional service to their customers. Internal weaknesses are more on the marketing side; clear marketing strategy and objectives are missing. Customer engagement and brand awareness are still at low level but what explains it the most is because the company has not operated for that long time yet. The weaknesses will be turned into strengths. This content marketing plan will help House of Pips to get new ideas, realistic objectives to implement professional content marketing and to result in gaining brand awareness so new customers and the existing customers will be more engaged to the company.

The external opportunities for House of Pips are for example the growing need of social media and community activities, this House of Pips can take into account and create a strong community in the future. People seek experiences and excitement (Finanssialan kyvykkydet 2020, Finanssialan Keskusliitto 2012, 28-30) so House of Pips can also create new things to satisfy these type of needs that was found during the study; mentoring program for better learning experience, website visuality, videos, mobile applications, YouTube videos, live streaming, tests, games and more.

New technology solutions and the growing demand of mobile solutions can give several opportunities because the service is online and mobile friendly. House of Pips can attract people with the benefits of trading "always online, always with you, just internet required, simple way to make a little extra". External threat for the company is the threat of new entrants because becoming a signal provider doesn't require any licenses (as mentioned earlier). Other threats are for example the unstable economical and political situations in this world. Online information security threats and privacy problems can also be a big threat because those factors affect on customer's buying behaviour but also can have negative affect on the service. Hackers, information leaks and online thieves for example.

5.2 Objectives - Where do we want to be?

Objectives (appendix 21) are the support stone of the whole marketing planning, objectives are the desired places and things that the company wants to achieve with the help of the marketing plan. 5Ss objectives setting tool was used to create realistic objectives for House of Pips.

5.2.1 House of Pips content marketing plan objectives

The objectives of the content marketing plan are to sell the services more efficiently with by implementing consistent and effective content marketing which attracts the desired customer segment. House of Pips will have excellent service and the company will build trust and engagement with the customers with value adding customer care and professional service.



Figure 24: 5Ss objectives for the House of Pips content marketing plan

House of Pips will be collecting customer insights through forums and other similar sources where customers communicate. The company will also communicate with the customers and potential customers online in different channels. The objectives are to create good customer relationships and spread positive attitude. From customer insights House of Pips can improve their service and even create new products and services for the customers' needs. House of Pips will keep their service online and use Telegram, Facebook messenger and Instagram direct message for customer service, so there is no SMS cost for example. Adding more frequently asked questions, creating an information bank and making the most asked questions clearly and easily available will save time from the employees from answering each question over and over again. So the content is truly valuable in multiple ways.

The final part of the 5Ss is the sizzle which stands for doing something different; gaining brand awareness by being active online and differentiating the brand from competitors. This

can be for example the way how the company succeeds in affecting people, with good content gaining followers and a good brand image.

5.2.2 Mission and vision

A new mission and vision (appendix 22) were set to support the objectives and future strategy work. House of Pips's vision is to be a leading Forex signal provider company who deliver superior value to all of its customers by serving them as individuals and offering high quality services with competitive prices and different service options that will exceed the customers expectations.

Vision

- *"We want to be a leading Forex signal provider company who deliver superior value to all of our customers by serving them as individuals and offering high quality services with competitive prices and different service options that will exceed their expectations. We want to break the negative beliefs towards Forex signal providing as a business and show the customers that we can truly help them and that we can give them all the information they are searching for. We want to build a Forex community and deliver our service in a social and also in quite a beneficial educational way."*

Mission

- *"We deliver high quality Forex signal and Autotrade service which will stand out from the crowd and add value to each of our customer in the way of profitable and safe forex trading, pleasant education, welcoming customer contact and a fun, social Forex community activities."*

Values

- *Professional Forex trading, always aiming to be as successful as possible to give concrete benefit to the customers*
- *"Quality over quantity"*
- *Easy, simple, reachable, modern and social*

Brand slogan: "We analyse, you trade."

Figure 25: Vision, mission, values and brand slogan

House of Pips will break the negative beliefs towards Forex signal providing as a business and show the customers that the company can truly help them and that House of Pips can give them all the information they are searching for. House of Pips wants to build a Forex community and deliver its service in a social and also in quite a beneficial educational way.

The mission is to deliver high quality Forex signal and Autotrade service which will stand out from the crowd and add value to each of the company's customer in the way of profitable and safe forex trading, pleasant education, welcoming customer contact and fun, social Forex community activities. The newly set brand values are the following; professional Forex trading, always aiming to be as successful as possible to give concrete benefit to the customers, "quality over quantity", easy, simple, reachable, modern and social, that is House of Pips.

5.3 Strategy - How do we achieve our goals?

The strategy part (appendix 23) of the content marketing plan tells how to achieve the objectives. The strategy for House of Pips is to create a content marketing path, be active on social media channels: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and focusing on search engine optimizing. House of Pips can engage potential customers with by creating content which is useful and inspiring for the customer and even worth sharing to the customer's own connections. This can convert the new customers into engaged customers.

House of Pips will create conversations and have dialogues with the existing customers and the potential customers. Asking questions, giving topics and themes encourages people to talk. House of Pips will be keeping the customer service on social media channels or email. And to save the company's employees time, it's initially important to collect the issues and questions that the customers have and based on those to improve the service. Being present in the chosen online channels and gaining followers with good content as well as having paid advertising campaigns that will gain awareness are the key tasks to get the business rolling. Information, inspiration, highlighting the values of the company and how House of Pips is different from other competitors.

To make sure House of Pips will get new customers and have the right kind of audience, segmentation was remade (appendix 24-25). House of Pips will target to the people who are interested in Forex trading, doing it already but in a need of professional support (Signals or Autotrade) or just to see other professional trader's ideas to adjust their own strategies.

The target group will be aware of the Forex terms and know how trading works in general. The age range will be from 20 to 40 years, because underaged or very young people can not necessarily handle their assets responsibly and older people, over 40 years old, are not necessarily very familiar with the social media channels where House of Pips operates so that would make it hard to deliver the service fully to the customer. If the company finds it hard to attract new customers globally, the segment can be defined more tight and target only to the United Kingdom, United States, Netherlands, Russia, Israel, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, Australia, France, Denmark (and Finland, because of the employee relations to the country). These mentioned countries have the most Forex traders and trading activity according to the data released by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) 2010 Triennial Central Bank Survey. This change could save marketing costs and give more profitable customer relationships in the future.

As mentioned the ideal customer would be between the ages 20-40. From the United Kingdom, United States, Netherlands, Russia, Israel, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, Australia,

France, Denmark or Finland. The person is financially stable and wealthy. The person subscribes for more than 1 month; the longer subscription time the better. He or she invest more than 500 euros on the trading account. Ideal customer is also active on social media channels like for example: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. He or she follows House of Pips online, shares the company's posts and communicates on the channels in a positive way. The person is interested in networking and community activities. What comes to Forex trading, not afraid of small money losses, the risks that Forex trading has, and the person is patient with the trading and believes on its profitable long term affects.

After doing net scouting, exploring multiple Forex forums, discussion and review pages it was clear what kind of things the customers see as good things in Forex signal providers and what they don't really like (the things which are worrying them) and as result preventing them from purchasing.

The biggest worry is signal provider scammers. This means companies who are not real and will take the customers money and give low quality service if even anything. Another worry is money loss, especially if it's caused by someone else than the customers themselves. It's easier to lose through your own fault than when someone else has been part of it. When the customer pays a lot for the service but doesn't get any added value from it, like education for example, it's not seen as very good service (according to the discussions found on Forex Forums).

Many people commented on Forex forums (Elite trader for example) that it would be nice to know why the signal provider suggests an action, what causes the decision and so on. So it's obvious that the people who are looking for a signal provider are also looking and hoping to learn from it. There was also a conversation about Forex mentoring, but after searching, not many forex mentors was found. Perhaps because it requires more time and effort from the company's employees.

In this business the customers rely on each others. From forums and other official pages people ask about signal providers and suggest good ones to each other. You could say that at least half of the conversations were about the negative things of signal providers. This is why House of Pips should focus on breaking those negative beliefs and create and communicate serious trust to its customers and social media followers. Focusing also on the pro's found; education and explanations, motivation, insights and mentoring.



Figure 26: Content marketing path shows the tip of the communication, the reaching channels, the engaging channel and the desired customer actions

The content marketing path (appendix 26) was created after the research on the potential customers, in which channels they are active and also taking into account where the competitors are being active. This research resulted as seen in the figure 26. The tip of the path and the tip of the communication is to have Forex trading related content, inspire and motivate people to do Forex trading with passion. House of Pips will give insights, opinions and break the negative beliefs with by offering service which will exceed the needs of the customers.

The chosen social media channels for reaching and attractive content are Instagram; Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube, because these channels are also used by the competitors and after net scouting the potential customer segmen;, it seems that these channels are used the most and works well with communication.

With these social media channels comes also search engine optimizing. House of Pips will optimize their website with the right keywords and create informative content to make the website more complete. The reaching channels are ment to lead the potential customer to the company's website. The website works as the informative and insightful channel to engage the customer. The actions that House of Pips needs the customers to do as a result of all the content marketing, website maintenance and using the service itself is to get inspired, share the content and recommend it to their friends, find the content useful and informative, subscribe for the service, enjoy the service and find it professional and trustworthy.

5.4 Tactics

The tactics part of the content marketing plan (appendix 27) opens the strategy in more detailed way. Starting with the engaging channel which is the company's website (appendix 27). More content will be created to Houseofpips.org, a databank/information bank consisting of the most needed terms in Forex trading (from 10 to 20 definitions), explained with text, pictures or/and video material. So the frequently asked questions (FAQ) page would be more about the service itself and about the company. The information bank would be then more about Forex trading terms and definitions. So these two subjects (service and company together and Forex trading separately) would be in different pages to make the content more clear instead of having everything on the same page.

5.4.1 Engaging channel

To make sure Google and other search engines notices House of Pips, it's initially important to create content in to the website for example in a form of a blog or an article. Regularly published blog texts or articles will create traffic to the website (caused by the people who are searching online the topics of the blog/article) and search engines will see the page as more and more important, then ranking it better on the search for specific keywords. The themes of the blog writings or the articles can come from the frequently asked questions, from the most common worries of the customers (like Forex scammers, money loss, risks why trading fails and how to choose a broker 10 tips) or it can be anything related to the Forex industry. (Organic SEO - Search Engine Optimization 2016.)

