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Developing a dynamic website using the online website builder Weebly for Viking Fortune Oy

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Laurea University of Applied Sciences

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Degree Programme in Business In-
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Bachelor's Thesis
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Websites play a vital role in product marketing and company branding to achieve a particular goal of business development. The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is to develop a website for Viking Fortune Oy. A new website for Viking Fortune Oy will allow them to use the website as a marketing tool to increase their product visibility. Viking Fortune Oy is a small-sized company located in Helsinki city centre. The company owns an amber jewellery and antique store named 'Amber Palace', where the customers consist of tourists who visits Helsinki during summer.

This bachelor's thesis consists of two sections, a theoretical section and implementation. The theoretical section provides a literature review of website usability, the website as a marketing tool and an understanding of the requirements of a good website. The implementation section focuses on creating a functional website for the case company by using an online website building platform. Qualitative research methods have been used in this thesis project.

The outcome of this thesis project was a website for the case company which can be modified by the employees. All parties are satisfied with the result of this thesis project which made this research successful.

Keywords: website, website-builder, weebly, web development, web design

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1 Introduction

Having a website become essential for all size of businesses to do their business in this competitive market. Companies are making a website for various reasons. A website allows the business organisation to promote, advertise and market their business all over the world in a cost-efficient and speedy manner (Brown 2011, 11). A website becomes the easiest way for any businesses to advertise their product and increase the product visibility to potential customers. In this project, a website was created for Viking Fortune Oy to market their product and to inform customers about the jewellery and antique they offer in their store located in Helsinki, Finland.

1.1 Background information

Viking Fortune Oy is an amber made jewellery and antique store. The store sells its product mostly to the tourist who came to visit Helsinki. One of the authors is working in this company as a sales person since March 2015. During her work, the author noticed that there is a need for making a website to inform the customer about their product beforehand. She realised, most of the customer does not have the necessary knowledge about amber and amber made jewellery. It would be more comfortable for all the sales persons if the customers already know about the store jewellery because explaining the basics of amber jewellery to each customer is a time-consuming task. From this idea, the author proposed to the owner to create a website for the company for product visibility and the probability of using the website as a useful marketing tool. Owner of the company accepted the proposal and gave the responsibility to the store manager for farther guidance.

1.2 Objective

The primary objective of this project is creating a new dynamic website for Viking Fortune oy to increase the product visibility to the potential customer. Additionally, another objective of this project is to create the website by using an online website builder which can be updated regularly by employees of Viking Fortune Oy having little or no technical skills. The commissioner did not want to install anything on the computer, and he wanted a drag and dropped secure platform where employees can update the website from anywhere which leads authors to use an online based website builder.

After finishing this project, authors will be more experience in web development by learning a new web developing platform, gain more knowledge about using the website as a marketing tool, improving communication skills by understanding the requirements of a business client.

1.3 Methodology

Action research method used in this thesis as it is a research and development work. Different research techniques such as documents analysis, and interviews used to collect the data. A benchmarking between two website builders was conducted to select a platform to create the website. All the data used are in qualitative form. The document analysis includes website usability, using the website as a marketing tool and understanding the requirements of a good website. The interviews were conducted with two group of people. Interviewing customers was conducted to understand the requirements of customers and interviewing employees was necessary to know the computer operating skills of the store employees. A benchmarking between website building platforms helps employees to choose a platform. The overview of the methodology is described in chapter three.

1.4 Limitations

One of the limitations faced during this project is the unavailability of resources from the client. Due to the busy schedule, owner of the company did not manage to give the photograph of the products which was needed for the website. The website was created with random pictures collected from internet. Due to the copyright issue, the website cannot be published now for public use. However, the website has been designed in a way that the employees of the company can easily replace and update the contents of the website using the administrator account given by the authors.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is structured into eight different chapters. The first chapter consists of the introduction part with background information of the project, the primary objectives of the project, methodology used and project limitations. The second chapter is about the literature review of this project which briefly describes the importance of website design, website usability and using the website as a marketing tool.