The video tutorials in House of Pips website should be done by the company itself, in a differentiated way. House of Pips can create "how to.." videos to YouTube and link them to their website and to other channels too. This way content is being created to two channels, YouTube and House of Pips website. Other visuality and action to add in to the website is called "calls to action tools". How House of Pips could use this is for example to create a game or a test "How much do you know about Forex trading?". Adding few simple questions, the customer chooses the answers he or she sees as correct and based on the results of the test he or she is being offered a package. A person gets 3/10 points correct and then Autotrade package would be suggested for him or her. With the results could appear a small summary; "You got 3/10 correct answers! Well done, you are getting there! Enrich your knowledge and take a look at our Forex databank and blog *here*. We would suggest you to start with our Autotrade package because... But you can see the other options from *here*

too. “ In this way the customer would be activated and linked to other pages on the site. Also then the customer get’s a personalized suggestion based on the points he or she gets.

Other suggestions to House of Pips website is the possibility to order a free email news letters. The emails would be about updates and latest offers and promotion codes. House of Pips could also edid to the subscription form a question “where did you find us?” to collect the data about where people find House of Pips. Updates to the website should be added as often as needed, blog/article should run at least montly (1-2 times a month minimum).

5.4.2 Channels to reach the potential customers

Next parts are the reaching channels of the content path; Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, search engine optimizing (SEO), LinkedIn and YouTube. On Instagram (appendix 28) , House of Pips will share motivating, inspiring and informative content. This content is meant to reach the target audience, make them impressed and interested to continue exploring the House of Pips website, where the final engagement is done by the attractive, informative and inspirational content which leads to purchase decision.

The pictures and videos on House of Pips Instagram should be attractive and give value to the viewer, for example 5 days of Forex trading tips, 3 days of company information, clips of House of Pips (who, why, how?), YouTube videos attracting the customer to see the full video on YouTube (this is leading the customer in the desired channels). Posting time on Instagram should be from 2 to 3 times per day 5 to 7 times a week because Instagram seems to be popular channel among traders so it’s important to stay active there. House of Pips can also find a person to represent the brand instead of just the cartoon figure, so the company would feel more personal and has someone for the customers to relate to.

The House of Pips Facebook channel (appendix 28) should be kept for informative content like updates, offers and promotions and for sharing House of Pips blog posts or articles. So the content would be truly valuable and professional. Also to have some entertainment too, House of Pips can link their YouTube videos to their Facebook page or have live streaming once a month about different subjects related to trading (tips, how to do..., and so on).

Another popular method used is “like and share” and “tag a friend” picures and videos attracting Facebook users to comment, tag, like or even share, which means more awareness to House of Pips. These like and share kind of posts should have some prize to win, otherwise people don’t feel any need to take the action (free subscription month for example can work as a prize). Publishing time will depend on how often there is offers, articles etc., to share.

Once a week is a good start for House of Pips, when the audience gets bigger more active publishing time can be considered.

Twitter channel (appendix 29) can be used to guide the customer from one channel to next. Using short but effective texts and hashtags, links to blog, articles, news, YouTube and attracting the customer with interesting content, publishing time from 2 to 3 times per day 5 to 7 times a week. Twitter (like also all the other channels) can be used for communicating with the customers; trying to awake conversations by asking questions and making short Twitter surveys called “Polls”. Example picture below.

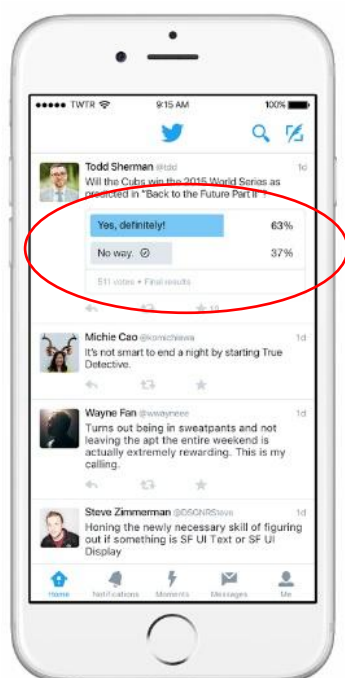


Figure 27: Twitter Polls (Sherman 2015).

House of Pips can create Polls about emerging and exciting topics. Gaining opinions and awareness through the Twitter communication. The next channel for reaching customers in the content marketing path is LinkedIn (appendix 30). House of Pips should create an official LinkedIn page for the company and there share important industry insights to show a professional image of the company. Publishing time can be from once a week to once in every 2 weeks to get started.

YouTube (appendix 30) can be used well for building brand awareness too. The videos should be entertaining but informative. For example if House of Pips makes Forex tutorials they can be professional and very informative but something fun should be added, little bit of humour like the well known company BabyPips does with their Forex lessons. Other video ideas are video series about the company, how was it founded and what happens “behind the scenes”.

Creating videos regularly is initially important for gaining the needed awareness and to have content to share and see.

5.4.3 Search engine optimizing

Search engine optimizing (appendix 29) will be done by creating useful content to the website regularly. Optimizing the content to the suggested keywords below in the figure 28; Google and other search engines will show House of Pips more better in the results for these search words and others matching with the website content. According to the keyword analysis done during this study: these keywords listed below in the figure 28 are commonly used and in few of them is also added a little bit of specification to the location and language to make sure that the company is easy to find for also those people who come from the same country where the company is operating (Netherlands, Dutch signal providers)



Figure 28: Keywords to use in search engine optimizing and marketing

Paid search engine marketing can be done for specific campaigns. A paid campaign can run for a week or longer with a daily budget. Campaigns can be months long which enables more views and clicks but it will possibly require a bigger investment. House of Pips can first focus on gaining organic (non-paid) awareness through the website content optimizing and later on try their sales message success with the paid search engine marketing (SEM).

5.4.4 Content marketing calendar

A content marketing calendar for the year 2017 was created (appendix 31) to the end of the tactics part to show in detail in which days and months are the campaigns and promotions done. Suitable awareness days for House of Pips and the business was collected and arranged in to the calendar. Under each month is the dates for the potential days to keep campaigns or

other promotions and also few ideas about what type of content or themes can be used during specific months. Content calendar can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 29: Content Marketing calendar for House of Pips

The calendar starts from June and ends in December. So before the year 2018 should be planned what are the campaigns and important days then in year 2018. The promotions and campaigns are ideas that House of Pips can use in their marketing actions this year. These days listed on the calendar are also common awareness days for other companies and competitors to be alert and have sales action on.

5.4.5 Budget

The budget (which is 100 euros per month) is based on the amount that the company is ready to invest in their marketing actions in year 2017 (appendix 32). The amount is divided between the most potential channels according to the competitor and customer analysis done during this study; Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and last, if the company wants to try search engine marketing they can put monetary effort on it.

Budget for marketing actions			
• 100 euros per month in total to all actions in year 2017 content marketing. Starting from June. Total cost 700 euros for online marketing in 2017.			
Channel	Investment (per month)	What/where?	Why?
Instagram	45€	To promo code advertising or to boost other campaigns in month (video, picture etc.)	To gain more audience and make House of Pips approach the right audience, who are interested in Forex trading.
Facebook	35€	Sales campaigns and promotions, best posts (blog links, articles, videos).	Facebook advertising can reach big audiences and Facebook is commonly used around the world, so should be boosted monthly during sales campaigns.
Twitter	20€	Sales campaigns, gaining awareness and new customers – In the beginning gaining real audience then the paid marketing actions can be increased.	To boost sales campaigns, reaching the right audience.
Google SEM	Daily budget, pay per click/view + keywords. Should be done when possible to invest big budget on the campaign. Google Ads offers pricing suggestions based on the desired marketing objectives.	(Doesn't have to be used every month in the beginning but it's good way to test the sales message and reach the target audience).	To make sure House of Pips will be easier to find from Search Engines especially during campaigns. Setting Ads will put House of Pips high on the rank with specified keywords.
Not all the channels need paid advertising, like LinkedIn. With good content comes organic success (SEO especially). But Instagram and Facebook should be kept strong and boosted for great results in sales and customer acquisition. Right target group + boosted marketing = SALES			

Figure 30: Budget for the marketing actions in 2017

The investments are monthly amounts, meaning; how much money to put on a chosen campaign or promotion in a specific month. Budget planning can be seen in the figure 29 above.

5.4.6 Measuring and monitoring

The basic social media marketing analytics (appendix 33) that House of Pips should use is the number of followers, likes and sharing in each channel (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn). Also the number of engaged users, which means users who actively follow and interact with House of Pips social media channels. Each post can be also monitored by the amount of coverage which means how many times the post(video, picture) has been seen. These analytics are the very basics and that's why should be monitored.



Figure 31: Analytics are meant for measuring the marketing success

What can be monitored and measured in the House of Pips website is the amount of clicks, views, conversion rate, duration of the visits and customer behaviour on the website. The campaigns should be monitored including return on investment (ROI), coverage, conversion of the campaign. So how did the objectives of the campaign succeed. Also in general it's important for the company to follow the ROI and how the business is growing in time.

5.5 Future trends - proposals

House of Pips should take into account the up coming and already growing trends emerging online (appendix 34). Content marketing is at a turning point, technology is developing and as a result: is being used more and more. Videos, live streaming and activating content is becoming more valuable than plain text content or basic pictures. Consumer behaviour changes rapidly and that affects on the content marketing. (Pohjola, M. 2014.) Publishing what your audience sees as interesting and attractive and being ahead of the trends is ideal. Doing something before others realize it can be a game changer.

For example: creating a social media forum with live streaming, or with other activating content that the forum users can create themselves. What could it be for House of Pips? Visuality and the use of technology solutions and mobile solutions is the future of content marketing. This should be taken into account when planning marketing actions for the coming years. (An, M. The Future of Content Marketing: How People Are Changing the Way They Read, Interact, and Engage With Content 2016.)

5.5.1 Forex trading forum

As mentioned in the theoretical part of this study, it is true that community activities are also a rising trend online. House of Pips has the advantage in their business that the people who do Forex trading, can do it for different reasons: as a hobby, as a work or just for fun. Those people who are really into it can wish to find support from other like-minded people, hear opinions, get help and find customer to customer (C2C) information. A live community can be hard to make but nothing is impossible. Hard work and dedication will give the desired success. First need to build a place for it (For example: website or Facebook) and then attract customers to talk in that forum. The forum should be made easy to access and full of informative content created by House of Pips and customers.

House of Pips Forex trading Forum

- House of Pips website could offer a forex trading related forum to offer useful free communication c2c service, build traffic to the website and to gain customer insights too. Community activities and Forums are big part of future social media (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 191), to follow the trends; House of Pips could do trading related live streaming, share video and pictures on the forum to wake up discussion.
- When the forum grows bigger, House of Pips can build up a strong community for the people who are active and want to socialize. This can be also operating in social media instant messaging channels or House of Pips can later create a mobile application for such member and community things.
- Forum will make House of Pips easy to find, more known, social and different from the competitors. A forum on the website will also make House of Pips feel more trust worthy and personal -> engaging current and new customers.

Example from the Elite Trader forum <https://www.elitetrader.com/et/>



Step 1. Create Forum to houseofpips.org (or Facebook)

Step 2. Advertise Forum and guide people to go there and discuss -> create few topics and themes to organize the forum and its subjects and

Step 3. Collect insights, develop services and learn!

The Forum can communicate about future trends, hot topics, trading related themes, Forex things and much more! House of Pips only needs to monitor that the content is appropriate and suitable for it. Customers create most of the content. Simple!

Figure 32: Forex trading Forum hosted by House of Pips will engage target audience


The forum (appendix 34 and the figure 32 above) can work with log in option, so then in order to access the forum a person needs to log-in first (create a profile). It can also work without the log-in option which makes the forum more open to anybody and also fast to access. Eventually more valuable would be the log in option because that way House of Pips can collect data about the log in members and know what kind of people are interested in such forum activity. Later House of Pips can contact those people and suggest a live community (instant messaging community) possibility integrated with the service package they are subscribed for. First build forum, then such live instant message community is possible. This kind of activity will engage customers well. In the figure above is shown the Forex forum proposal.

5.5.2 Mentoring package

Another proposal (appendix 34) is based on what was found during the net scouting and listening to the customers online in different forums and discussion channels; customers are hoping to learn. It appeared that some people were searching for Forex trading mentors, kind of signal providers but with more personalized and educative service. So a professional to tutor the customer with trading. Based on this need to get education and more personalized service, an idea came. House of Pips could create a mentoring package, available for limited amount of customers (1 or 2 at a time) and the mentoring relationship would last one or two months. House of Pips would offer an access to their video lessons (so the company needs to make video bank first ready for the mentoring program) and perhaps live webinars or live streaming through social media channels about selected themes. The mentor and the client would meet virtually (discussion room, instant message, skype or other agreed channel) and discuss about the needs of the client. Based on those needs the mentor creates the program and gives access to the basic content of the mentoring program (so the video bank). During this time the mentor would teach the essentials about Forex trading and give tips and guide the customer through his or her start with the Forex trading. Price would depend on the duration of the mentoring program. House of Pips can consider this proposal and also test the demand of this more in the future by asking in social media would this kind of service still be much needed. In the figure below: mentoring proposal.

New service proposal - Mentoring

- **Mentoring package**
 - Personal trading support for 1 to 2 months and light education about House of Pips trading style and more
 - Access to video bank of House of Pips education material
 - Personal live chat, live streaming through social media channels or webinars
 - Discussion with the client, what do they want, how to get there...
 - Available for example for 1 (or 2) client at a time
 - What value does this give?
 - Mentor will save the customer's time and money
 - Customer will learn the essentials fast and well explained
 - Support of the mentor gives more faith and safe feeling to Forex trading and after the mentoring the customer can continue to Autotrade or signals easily (engagement!)
 - NB: the target audience in mentoring package would be the people who are not very familiar with trading and want to learn the essentials!
 - If mentoring sounds too personal, a Forex education course for bigger audience is a good idea too (like the company Infinite prosperity offers)
- Price range: +100-250€ per month (considering the time spend to mentoring during month and the content of the mentoring program)



What makes a good Forex trading mentor?

1. Trust
2. Genuine intentions
3. Realistic
4. Professionalism

(Fuller, N. Forex Trading Mentor. 2017.)

Figure 33: Mentoring package proposal

If the mentoring program sounds too personal, a Forex education course can be also an option. The course would be for a bigger audience, for example from 5 to 10 people per course. Content would be similar as the mentoring program idea has, access to video bank, webinars and other educative content. Going for the new service idea requires always careful viability analysis and test of the demand for such service like mentioned before.



Figure 34: House of Pips - Leader in the Forex signal provider business

6 Conclusions

After all the research it's clear that this business field is not the easiest to gain success in, but every business field has its own challenges. A shoe store company can produce a big amount of shoes and suddenly customers think that the shoes are out of style and nobody wants to buy them anymore and are calling them ugly online, laughing about the shoes and the brand. The company is in trouble with still shoes left in stock and having no buyers. They have to listen to customers and find out what kind of shoes can be stylish again, or perhaps they can make people like the shoes again with by investing on famous model to wear the shoes and then customers will think it's "cool" again. There are ways to get back on track but the point is that every industry has their own struggles. It's all about how well to manage it, how well to be aware of the risks, upcoming trends and so on. Being aware and ahead of the future trends is initially important.

Signal provider business requires very hard and patient work to gain the top of mind awareness among traders and the target audience. Forex trading is risky and no matter how hard

the company would want to give the best service, it's still about the customers money and losing the money due to unexpected market conditions can drive away the customers and give negative feelings towards the service. Only key to success is to do profitable trading and minimize the losses and risks. It's not always possible and then it can feel hard for the company to offer their service with pride. But compensating the losses with money back guarantee helps with this and adding other type of service like the mentoring program, or Forex education course, would give some variability to the service offerings (requires its own target group as mentioned earlier).

6.1 New target group and new positioning

One big thing to take into account is that House of Pips should definitely target their customer segment to more detailed audience as explained earlier in this study. People who are familiar with trading and the risks are ideal because if there is a money loss the customers won't get overwhelmed or quit immediately. Having customers who are not aware that their money is in risk (trading with money that they cannot afford to lose) and who don't have own opinions (strategy, knowledge) in trading can be risky for the business to take on and offer the service. House of Pips needs for the signals and Autotrade those people who are wealthy, well aware of the risks, doing trading already but needing professional opinions and ideas. The right audience is initially important in order to be able to make profitable business in the future.

Another conclusion was that since signal providers are known in a bit of a negative light and House of Pips employees think highlighting the Autotrade service would be more better than the "signal provider" term, House of Pips could change from the website and from social media channels all the big headlines and information from "House of Pips signal provider" to "House of Pips professional Forex assistance" then this would cover Autotrade, also signals and maybe in the future more Forex related services. In this way if some people have negative feeling towards signal providers but want Autotrade, those people would still enter the House of Pips website because it would not be advertised immediately as a signal provider, but more widely: professional Forex trading assistance.

6.2 Services and strategy work

Starting a business and gaining success can take long but it will be worth it eventually. Careful and consistent strategy work (in marketing and in business in general) should be done and also monitor the success of all the actions, because this business requires customers it's

also initially important to listen to the customers; what are the needs and what is the demand for different services. Can House of Pips do something differently or add something to improve? Always listen to the customers and improve if possible. Because signal providers are not having very good reputation online, it is valuable for House of Pips to consider the suggested service options to be added next to the Autoteade and signals. Having also less risky and that way more easier to offer services, can be good for the business profitability in the future.

Success and desired awareness will be gained through social media and other online channels by publishing interesting, attractive and engaging content regularly. The objective is to gain more awareness so being active online is initially important. With the help of the content marketing plan, House of Pips can gain the wanted awareness, get new ideas and frames to conduct the business more profitably. The content marketing plan will also support the future strategic work and give new motivation for the company to push forward and believe they can make a breakthrough in their home country, the Netherlands, as well as in other countries. House of Pips will start its mission to break the negative beliefs towards this business and be known from its goodwill and fairness which is quite rare in this industry.

6.3 Re-positioning the brand slogan

As a result of the reflection done during this study, it would be also considerable to clear out the sales message “we analyse, you trade” which is actually quite ingenious, that’s why it should be brought out more. What is the meaning of that slogan? Many might think “if the company is selling signals it means copying the trades and leaving your own brains at home”. But no, that’s not it. The customer can choose to use the trades or just to have a look at the ideas and do what the customer feels like it’s best to do. Signals should be understood as more useful service; “Take the advantage of getting ideas, tips and hear the opinions of a professional trader. Learn from it and improve every day, become a professional. Create your own strategies and get better with us”. This is what House of Pips should also highlight and this is what will also break many of the negative beliefs which are indeed about the “copying” and “doing nothing”, “not learning”, “just paying and getting nothing back”. People nowadays want to be activated, they want to learn and do things, so that’s why conquering the target audience with this new genuine brand message would be most likely to result in profitable membership acquisition.

7 Evaluation

The objectives of this study were to create a marketing plan to help the company gain more brand awareness online, get an up to date marketing strategy targeted to the new segment which was defined as a result of the research online on potential customers, Forex trading in general and signal providers. With the new content marketing plan, the company has good resources for better membership acquisition. The concrete result of this study was the content marketing plan itself. The assignment was successfully accomplished and the company can start using the plan immediately.

The company can fully use the plan as it is or get ideas from it and improve their current activities based on the plan. The plan consists of several important insights, for example about the target group and social media channels which will help House of Pips with their future marketing actions and customer care. The plan was build with using the PR Smith's SOSTAC model so it follows a professional structure of planning. The theoretical background was used extensively to make sure the plan would give the best possible value to the company.

The company's employees found the thesis and the content marketing plan useful. They can use the results and findings to improve their future marketing strategy and to see more better; where can the company improve and what kind of things should be highlighted more to result in positive brand awareness and membership acquisition.

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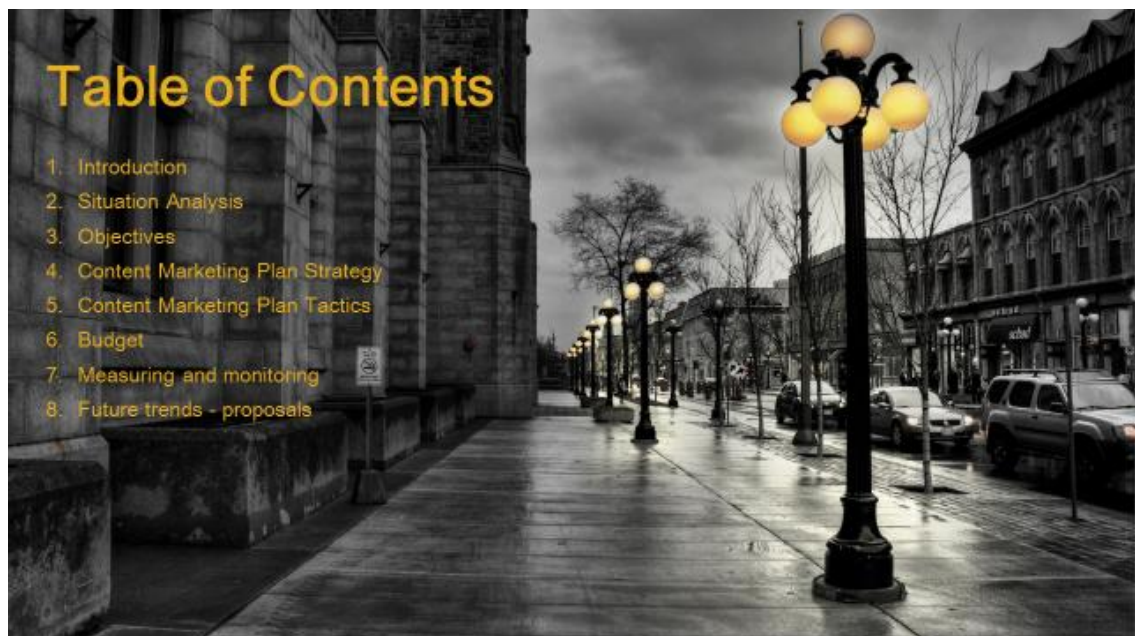
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Appendix 1: Content Marketing Plan for House of Pips



Appendix 2: Introduction - background and assignment

Introduction

Background

- House of Pips is a professional Forex signal providing company. Because House of Pips is still new in the Forex signal service market field, a proper content marketing plan is needed to build brand awareness and to gain more engaged and therefore happy customers. (House of Pips 2017.)
- House of Pips is a Dutch based but a global company, open to customers from all over the world. This makes the online marketing success initially important for House of Pips.