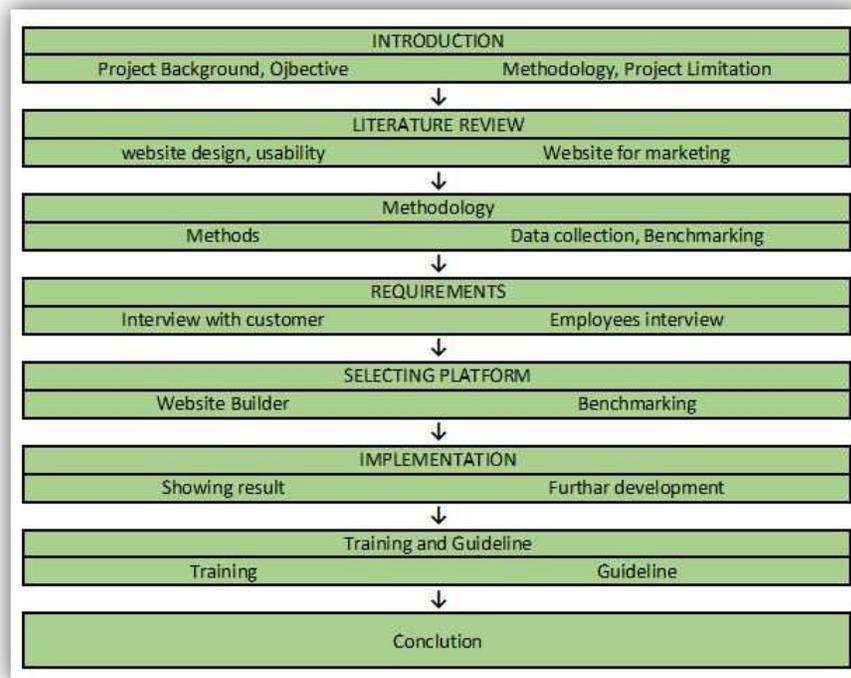


Figure 1: Structure of the thesis

The third chapter describes the methods used in this research paper. Client requirements and the process of choosing the platform shown in chapter four and five. Chapter six describe the implementation, and the outcome of this thesis project includes recommended further development suggestions. Employees training and guidelines described in chapter seven and the conclusion of this thesis project described in chapter eight.

2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background and literature review of the related subject has been described in this chapter. Theoretical analysis of website design and usability, use of the website as a marketing tool have been reviewed by different sources.

2.1 Website as a marketing tool

The website is a collection of different web pages which are running under one domain name such as www.google.com. Website and web pages are using interchangeably, but one website can contain many web pages (Website 2014). The website is a collection of documents, graphics or information where a user can have the complete experience according to their need. There are two types of website, static and dynamic. A static website is usually created by using HTML and CSS which display the same information for a very long time. Static websites are very uncommon these days. Whereas Dynamic websites become popular because of their usability and easy to update functionality. A dynamic website is easy to maintain through a simple browser interface.

Having a website became essential for any kind of businesses since the internet is available to everyone. According to Kotable & Helsen (2001), the use of ICT in marketing is being practised on e-business and e-commerce in the 1990s. E-commerce through Internet has changed customer's expectation concerning price, comparability, speed, and services. The integration of ICT with business improves efficiency and competitiveness of the company. It can connect customers, employees, and suppliers through communications and transaction. ICT plays a significant role in marketing to create value for customers.

Nowadays, marketing is an essential aspect of any business to achieve their goal successfully. There are other ways to do marketing for business but since the availability of internet become more common, using website became one of the most powerful marketing tools for business. Internet and website have played a vital role to run the business smoother than before. Creating companies own website could be a better way for a company to communicate with their potential customers. The website is playing a vital role in the customer and company by sharing and exchanging product information or the services.

A website is an essential source of information about the company. It can be integrated with multimedia features such as text, documents, audio, and video as an information source. It helps a company to expand the existing business by promoting their products and services to many customers. Since the website can be accessed at any time and from anywhere, the company will be able to interact with customers, understand their needs and get responses immediately (Bell, Fletcher 2004.).