Assignment

- Creating an integrated content marketing plan to make House of Pips more known online and to give frames and objectives to the future online marketing
- With by the customer-oriented marketing, the goal is to reach the right customers and make the customers profitably engaged to House of Pips
- Key words: Content marketing, brand recognition, brand awareness, social media activity, membership acquisition, Forex trading

Situation Analysis

1. Forex Trading industry
2. Forex signal providing as a market field
 3. PEST analysis
 4. Product/Service
 5. Customers
 6. Competitors
 7. SWOT analysis

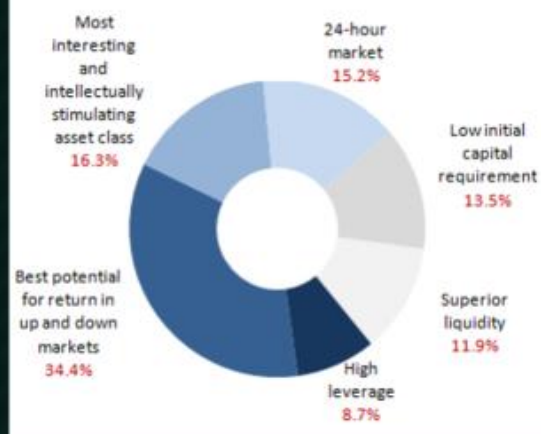
Appendix 3: Situation analysis - Forex trading industry

Forex trading industry

- Forex is the worlds largest financial trading market, as a globally open market with no central market place it's hard to regulate and control the market. Forex market can be described as a decentralized multiple-dealer market. There is no physical location where dealers meet with traders. (Kaus, S. 2010 Analysis of Forex industry.) Trading in Forex markets averaged \$5.1 trillion trade volume per day in April 2016, according to the 2016 Triennial Central Bank Survey of FX.
- To be able to do Forex trading successfully the trader follows the currencies of different countries, politics, economy, productivity and countries' own budgets to keep track on the current situation and up coming situations. Currencies are exchanged in order to do business internationally. What makes Forex trading so exciting is the volatile markets which allows countless revenue opportunities. So the money making possibility and the easy way of doing it online with only an internet access and an interaction device needed makes it attractive to people. (Kaus, S. 2010 Analysis of Forex industry.)
- The current market participants are for example Governments and Central Banks (implementing monetary and economic policies), Banks and Investment Banks (providing services for their commercial customers or trading own accounts), Hedge Funds (leverage and diversify their investments), Businesses, Individuals and SME's (trade currencies for purchases or speculation). (Kaus, S. 2010 Analysis of Forex industry.)

Q. What is the Strongest Reason for You to Trade FX?

Source: CitiFX Pro Survey, (n = More than 3,000) 2011



https://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/groups/pdf/txcg/111005_FX_retail_trading.pdf?497ed9c2dc1cce81f236a6bf84faf205

Appendix 4: Signal providing as a market field

Signal providing as a market field

- The competition in this industry is high among the market participants. The similarity of the services results in high cost competition. Differentiation between competitors has been provided through value adding services: For example market analysis and trading assistance. Providers want to create winning and profitable trading strategies for their customers in order to engage them. Forex trading is a worldwide market with plenty of possibilities. The key is to only stand out from the crowd. (Kaus, S. 2010 Analysis of Forex Industry.)
- The threat for this service is also that there are possibilities to get free signals, like mentioned before, from different private providers online and as one trader had commented on Elitetrader.com forum "Social media, Twitter, is a good place to check out signals with using the hash tag" so social media also gives free tips and hints to which some people settle for and not even try to search for more better and profitable options.
- Links to the discussions:
 - <https://www.elitetrader.com/et/threads/is-it-okay-to-use-forex-signal-services.295285/page-3>
 - <https://www.quora.com/Is-a-Forex-Signals-membership-worth-it>
 - <https://www.quora.com/Are-forex-signals-useful-in-making-profits-and-can-you-recommend-a-good-signal-provider>
 - <https://www.quora.com/Are-mentoring-Forex-Trading-Signals-programs-worth-it>

"Consumers react to the changes in society and in the economy in a way that they become more cautious in their decision making and emphasize the economical and physical security importance more than risk-taking. This is in the financial sector seen as, for example, customer's increasing interest and increased complexity/demand of their investment income. News coverage of the various information security threats makes many consumers to consider the security of online transactions." – FK, Ritva Rajander-Juusti

Appendix 5: PESTEL analysis

PESTEL analysis – What is affecting your business environment? Possibilities, changes and threats.	
Political factors - The political situation and its changes affecting currencies movements. - Because Forex market is global, local political factors have usually quite little long-term impact to the market.	Sources of the PESTEL analysis: Avi Mizrahi 2011 Forex Industry Summary. Sander Kaus 2010 Analysis of Forex industry.
Economical factors - Responsibility, ethics and sustainable development -> operating online, honesty, trust. - Economical uncertainty -> affecting currencies movements and market players confidence. - Cost competition between signal providers.	Finanssialan Keskuslaiton raportti finanssialan kyvykkyydet vuonna 2020, 2012. Javier Paz Retail FX: Market Overview 2011. Matti Pohjola 2014 digitalisaatio ja tuottavuus finanssialalla.
Socio-cultural factors - Experiential experiences, changes in customer behavior and needs, customers want to experience more and have visual content to get experiences and feelings. - The increasing crime and security threats online. - Excellence, engagement & ethics. Consumer confidence towards the financial sector companies can decline because of the online security threats for example - Consumers rely more and more on other consumers wisdom and peer reviews in their decisions. So good customer service and competitive products are highlighted in this business field.	
Technological factors - Technological development can change the industry and serve new opportunities to conduct business. New working platforms, visuality and inventions. The importance of social media and social communities is growing. - Technology takes over human's work, automation. - Dashing development of mobile technology	
Environmental factors - Signal providing happens online and from anywhere around the world, so it is dependent on internet connection and device used. Without internet the service can not work.	
Legal factors - Signal providing does not require licenses or certificates, at least not so far. Only brokers and other financial advice services accessing the customer's money needs licenses to operate. It can be that in the future also Forex signal providers must have a license. The objective of the regulation is to ensure fair and ethical business behavior. Currently anybody can become a signal provider and therefore there are many scammers and negative prejudices.	

Product/Service

1. Silver package
2. Gold package
3. Autotrader

Appendix 6: Product/Service

"The sales man must be able to be reliable, honest and natural in a selling situation. In addition, he must be able to identify each client's personal wishes and needs so that customers feel that they are important and that it's easy for the customers to approach the expert person who is serving them. Customers should also understand what they are being offered, so the seller must be clear and easy to understand when explaining products or services to the customers" – BBA student of the Financial Sector




- 3 different product packages:
 - Silver for long term trade signals (daily signals)
 - Gold for long and short term signals and (daily signals actively, multiple times per day)
 - Autotrade for automatic long term signals
- Products meets the needs of a person...
 - Who is interested in starting Forex trading and wants professional support and assistance with it
 - Who is already doing Forex trading but wants to get advices, community support and belong in to a group of likeminded people
 - Who is familiar with Forex trading, wants to improve, so wishes to get signals or automated trading option and support from professional for better results
 - Who wants to make money
 - Who wants automated Forex trading







BUY NOW

Appendix 7: Product/Service and social media situation

Challenges	Possibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition is high, products need to stand out well and be differentiated • Brand awareness • (Live chat: community needs enough members to work well and to engage members) • Engaging customers • Breaking the negative beliefs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do signal providers want to share their ideas instead of keeping them as a secret and make money for their own good? • Bad quality and customer service • No adding value to customers • No personalized feeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic promises with money back guarantee in case of non-profitable month. • Products are competitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prices • Product options and subscription length options • Personal customer service (Telegram, Instagram, Facebook, Email)



Social media accounts

<p>Facebook </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House of Pips Int. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47 likes (20.3.2017) • 47 followers • House of Pips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 likes 	<p>Instagram </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • @houseofpips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2768 followers (20.3.2017) • 61 posts 	<p>Twitter </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • @houseofpips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73 followers (20.3.2017)
<p>YouTube </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 followers (7.3.2017) • 3 posts 	<p>Snapchat </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exists, not operating currently 	<p>Telegram </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telegram for signals live chat and personal customer service

Appendix 8: House of Pips website situation

www.houseofpips.org

- + House of Pips has their website in English and Dutch
- + Brand colors and logo are well built
- + Informative website content
- + Video and visuality of the website are customer friendly
- + Linking to Instagram account and to other social media channels makes it easy for the visitors to continue viewing in other channels

HOUSE OF PIPS

Google

Google SE ranking for "House of Pips" (7.3.2017):

With other more common words like "signal provider Forex" or "signal provider Forex Dutch", House of Pips is far away in the ranking. Ideal situation and the goal is to be on the first page.

SOCIAL TRADING • RISK MANAGEMENT • VERIFIED RESULTS • LIVE CHAT • 1 WEEK TRIAL PERIOD • TO BE CANCELLED MONTHLY

1. **House of Pips | Facebook**
<https://m.facebook.com/houseofpips>
House of Pips. 50 tykkäystä · 1 puhutus tilitä. Maak kennis met social trading. Sluit je aan en verla de valutamarkt met een expert!
2. **House of Pips | Facebook**
<https://m.facebook.com/houseofpips>
House of Pips. 50 likes. Maak kennis met social trading. Sluit je aan en verla de valutamarkt met een expert!
3. **House of Pips System by HouseofPips | ...**
www.myfxbook.com/members/house...
Results and performance of House of Pips. Discuss, review, analyze and learn about House of Pips.
4. **House of Pips**
www.houseofpips.org
House of Pips is the number 1 Forex signal provider. Make use of the current abilities in social trading and let a professional trader ...