Companies are making websites for various purposes. There are mainly four types of online presence websites, (Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Johnston, & Mayer 2006, 14-16). Each type of website is made for different objectives for a different market. A website which allows customers to purchase products online is called transactional e-commerce website. www.ebay.com or www.amazon.com is an excellent example of a transactional e-commerce website. The customer can go through the products, and they can make the purchase using the provided online payment methods. The service-oriented company builds their website where the customer may not be able to purchase the products, but they can get the information about the desired service through the website. These types of a website called Service-oriented relationship building website. The third type of website is named brand building website where the customer can see the product online but cannot make any purchase. The outcome of this thesis project is creating a brand-building website where all the information about the product will be available on the website, but customers will not be able to make a purchase. Customers can find the store location through the website and visit the store by themselves to make a purchase. There is another type of website which is named portal or media site. This type of the website provides a gateway to information.

Companies which are choosing a website as marketing tools have the opportunity to connect with their potential customers all over the world. That is why marketing through websites are becoming more popular compared to traditional way of marketing such as brochures, posters, the newspaper or radio-tv advertisement which is costly for a new small businesses owner. The customer can be reached through internet by doing search engine optimisation, google ads scenes or social media advertising which is much more convenient than the traditional marketing. "A website is also a way of marketing which is permanent. Once made, it lasts. Unlike all paper marketing, like brochures, the newspaper ads, posters and also television and radio advertisements, it does not need to be redone or repeated. The website is also the best way to make the business worldwide. Through the internet, it is easy to reach people all over world". (Keller, 2015).

2.2 Website Design

Designing the website is as important as the content and information of a website. A website should be created in a way that customers will find the information they need without any distractions. “The design and the content should reflect the target of the audience and the purpose of the site” (Lawrence & Tavakol 2007, 8). Every customer who visits a website has different skills, ability, and thoughts. That is why a proper website design is essential for the best user experience. “Unless a web site meets the needs of the intended users it will not meet the needs of the organisation providing the website. Website development should be user-centered, evaluating the evolving design against user requirements” (Nigel Bevan 1999). This user-centered web design suggested answering few questions before making the website design. Questions are as followed;

- Who are the essential users?
- What is their purpose for accessing the site?
- How frequently will they visit the site?
- What experience and expertise do they have?
- What nationality are they? Can they read English?
- What type of information are they looking for?
- How will they want to use the information: read it on the screen, print it or download it?
- What type of browsers will they use? How fast will their communication links be?
- How large a screen/window will they use, with how many colours?

By answering these questions will help a developer to make the necessary design of a website which will serve the purpose of a company or user perspective. However, there are two main standpoints from which most people determine whether a website design is “good” or “bad”. One is usability which focuses on functionality, effectiveness, proper presentation of information, efficiency. Another one is aesthetic perspective which is all about presentation, animation, and graphics. There are some websites which are full of animation and graphics, but those are not considered as a well-designed website because of functionality and effectiveness. Website visitors could get lost or confused because of too much animation and graphics. The most important part of designing a website is about

communication with visitors. That is the reason a website designed by following usability standpoints consider as a good website design (Beaird, 2007).

2.3 Website Usability

Usability is the concept that establishes its position on the link between a human angle to information and communication technology. Usability can also be seen as a design approach, a product attribute, and measurement (Turkka Keinonen, 2007). Some websites are hard to navigate for of users, and it is difficult to find the information because of its complicated design. These poor-quality websites will waste users time and can make them frustrated. A frustrated website experience can make a negative impression on the company. That is why usability is essential for a website which is considered as a representative of a company.

An aim of the company to create a website will be not fulfilled if a website does not meet the need of users. The most common and widespread is probably Jakob Nielsen's definition that describes the usability as the quality attribute that estimates how easy website user interfaces are to use. (Nielsen Norman Group 2012). To achieve the specific goal of the company, some characteristics of usability which should be followed to make a user-friendly website. The picture below shows the graphical representation of usability characteristics;

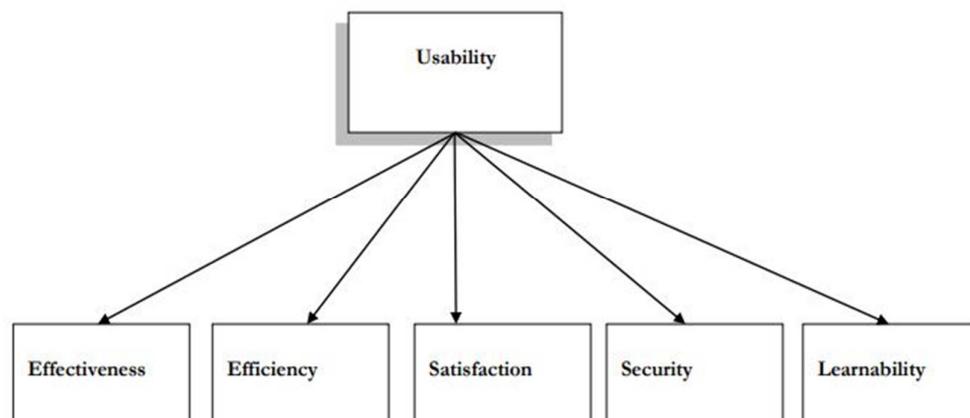


Figure 2: graphical representative of usability characteristics. (Abran and Khelefi. 2010)

The characteristics of website usability are described below:

- **Effectiveness:** A user should be able to use the website without any complexity because the average web user does not understand the technical aspects of a website and they can quickly lose their interest if they get confused in so much information in one page. The designer should use an easy to understand and easy to use interface which will be more useful for all kinds of users or customers to navigate the website.
- **Efficiency:** Efficiency of a website can be measured by the time and accuracy used to perform a task requested by the user. Efficiency is a fundamental issue in any website design because, if a website is slow or if it takes too long to open then the user might lose patience to stay on the same website. It could happen if a website has a vast amount of animation or graphics which leads to slow loading a page. Internet speed is not the same everywhere in the world. In an area where internet speed is slow, they will have difficulty in browsing a website which contains a massive amount of high definition pictures or animations.
- **Satisfaction:** The user should find their satisfaction when they use a website. Satisfaction is the degree to which the user of a website is happy with their user experience when using the website. As an example; A customer visits a website to get information about a product they are interested in, the website should have all the information to satisfy that customer. Otherwise, the customer will not be convinced to purchase or lose interest about the website. A website is considered to be satisfactory to use when the user does not find any discomfort or negative attitude towards the use of the website.
- **Security:** A user should feel secure when they visit a website. When making a website for e-commerce, all the payment methods should be authenticated, and the user should feel safe to use those payment methods. The Internet is becoming less and less secure. A web designer should be conscientious about putting malicious links on the website.
- **Learnability:** Learnability is one of the central aspects of usability. Learnability is a quality component of usability that means how easy it is for a user to complete tasks

when they use the website for the first time. Browsing through the website should be easy to learn and understand. A website with a complicated navigation will always make difficulty for a user to use primary task such as log-in, or finding the product which they are looking for.

To make a website welcoming and engaging for the potential customers, above studies was necessary for this thesis to make the structure of the website for useful result.

3 Methodology

Action research method used in this thesis as it is a research and development work. The company have a problem with marketing the products to their potential customers. Action research method is used to identify and solve the problems (Koshy 2010). This bachelor's thesis consists of two sections, a theoretical and implementation. The theoretical section provides the literature review on website usability, website as a marketing tool and understanding the requirements of a good website. The implementation section focuses on creating a functional website for the case company by using an online website building platform. The theoretical part of this thesis is the foundation for creating the website. All the data gathered from literature, interview and benchmarking focuses on to create the company website.

3.1 Research approach

There are two different approaches to research, qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research is a combination of the rational, explorative and intuitive, where the skills and experience of the researcher plays a critical role in the analysis of data. It is usually based on social process and not on social structures which is frequently the focus in quantitative research (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2010, 105). For this thesis, the researcher has chosen to collect the data through theoretical analysis and interviews which are methods usually related to qualitative research methods.