Customers

1. Who are our current customers?
2. What are their worries and how do they act online?

Appendix 9: Customers - current customers

Customers

- **Who are our current customers and prevalent potential customers?**
 - 75% men (according to House of Pips Instagram analytics 14.6.2017)
 - 25% women (according to House of Pips Instagram analytics 14.6.2017)
 - Age: 18-44 (according to House of Pips Instagram analytics 14.6.2017)
 - From: United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, Singapore, Netherlands, Mexico (according to House of Pips Instagram analytics and previous customer data)
- **What is our target audience?**
 - Age: 18 +
 - Country: no limits
 - Men and women
 - Interested in Forex trading



Customers

- What are the needs that we satisfy?
 - The need of...
 - help in trading; customer is unconfident with his/her own ideas and strategies so wants assistance
 - making money
 - doing something different or new
 - learning about and how to do Forex trading
 - being able to work from home or where ever internet is available
 - support with trading and ideas
- How do we add and develop the value that a customer experiences?
 - Personalized customer service and contact
 - Professional trading, signal service with risk management and money back guarantee for non-profitable months
 - Competitive prices for each package option, improving service constantly based on the customer feedback and trends

Appendix 10: Customers

"Customer experience is the sum of the encounters, perceptions and feelings that the customer is forming from the company's activities." – Katleena Korteso & Janne Löytänä

Appendix 11: Competitor analysis



Competitors

- There are so many competitors that it would make a long list to collect them all and that would not even give much value. The main thing is to find the ones who are easy to find online and who seem to be popular and well known as signal providers. In the following slide shows, you can see some competitors listed, but keep in mind that still some of them can be not operating for the customer's best interest. Best way to recognize it, is the marketing actions and shady trading results. However, scammer or not, they can attract innocent customers who could go for House of Pips instead and get the service they really were looking for, and even more, so it's good to be aware what kind of signal providers operate out there.
- Free signal providers and social media signal providers are also tough competitors attracting potential customers, but not all of them have home websites or official image as a company and therefore are not fully comparable to House of Pips.
- Signal providers listed on the following websites (reliable or not, these can highly attract newbies because of the high google rank)
 - <http://www.top10forexsignals.com/>
 - <http://www.dailyforex.com/forex-trading-signals/page-1>
 - <http://fxforex-trading.com/>
 - <http://www.forexpeacearmy.com/forex-reviews>
- Like mentioned before, there exists multiple competitors and that's why it's important to follow the way through customers voice and reviews to the most powerful and competitive ones to find out how do the competitors differentiate themselves, what is their offered value? (Also need to be very critical because of the huge amount of scammer services in this field).
- Other competitors worth checking:
 - <http://www.practicalpips.com/>
 - <https://simplefx.com/dashboard/?s=&adg=18053001957&adid=81767245327&loc=9065112&dev=&kw=fx%20signals&plcmnt=&adid=ClGV1-vKs9MCFaspOwodf9YHGO>

Appendix 12: Competitor analysis table

Competitors – Who are they? (Not in specific order, collected by the SE ranks and customers recommendations online)						
Company name	Website	Country	Social media accounts	Products/services	Prices	+/-
Samy17fx	http://samy17fx.com/	Canada	Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube	3 signal packages: Forex signals, Telegram group, personal teaching (Ultimate package)	Standard 1 month = \$ 150 Gold 2 months = \$ 290 Ultimate 8 hours = \$ 600	+ Email updates free subscription + FAQs enough - Website not so user friendly (navigation doesn't work well)
Akas Forex	https://akasforex.com/contact-membership/	UK	Facebook, Twitter	- Blog subscription - Signals subscription	1 month = \$100 Other prices not to be found	+ Blog send through email or seen on the website with a password - Bad non-updated looking website - Lack of information and unclear guidance
1000 Pip Builder	http://www.1000pipbuilder.com/	USA	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	Signal subscription, Email and SMS signals	97 \$ / month	+ Free 1 week trial + Reviews + Website overview looks quite modern and visual - Social media navigation links not working

Company name	Website	Country	Social media accounts	Products/services	Prices	+/-
Signalator	https://www.signalator.com/en/	UK	Facebook, Twitter	Trading signals with an automated trading, SMS and Email alerts. 3 package types well and with detailed explanation, each different so easy to find own.	XT signals: 1 month=\$125 3 months=\$300 6 months=\$525 1 year=\$900 Basic signals: Same price as XT signals package Plus signals forex set: 1 month=\$195 3 months=\$468 6 months=\$819 1 year=\$1404	+ High Google rank for "signal provider forex" + Informative and large website content (this has affect on the SE ranking) - Almost too much small text, not so user friendly - Plain, non visual website look
Dux forex	https://www.duxforex.com/	UK	Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest	Forex signals, with email or mobile application Dux Forex -alerts	4,995 for forex signals	+ Low price + Own mobile application is definitely a nice plus
Vladimir Forex Signals	http://www.vladimirforexsignals.com/?hop=mlcebio	Unknown	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	Signal service, blog, community + teaching, seminars	975 / month	+ Lots of reasons to join explained + Visual + Offers a lot + 7days free trial

Appendix 13: Competitor analysis table

Company name	Website	Country	Media accounts	Products/services	Prices	+/-
FxLifeStyle	http://www.fxlifestyle.com/	Unknown	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube	Forex signals: Different packages with payment option only to pay all at once, no subscription. PDF book included to some of the packages. Forex course: Mentoring, video chats, teaching, tips, personal help, chat rooms.	Signals: 1 month= 39,99\$ 2 months= 79,99\$ 5 months= 129,99\$ 1 year= 189,99\$	+ Very active and popular social media + Website looks professional and well explained, visual content -Attracts people who want to get rich FAST, typical money/richness advertising, targeting on students, younger audience - "A Showoff" feels a bit like a scam because of the pushy millionaire bragging on social media
The Forex Boss	http://theforexboss.com/	Slovakia	Instagram, Facebook	Signals, technical analysis and fundamental market data. Signals send via Telegram or Whatsapp.	First month 200\$ and then 250\$/month, 70\$ per week, Possibility for custom subscription.	- Short not very informative website, zero results to be found, social media only about proving customers not inspiring - Pricing method + 2 days free trial
Forex Profita	http://www.forexprofita.com/	Australia or India? Unclear	Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Skype, Google +	Forex signals: 3-5 Signals per day, 9 Currency Pairs, Entries, SL and TP placement, 75% Wining Rate, Whatsapp, Viber Support, Instant Mobile Alert of signal, Personal Signal Manager, Signal given on US and London Sessions.	1 week trial 30\$, Standard 100\$ per month, Business 250\$ 3 months, Professional 400\$ 6 months.	+ Modern nice looking website with lot of visuality and movement + Social media channels -Non active twitter, no Instagram - Questioning proof of performance/results because they could be

Company name	Website	Country	Social media accounts	Products/services	Prices	+/-
Multi Management Future Solutions	http://www.mmfsolutions.sg/services/forex-pack/	Singapore	Facebook, pinterest, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter	Forex: Signals and HNI forex (higher profit Margin with less risk ratio) Contact via skype, Whatsapp, email or SMS.	Signals: Quarterly: 450\$ 6 months: 800 \$ 1 year: 1500\$	+ Social media + Modern and updated website plus wide informative content
Honest Forex Signals	http://www.honestforexsignals.com/join	UK	No active social media channels	Signals, send through email.	Signals: 177\$ / month	+ Nice reviews, makes it feel reliable and professional - Old looking website with not much visuality
Daily forex signals	https://www.dailyforexsignals.co.uk/	UK	Facebook, Instagram	4 subscription options with price trick (price of 1 year), signals send to the customers email.	29,99€ /1 month 74,99€ / 3 months 119,99€ /6 months 49,99€ / 1 year	+ Chat box on their website + Reviews + Overview looks quite reliable and modern + Price trick is quite good - No community
Dutch forex signals	http://www.dutchforexsignals.com/	The Netherlands	Facebook, Instagram, twitter	4 subscription options called "licenses", daily signals, community chat on WhatsApp.	29€ /1 month 74,95€ /3 months 125€ /6 months 199,95€ /1 year	+ 2 days free trial + Community chat + Competitive prices - Doesn't feel very professional based of Instagram and messy website content, questioning results

Appendix 14: Competitor benchmark

Competitors — What can we learn from them? How could we improve or do more?

- Price: Prices of the services vary quite a lot. Common trick used is that the monthly paid price lowers when choosing a longer subscription option for example 29,99€ /1 month vs. 49,99€ / 1 year.
- Social media: Social media is important in this industry because of the customer segment indeed comes from all around the world. Social media is a good way to reach anybody from anywhere. Most commonly used channels among competitors are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Some few competitors had also YouTube channels.
- Website: Creating content to the website like blog writings, weekly/monthly, article etc. to make people come back and find information from the website. Packages explained one by one on different pages BUT not too much talk, visuality is always good.
 - Log in option, "members area", other content for only registered customers, no need to buy anything but gives access to the forum for example. This way easy to collect data from prospects and better knowledge of who are our customers and where do they come from etc. (during registration they have to fill a form of profile questions.)
- Package options/service: Community chat (BUT NEEDS TO BE WELL BUILT FIRST) so a forum community page would be a easier start for creating this Forex community and social -learning from each others- thing.
- Image: Reviews on other sites like Forex Peace Army and other forums not owned by House of Pips are a great proof of a quality. Some of the competitors had reviews on Forex Peace Army and customers were talking about companies also in forums like Elitetrader.
- Other: In the subscription/register form could be (like some competitors had) a quick question "Where did you find us?" This little question would give very valuable data for the future online marketing and channel solutions. House of Pips would be more aware where the customers find their service, is it Facebook, Instagram or something else perhaps.

Competitor benchmark

Appendix 15: Benchmarking

Forex Profita – Google +



- Forex Profita has Google + account where they share their news and try to guide the customers with a link it to their website. Also the use of # hashtags is strong so they make sure they are easy to be found. Google + is not very commonly used social media but it can help with traffic building and therefore can be something to think about in the future for House of Pips (If Google + gains more audience from the desired target group). But for now, it's not necessary because it's not commonly used.