3.2 Research Method

Because of the nature of this project, action research process was decided to use as one of the leading methods. Action research is the method that involves the process of identifying problems and finding solution for those problems (Koshy 2010). Action research

methodology as shown in Figure 4 recommended that build an action loop between action nodes and reflection after them, in order to keep the flexibility of possible change during the duration of an investigation or project. The advantage of the methodology consists in its flexibility of generating new solutions to practical problems in different segments of activities (Dick 2000).

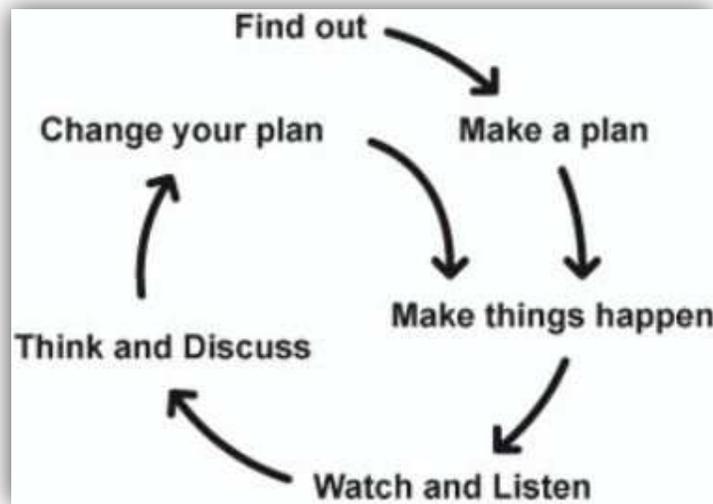


Figure 3: A model of action research methodology

The case company needed to solve their marketing problem. A website was created to solve the problem after collecting data using several methods.

3.2.1 Data collection

In order to create a user-friendly website for the case company, it was essential to study the website design, website usability and the use of a website for marketing strategy. These study helps authors to create the base of making a website which can be used for company's product marketing. Interview with two groups of people was also conducted to understand the requirements of the website. Interviewing the store customer helped to decide the contents of the website and interviewing company employees gave the idea about employee's computer skills.

3.2.2 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a method of comparison. It measures the time a package takes to process a number of transactions. This is referred to as a benchmarking test. These tests are conducted in a controlled environment. They are an excellent way to measure the performance of two or more products in a standard environment (Shelly 2012, 306). In this thesis, authors faced the challenge of selecting the platform according to client needs. The challenge was to explain the existing platform to the commissioner because of his lack of knowledge of computer skills. By benchmarking different online website builder and after showing the result of the benchmarking, the company decided to use Weebly as their platform to use for creating a website. This makes benchmarking a beneficial tool for solving the problem of comparing another platform available on the market.

4 Requirements

This chapter will describe the stages collecting and understanding the client requirements. The purpose of making the website is to get more visibility and advertise the company's product to the potential customers. To fulfil that purpose, it was essential to understand the company's customer requirements which have been done by face to face interview.

4.1 Interview with customer

The primary customers of the company's products are Asian tourist who visits Helsinki with a group. It was essential to ask them some specific questions to understand their requirements and needs. A face to face interview has been done with approximately 30 customers. The critical findings of from interview are as follows:

- Internet access: As a tourist, they only use the internet when they stay in hotels or often in tourist buses because it is costly to use mobile internet outside of their home country.
- Used devices: Two third of the customer use only mobile devices to browse the internet. Only a few of them use a computer.
- How they know about stores: 12 out of 30 knew about the store from their friends and family. Most of them did not know about amber made jewellery

stores, but when they visit the stores with the tourist group, they liked the product and made a purchase.

- Preferred sources of information: Most of the customers prefer social media or website to collect information about tourist destinations and available local product.
- The need of website: Everyone agreed that a website with product information and store location would be more straightforward for them to visit the store.
- Website contents: Product image, price, company background, contact information, store location was the primary concern of the customers.
- Online reservation: Half of the interviewer mentioned about making product reservation before visiting the store.
- Website language: 10 out of 30 interviewers suggested that they would prefer a multilingual website which they will feel more comfortable to use.

After interviewing the customers, Authors made a list of the main features according to customer need and presented to the commissioner. Both parties agreed main features of the website were:

- Simplicity: The website design should be simple and straightforward. The customer should be able to navigate the website without any complication.
- Number of pages: Website will contain mainly three pages. A 'home page' featuring the product information, An 'about us' page with brief information about the company and a 'contact us' page for contact information and store location.
- Online reservation system: A customer should able to reserve a product through the website.
- Mobile friendly: Website should be fully functional for mobile devices.

- Multilingual: Primary language of the website will be in English. Finnish and Chinese language will also be added later.

4.2 Interviewing employees

Choosing a platform to create the website was a big challenge for authors of this thesis. Case company want to use a website building platform which easies to use and do not require to install anything on the computer. The company want their employees to edit and maintain the website. An interview was conducted to understand the computer knowledge of company employees. The question of the interviews was mainly about the study background of each employee, what kind of application they can operate, what kind of browser they use, how often they do online shopping.

The brief result of the interviews:

- None of the employees had any experience of website development.
- All the employees are familiar with office MS Word and MS Powerpoint.
- Google Chrome and Firefox are the most common browser.
- Everyone knows the basics of windows operating system.
- All the employees are a frequent online shopper. They understand the basics of website navigation.

5 Selecting platform

A simple and user-friendly website for the company was the primary need of the company. The second requirement was to choose a platform where employees can easily modify the product information when they need.

5.1 Website Builder

After several meetings and explanation of many different kinds of web developing platform, an online website builder was chosen to create the website. Online website builders are browser-based online tools that typically allow the construction of website without manual code editing. Online website builders are designed to be very easy to use. It allows anyone with basic computer knowledge to create an entire website using drag

and drop editor (Wikipedia, Website builder). There are many famous website builders on the market, but Weebly and Wix were chosen by the company employees to test and learn about the online website builder. A benchmarking between Weebly and Wix has been done to show the difference between this two website builder.

5.2 Benchmarking Weebly and Wix

Benchmarking Weebly and Wix gave the results which were helpful in choosing the most optimal solution for the company employees. This makes benchmarking a powerful tool when deciding how to build a solution. This project was implemented using a website builder. Website builders are browser-based tools that allow a user to create a website without manual code editing. There are two categories of website builder which are online and offline software. Based on the commissioner requirements, an online website builder was chosen for this project. Online website builder such as Weebly, Wix is focused around the concept of Software as a Service (SaaS) “a software distribution model in which applications are hosted by a vendor or service provider and made available to customers over a network, typically the Internet” (Rouse, 2010). After several meetings with commissioner and company's other employees, Weebly was chosen for this project because of its user interface. Weebly was founded in 2007, and there are 40 million of entrepreneurs are using Weebly for various reasons. It also offers the web hosting and domain for the users which means, a developer will get everything that they need from one platform without installing anything on their computer. Wix was founded in 2006 and has over 109 million registered users. It has 2.87 million paying customers as at the end of December. Wix has a year over year growth of 41% which shows that they are a very reputable website builder. Whereas, Weebly was founded in 2007 and has over 40 million registered user. Weebly is a private company that is why they do not disclose the amount of paid users. However, Weebly privately founded by very reputable investors that have founded other large company as well which provide the confidence in the overall business model and growth of Weebly. (Wong 2017).

A categories key features difference between Weebly and Wix is presented below with the comments of commissioner and employees.

Template design: Designed templates or themes are essential to creating a website using online website builders because choosing an appropriate template can make work easy for the users. Wix has over 500 professionally designed templates which allow users to find a suitable design for the website. However, if a user wants to change the template after

putting the contents, users existing content will not be automatically transferred to the new template. Wix also allows creating pages from the scratch. Weebly has over a hundred templates which are smartly designed, and they have been making improvements on the theme design. Weebly's themes are customizable and existing contents will be automatically transferred to the new template if the user changes the theme. Wix and Weebly both have the Mobile-friendly editor which is very useful for creating a website for the mobile experience.