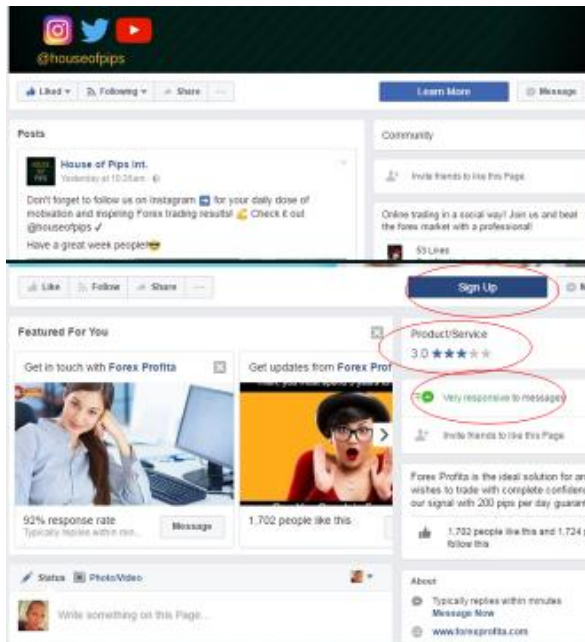
<https://plus.google.com/u/0/104025855654110883354>

Forex Profita – Website



- Website is modern and very visual with moving pictures and interesting content catching the viewers eye
- Navigation is easy to use and find from the top of the site
- Social media linking
- Newsletter possibility which creates engagement and new customer possibilities
- Detailed contact information creates the feeling of trust towards this company

Appendix 16: Benchmarking



Forex Profita – Facebook

- House of Pips Int. Facebook site is as a community but as an operating service should be changed into a product/service site instead, like Forex Profita has (see the picture example).
- House of Pips Facebook site should be the possibility to give reviews. Forex Profita's Facebook gives information about how fast they reply to their customers via FB messenger etc. Also like we see in the picture, it has direct button "Sign Up" which guides the customer to the sign up page of the company, simple and effective!

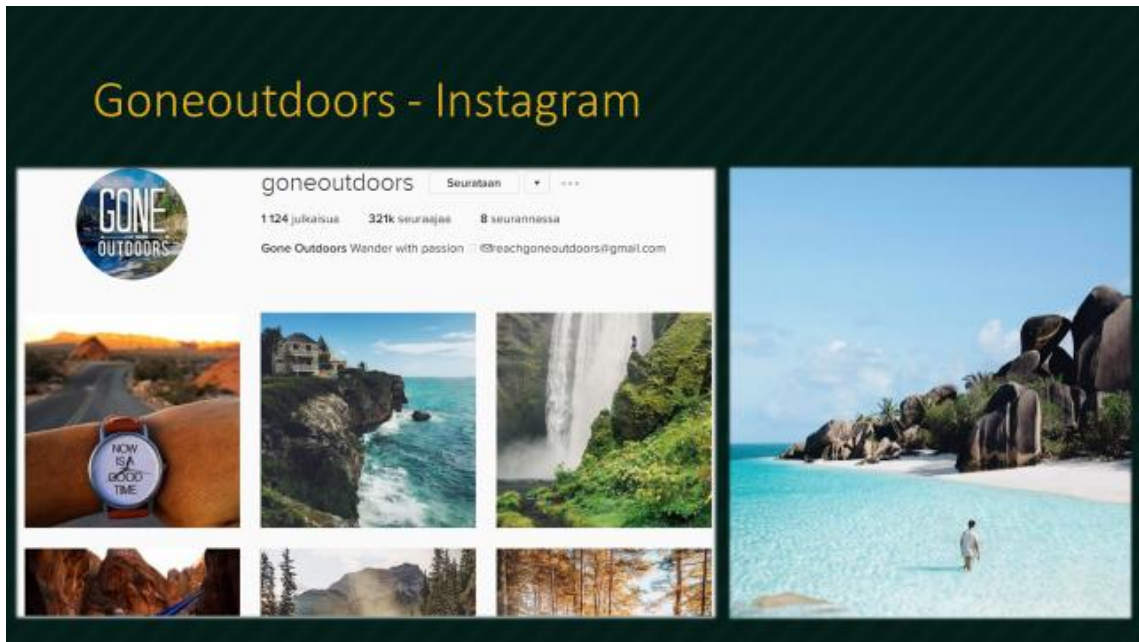
Fx Lifestyle - Instagram

- From the world of Instagram, FX Lifestyle stands out from the competitors because of it's nice quality visual content, pictures and videos, but unfortunately not all of them. The pictures collected here are examples of the good pictures for content marketing, not too pushy or "scammer like". The post's texts are not professional (see below) but the pictures catch they eye. For example goneoutdoors (see next slide) Instagram account is making huge money just because of the amazing pictures. Instagram is for the pictures and videos, so they need to be attractive to be effective.



- The fact that this company has a person representing the brand identity makes it also seem more real, to see a person, a face, instead of cartoon figures or just text.

Appendix 17: Benchmarking



Appendix 18: Benchmarking



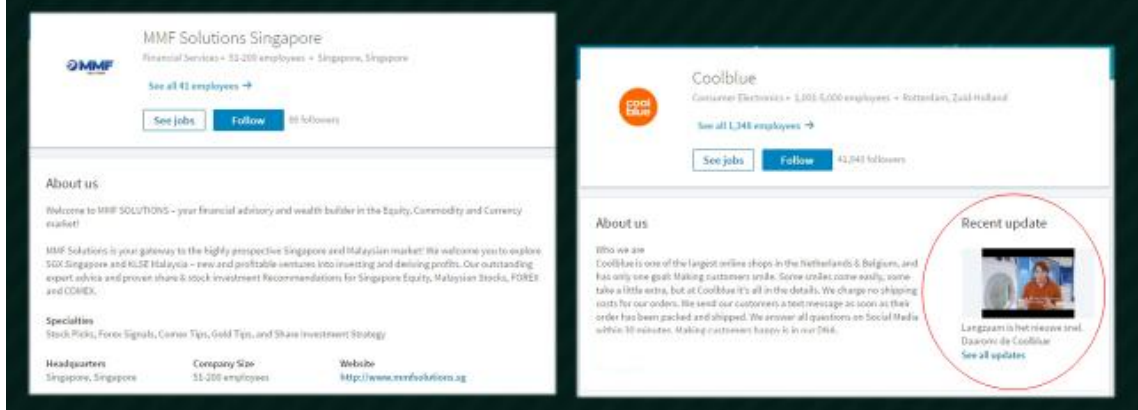
Twitter – Dutchforexuniversity (Dutchforexsignals) vs Forex Gump(babypips)

- It seems that not so many Forex signal provider companies know how to attract their customers on social media, so they are lacking the modern marketing knowledge and the understanding of how important customer insight is. During this benchmarking I noticed a lot of product-oriented marketing.
- Let's take a look little bit out of the Forex signal provider industry's lines. Forex Gump from Babypips.com is handling their Twitter well enough to mention. They are using content marketing, so creating content which truly has some value to the customer. Like in this example on the last slide (nro34) we saw a link to a blog post on their website, telling tips what to consider when choosing a broker. Yes, it's more attractive and will give more clicks than the other example from a competitor Dutch forex signals. Their Twitter is filled with pictures as shown. They give no value to the customers unless somebody is very badly looking for specifically a Dutch signal provider and happens to see this company on Twitter.
- Forex Gump is also using # hashtags which is a good way to get noticed on Twitter. Especially using the most popular hashtags. Twitter always shows which words are the most common in that moment (awareness days etc.).
- Twitter is a social media site, a micro blog, and should be used well to guide the customers to other sources with the intention to give the best value to the customer from the posts and links and landing pages.

Appendix 19: Benchmarking

MFF Solutions Singapore - LinkedIn

- Having a LinkedIn business profile gives the company a professional and slightly more serious image. Not that many signal providers have LinkedIn so it could be good for House of Pips to go for LinkedIn and try to gain awareness through nice posts like the other example here, Coolblue, does. Video posts are always attractive.



Forex Profita - YouTube

- Forex Profita has YouTube channel with videos about "What is Forex" and overviews about their website and service. Some of the videos have not such good sound quality which makes it not so pleasant to watch. Also these videos have nothing unique so they are not very interesting. Surely the customer gets the information necessary, but not in very exciting way. House of Pips can differentiate themselves with by creating entertaining and high quality YouTube videos.

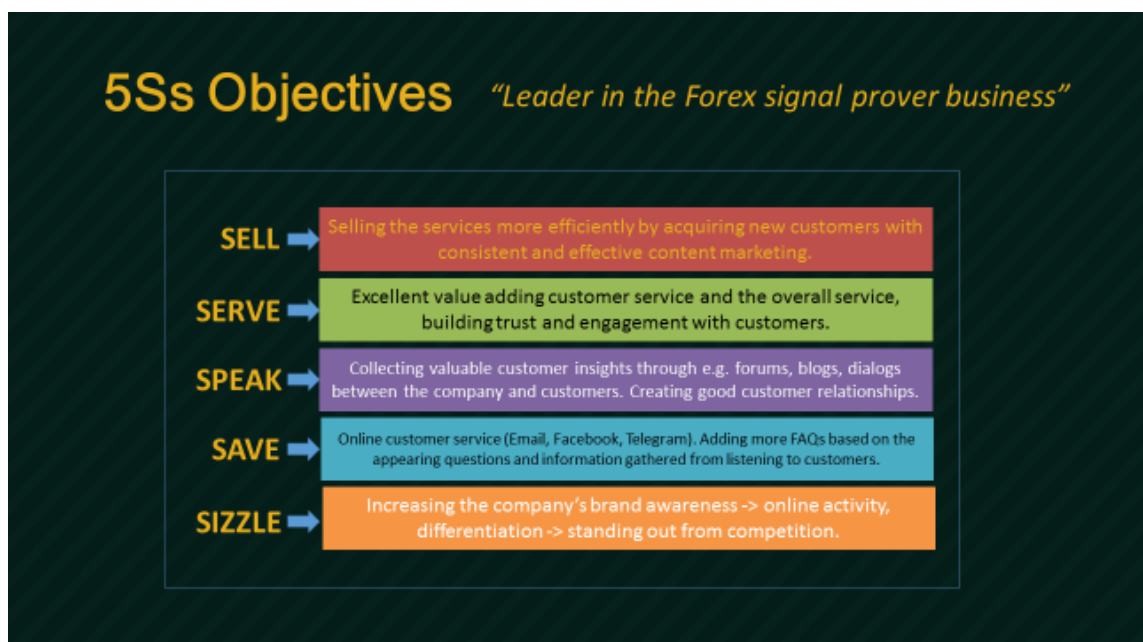


Appendix 20: SWOT - analysis



SWOT analysis — Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of House of pips	
<p>Internal Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A global business- English, Dutch, (Finnish)- Professionality and experience in trading Forex- Differentiated value adding products with good offers- Superior, personalized customer service	<p>Internal Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Marketing objectives short-, medium- and long-term, strategy work lacking (Marketing plan/business planning)- Brand awareness low (new in the field)- Churn rate, not many engaged customers <p>- Internal weaknesses will be turned into strengths</p>
<p>External Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- New technology solutions- The growing popularity and need of social media and communities/forums, Social Network- Growing knowledge about Forex trading- The demand of mobile solutions in working- New services, value-adding experiences (mentoring, education)	<p>External Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Large amount of competitors, threat of new entrants- Ease of entering the market/industry- New regulations- Unstable economics and politics- New technology changes- Information security threats online