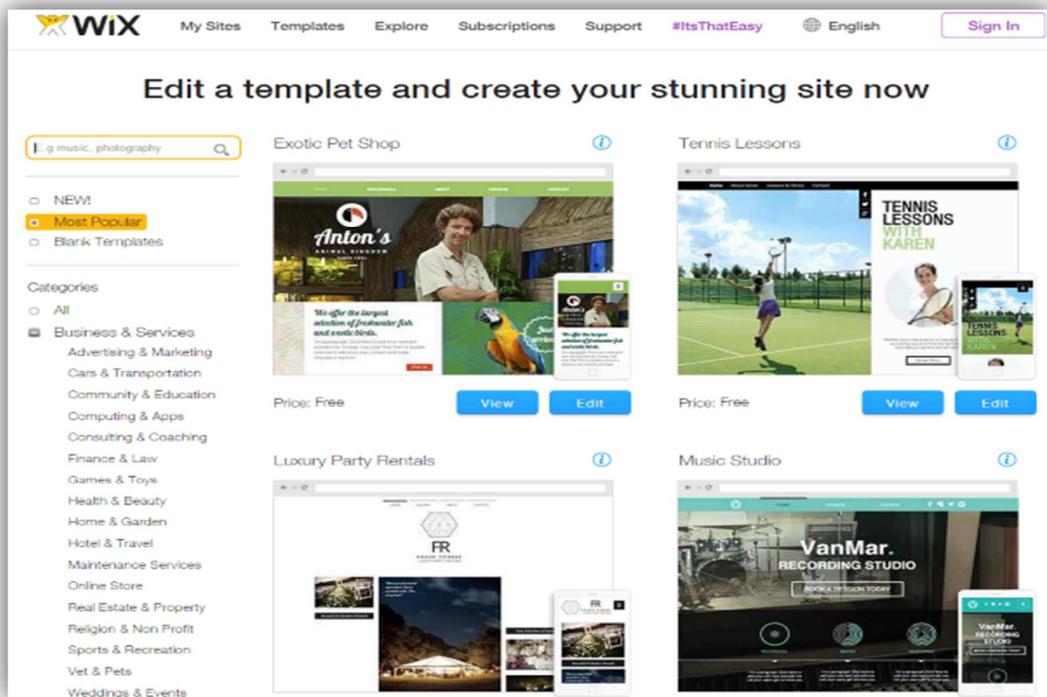


Figure 4: Wix template choosing page

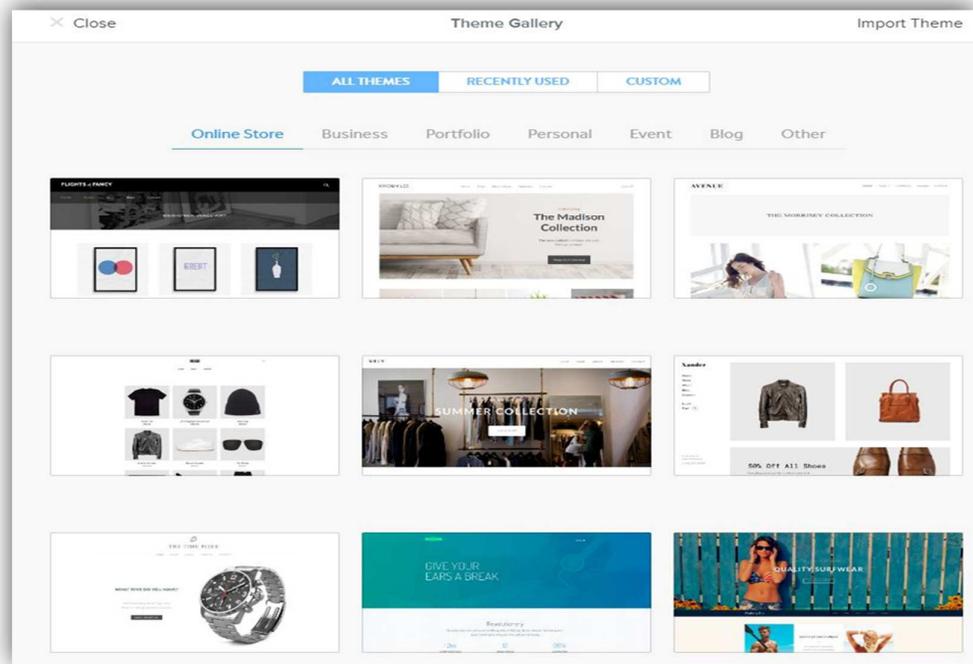


Figure 5: Weebly Theme Gallery

Comments: Wix is the better option in a matter of choosing a template because of the number of the template which is well categorised but the commissioner of this project like the idea of changing the theme. Using this option can be useful in future if the company want to change the look of the website.