Appendix 21: Objectives - 5Ss



Appendix 22: Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

- *"We want to be a leading Forex signal provider company who deliver superior value to all of our customers by serving them as individuals and offering high quality services with competitive prices and different service options that will exceed their expectations. We want to break the negative beliefs towards Forex signal providing as a business and show the customers that we can truly help them and that we can give them all the information they are searching for. We want to build a Forex community and deliver our service in a social and also in quite a beneficial educational way."*

Mission

- *"We deliver high quality Forex signal and Autotrade service which will stand out from the crowd and add value to each of our customer in the way of profitable and safe forex trading, pleasant education, welcoming customer contact and a fun, social Forex community activities."*

Values

- *Professional Forex trading, always aiming to be as successful as possible to give concrete benefit to the customers*
- *"Quality over quantity"*
- *Easy, simple, reachable, modern and social*

Brand slogan: *"We analyse, you trade."*

Strategy

In what ways do we achieve our goals?

Customers and market positioning

Content marketing path

Appendix 23: Content marketing Strategy and customer segment

Strategy to achieve the 5Ss objectives


1. Content marketing path, activity on social media channels: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube LinkedIn and focusing on search engine optimizing. Creating content, which is useful and inspiring for the customer and even worth sharing to their connections. In this way House of Pips can engage potential customers and convert them into engaged customers.
2. Always ready to answer to the questions of the customers, learning from those and using it as an information. Creating content, which will answer better to the questions e.g. a blog, articles, videos etc. To open the issues and guide the customers even better. This also will save a lot of time from the company in the future (so answers to the SAVE part of 5Ss objectives), no need to answer to the same questions when they are easily available in the website or in other channels. House of Pips will be creating trust between them and their customers through individual and personalized customer service, offering live chat and being honest with the fact how Forex trading really is, not really a way to become a millionaire in one day like some people think. So this will also make sure that House of Pips attracts the more enlightened audience, instead of those who don't know a thing about trading and the facts/risks about it.
3. Actively observing the online behavior of the customers and potential customers. What do they talk about in forums etc.? House of Pips will also try to make conversations and have dialogues with the customers and prospects. Asking questions, giving topics and themes, which encourages people to talk.
4. Keeping the customer service on social media channels or email. And to save the company's employees time, it's initial to collect the issues and questions that the customers have and then create content based on those to improve the service. If there is many questions about some things, then it's not clear enough for the customers or enough easy to find. And creating informative and good content will also make the SEO positive. Useful content will be rewarded.
5. Being present on the chosen channels, gaining followers with good content. Advertising campaigns that will gain awareness. Highlighting the values of the company and the fact that House of Pips is different and not a scammer company with empty promises.

Customers – Who do we want to reach?

- Reaching people who are interested in Forex trading, doing it already but wants professional support (Signals or Autotrader) or just to see other professional traders signals to adjust their own strategies.
- **What is our ideal customer like?**
 - Age: 20-40
 - Male or female
 - From: United Kingdom, United States, Netherlands, Russia, Israel, Switzerland, Russia, Singapore, Japan, Australia, France, Denmark or (Finland, because of the employee relations to the country) (According to data released by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) 2010 Triennial Central Bank Survey these are the countries of most traders and people interested in Forex trading market)
 - Financially stable and wealthy
 - Subscribes for more than 1 month, the longer subscription time the better, invest more than 500€ on the trading account
 - Active on social media: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, follows House of Pips, shares the company's posts and communicates on the channels
 - Interested in networking and community activities
 - Not afraid of small money losses, risk, and is patient with trading and believes on it

Appendix 24: Customer profile

Customer profile – Andrew Woods, 28.



- Andrew is 28 year old single Englishman, working full time for a medium-sized company as a sales man.
- Active on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, occasionally YouTube.
- Interested in Forex trading but not feeling secure enough to do it on his own.

This persona's data is gathered from the forums and discussions found during the research (E.g. Elitetrader forum, Quora, BabyPips). These thoughts on the right side of this demonstration are the prevailing worries.

- Andrew wishes to have a virtual forex mentor to help out with trading, but don't know where to find a reliable one.
- Andrew considers signal service but is afraid of big money losses, scams, and the fact that he would not learn anything from it.
- Andrew is not sure how to make the decision of who is the best signal provider for him. He is reading popular pages like Forex Peace Army for reviews and google suggestions (the best ranked websites).
 - Andrews biggest worries listed:
- Risks (money loss, scam, zero added value from a paid service)
 - Not learning anything from the signal provider
 - High subscription costs
 - How to make profit? Andrew wants to make money.
 - What if I lose a lot of money?

What do our potential customers talk about with each others?

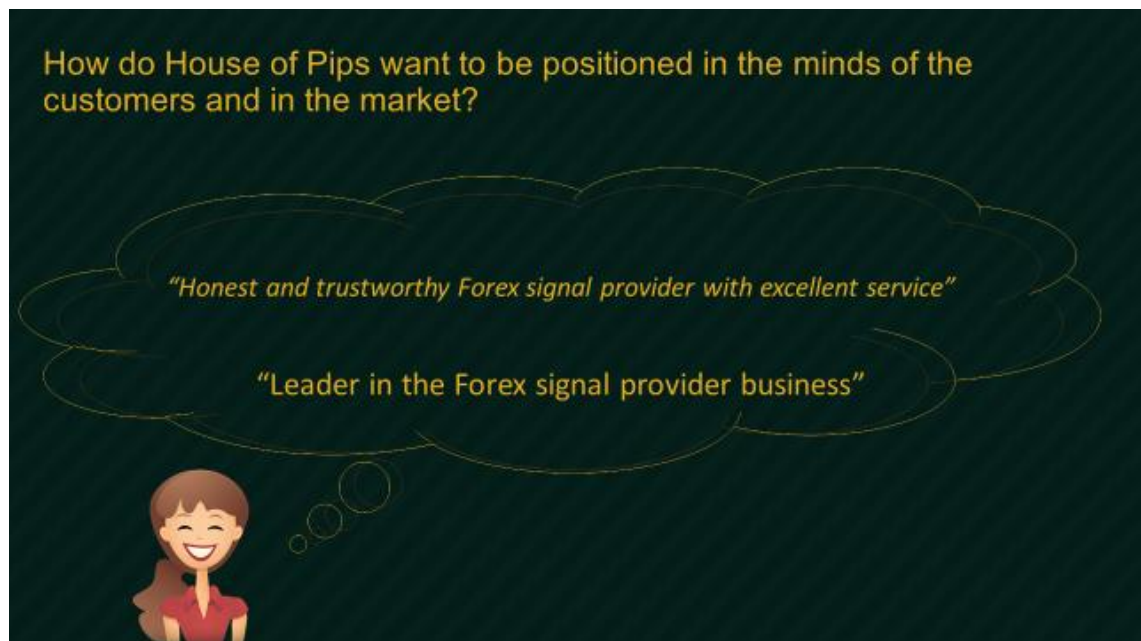
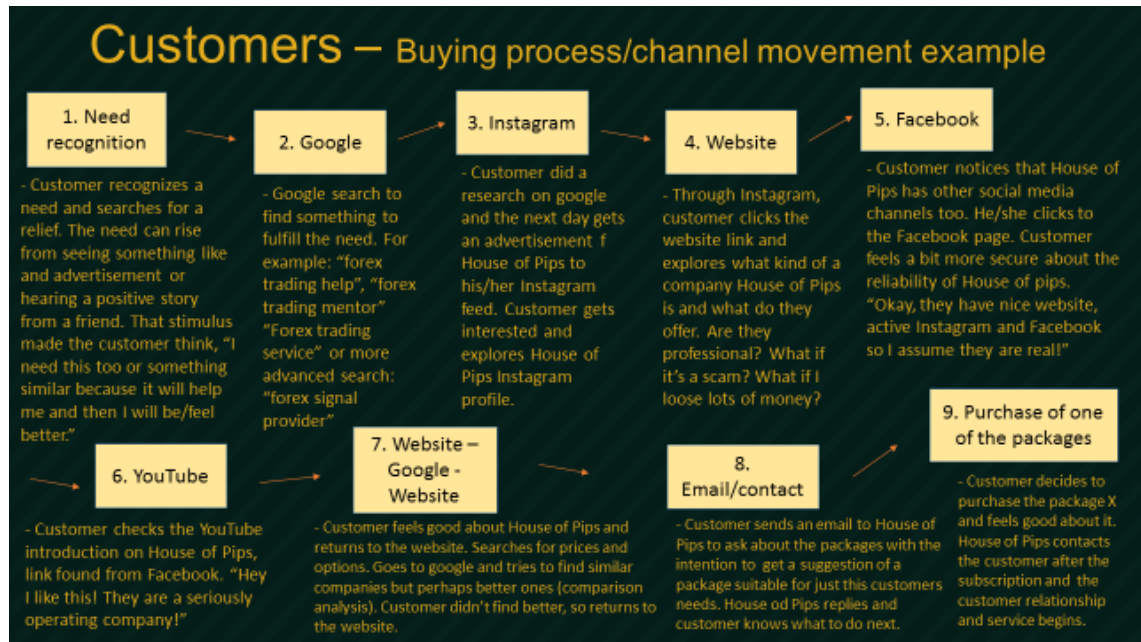
“What you should pay attention to is risk management and risk-of-ruin probability, and how do they handle losing trades, their max. drawdown. Weak spots become visible during losses, because it shows how signal providers copes with stress and keeps himself from doing wrong trades in order to pare declines quickly.” – Elitetrader Forum



“I'd trust some signals if I knew that trader PERSONALLY. Anyway, no one is insured from scams.” – Elitetrader Forum

“We need to do a lot of research before investing our money which unfortunately we don't do and obviously allow those scammers to take our money.” – Elitetrader Forum

Appendix 25: Customers - buying process - company positioning



Appendix 26: Content marketing path



Appendix 27: Tactics - tip of the communication and the engaging channel

The tip of the communication

- Forex trading inspiration
- Information
- Motivation
- Insights
- Breaking the negative beliefs

- **Bringing up the positive outcomes and -nature of Forex trading**
 - Freedom
 - "Be your own boss"
 - Forex trading is with you where ever you go, only internet needed
 - "Earn that little extra"

www.houseofpips.org - Engaging

- **Adding some content:**
 - Information – databank: The most basic things and explanations about Forex and Forex trading. From 10 to 20 definitions. In a form of text or then videos. Videos are always more attractive.
 - Blog or articles about specific themes and subjects (publishing activity in every 2 weeks for example)
 - Themes/subjects can come from the questions customers ask, news that are important, trading forex stories, tips for better forex trading, why trading fails, how to choose a broker, why signal providers are seen as so negative, how to recognize a scam signal provider etc. Blog should be as visual as possible, pictures, games, videos...
 - FAQs with new added most common questions, win rate, free week trial and making the payment. Answers related to the service and how it works plus House of Pips things itself, like "What kind of support do you offer for beginner trader", "how successful are your trades", "how does the signals look like?". The Forex related things should be collected to the House of Pips databank.
 - Information, education, insights, engaging and activating content.
 - Video tutorials should be by House of Pips (this way also new content to the YouTube channel).
- **Calls to action tools:** Game test -> "How much do you know about Forex trading?" few simple questions and based on those suggesting a package option for example if the person gets 3/10 points, Autotrader would be suggested for him/her. With the results comes small text summary "You got 3/10 correct answers! Well done, you are getting there! Enrich your knowledge and take a look at our Forex databank and blog. We would suggest you to start with our Autotrader package because... But you can see the other options from *here* too."
- Possibility to order free email news letter (service offers and updates) -> potential customers, seeing how many curious people (the demand).
- Subscription form: should add a question "where did you found us?". To collect data (where do customer find the company).

- **Posting time:** Webpage blog/article once in 3 weeks ore more, updates etc. as often as required.

Appendix 28: Reaching channels; Instagram and Facebook

Instagram @houseofpips - Reaching

- Instagram content:
 - Inspiration, motivation, information, quotes attracting the customer to see houseofpips.org
- Pictures and videos
 - Inspiring quotes, videos and pictures
 - Informative pictures with a story leading the customer to the website or to other reaching channel like YouTube for example.
 - Forex Facts – 5 days of posts (video and pictures) about different facts about Forex trading, videos are to lead people to the House of Pips YouTube channel
 - House of Pips story, who, why? Mission, vision – YouTube video -> Linking on Instagram and Facebook
 - More personal pictures, a person for House of Pips
 - High quality content, nice looking and attractive, highlighting the benefits of Forex trading and signal provider services, positive outcomes, lifestyle inspiration, tips and advising -> reason to follow and watch, awakens curiosity towards House of Pips

 • Posting time: 2 to 3 times a day, 5 to 7 days a week

Facebook @houseofpipsint. - Reaching

- Change from community page to Product/Service page, so House of Pips can get for example ratings and other data to their Facebook page + House of Pips is a service not a community so should be correctly categorized – adding reviews tab and offers and services tabs.
- Customer service – Facebook message
- Offers information, trading and company information and updates, links to blogs/articles and videos, like & share competitions, “tag a friend” – Forex related success lifestyle posts
- Live streaming once a month or more, showing how House of Pips does Forex trading, expressing opinions about hot topics, showing new interesting things (trading platforms or recommend brokers, strategies, website content news etc.)
- Posting time: Always when rational content, news etc. to post -> Once a week or more

 Find us on
Facebook

Appendix 29: Twitter and SEO

Twitter @houseofpips - Reaching



- Links to blogs, articles, YouTube channel
- Attracting content:
 - Informative, inspiring text, images
- Short informative texts
- Communication and gaining customer insights:
 - Conversation -> "Why do you trade Forex?" and more advanced questions to wake up opinions
 - Twitter polls
 - Asking opinions about hot topics, trading etc. 1-3 times a month.
- Posting time: 2-3times a day 5-7 times a week

Search Engine Optimizing/Marketing **Google**

- Keywords:
 - Forex signal providers
 - Forex signals Telegram
 - Autotrade providers
 - Autotrade Dutch
 - Forex signal provider Netherlands
 - Forextrading assistance
 - Forextrading services
 - Forextrading help
 - Dutch Forex signal providers
 - Forex Autotrade providers

Writing articles with using the keywords in different views. For example an article about the positive and negative things about signal providers, the company's opinion and view etc. The articles can also go a bit out of the subject to create other content slightly related to the word we want to optimize.

- Forex and Forextrading are more searched than "signal provider" so with by creating content about forex trading and stuff related to the most searched words, House of Pips will gain more visitors and visibility to their website. Organic awareness will be gained through creating valuable content to the website. (<http://keywordtool.io/>)
- Paid SEM can also be used to boost the SE rank in the beginning, Google Ads offers campaign creating opportunity so the company creates the sales text they know will be attractive for the target group and then the company pays for the clicks or views they get. Google Ads has a daily budget system, so based on the marketing objectives and amount of money to use per day, the budget for the SEM is set. It can require a big investment so should be considered and prepared well before doing it. (<https://www.google.fi/adwords/>)
- House of Pips could use Impression "times seen" option. So to have the marketing objective of gaining brand awareness with the paid ads. Klicks and also conversion objectives are possible. That means that House of Pips would set up the marketing objective of getting people buy when they come to the website.

Appendix 30: LinkedIn and YouTube

LinkedIn @houseofpips - Reaching



- Creating official LinkedIn site for House of Pips
- Building awareness -> Logo, company information available
- Attracting followers with LinkedIn follow button on houseofpips.org
- Sharing company news and industry articles -> keeping it professional and interesting (articles and videos about popular topics, opinions, company views etc.)
- Posting time: Once a week or more



YouTube @houseofpips - Reaching

- Building awareness -> Interesting, entertaining and educative videos
- Attracting followers with new videos regularly
- Posting time: +/- 1-2 time in a month
- Video ideas:
 - Forex tutorials in House of Pips style, making it different from other tutorials.
 - For example babypips.com explains hard Forex things in their free Forex school but with humor added to it which makes it more nice to read!
 - House of Pips - the story behind the company
 - 5 Forex facts- funny/entertaining cartoon way for example, to make it stand out from other similar videos



Appendix 31: Content marketing calendar



Appendix 32: Budget for the content marketing

Budget for marketing actions			
• 100 euros per month in total to all actions in year 2017 content marketing. Starting from June. Total cost 700 euros for online marketing in 2017.			
Channel	Investment (per month)	What/where?	Why?
Instagram	45€	To promo code advertising or to boost other campaigns in month (video, picture etc.)	To gain more audience and make House of Pips approach the right audience, who are interested in Forex trading.
Facebook	35€	Sales campaigns and promotions, best posts (blog links, articles, videos).	Facebook advertising can reach big audiences and Facebook is commonly used around the world, so should be boosted monthly during sales campaigns.
Twitter	20€	Sales campaigns, gaining awareness and new customers – In the beginning gaining real audience then the paid marketing actions can be increased.	To boost sales campaigns, reaching the right audience.
Google SEM	Daily budget, pay per click/view + keywords. Should be done when possible to invest big budget on the campaign. Google Ads offers pricing suggestions based on the desired marketing objectives.	(Doesn't have to be used every month in the beginning but it's good way to test the sales message and reach the target audience).	To make sure House of Pips will be easier to find from Search Engines especially during campaigns. Setting Ads will put House of Pips high on the rank with specified keywords.

Not all the channels need paid advertising, like LinkedIn. With good content comes organic success (SEO especially). But Instagram and Facebook should be kept strong and boosted for great results in sales and customer acquisition. Right target group + boosted marketing = SALES



Appendix 33: Measuring and monitoring

Analytics – To follow monthly success in 2017

- The number of followers: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
 - The number of likes: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
 - The number of customers/others sharing the company's content: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
 - The number of engaged users (shares, likes, comments): Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
 - Coverage/times seen of the posts: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
-
- Website clicks, conversion rate (Customer comes to the website and makes a purchase = goal), visitor amounts (from organic and from paid SEO/SEM), durations and behavior during the website visits: Website
 - Campaign ROI, the marketing efforts put on a specific campaign: Campaigns, promotions
 - How many people reached, likes, shares, customer acquisition
 - Return On Investments, costs: the whole business and the actions to make it work

Future trends

Proposals

Appendix 34: Proposals

House of Pips Forex trading Forum

- House of Pips website could offer a forex trading related forum to offer useful free communication c2c service, build traffic to the website and to gain customer insights too. Community activities and Forums are big part of future social media (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 191), to follow the trends; House of Pips could do trading related live streaming, share video and pictures on the forum to wake up discussion.
- When the forum grows bigger, House of Pips can build up a strong community for the people who are active and want to socialize. This can be also operating in social media instant messaging channels or House of Pips can later create a mobile application for such member and community things.
- Forum will make House of Pips easy to find, more known, social and different from the competitors. A forum on the website will also make House of Pips feel more trust worthy and personal -> engaging current and new customers.

Example from the Elite Trader forum <https://www.elitetrader.com/et/>




Step 1. Create Forum to houseofpips.org (or Facebook)
Step 2. Advertise Forum and guide people to go there and discuss -> create few topics and themes to organize the forum and its subjects and
Step 3. Collect insights, develop services and learn!

The Forum can communicate about future trends, hot topics, trading related themes, Forex things and much more! House of Pips only needs to monitor that the content is appropriate and suitable for it. Customers create most of the content. Simple!

New service proposal - Mentoring

- Mentoring package**
 - Personal trading support for 1 to 2 months and light education about House of Pips trading style and more
 - Access to video bank of House of Pips education material
 - Personal live chat, live streaming through social media channels or webinars
 - Discussion with the client, what do they want, how to get there...
 - Available for example for 1 (or 2) client at a time
 - What value does this give?
 - Mentor will save the customer's time and money
 - Customer will learn the essentials fast and well explained
 - Support of the mentor gives more faith and safe feeling to Forex trading and after the mentoring the customer can continue to Autotrade or signals easily (engagement!)
 - NB: the target audience in mentoring package would be the people who are not very familiar with trading and want to learn the essentials!
 - If mentoring sounds too personal, a Forex education course for bigger audience is a good idea too (like the company Infinite prosperity offers)
- Price range: +100-250€ per month (considering the time spend to mentoring during month and the content of the mentoring program)



What makes a good Forex trading mentor?

1. Trust
2. Genuine intentions
3. Realistic
4. Professionalism

(Fuller, N. Forex Trading Mentor. 2017.)

Appendix 35: House of Pips



Appendix 36: References

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