Ease of use: Wix and Weebly both are drag and drop website builder which allow users to drag in content from the toolbar to create users own content. One benefit of using Wix, it allows the user to put contents to anywhere on the page. Whereas, Weebly only allow inserting the contents in designated areas. However, this limitation can be solved by choosing the theme. This should not be an issue for a small company website because there are many smart pre-design themes which can be changed later.

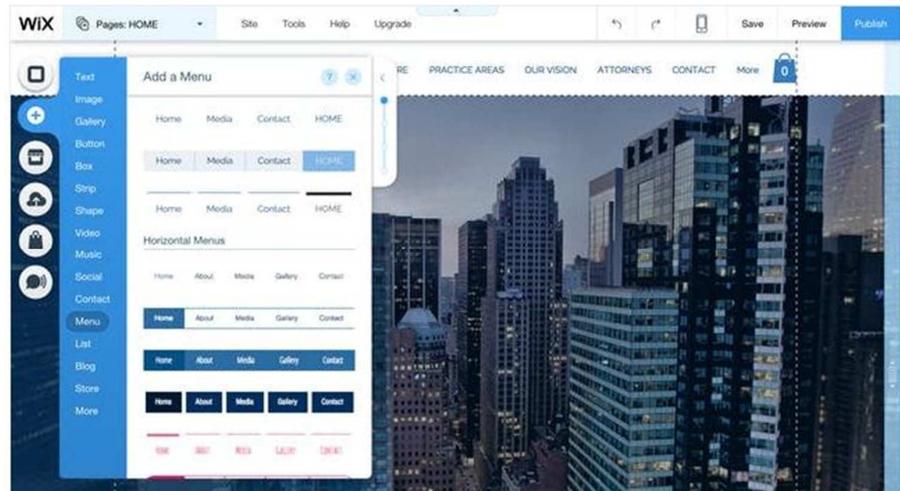


Figure 6: Wix Edit page

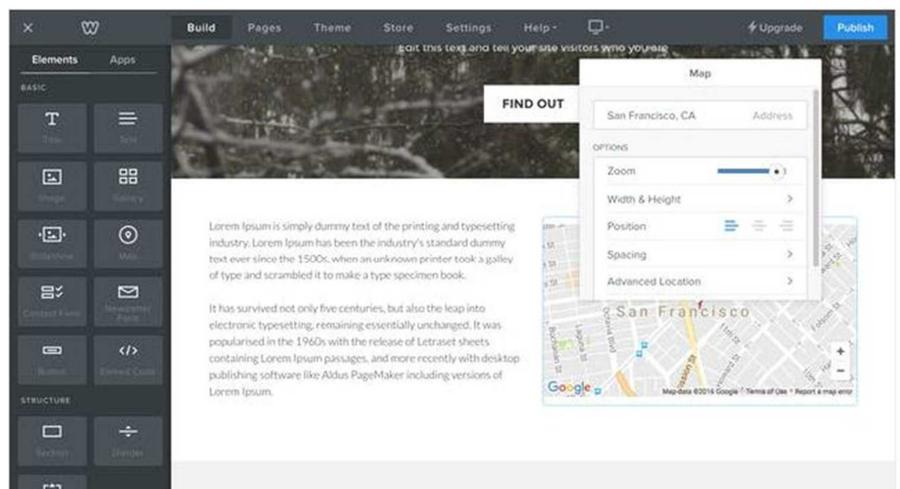


Figure 7: Weebly Edit page

Comments: Wix is more flexible as a drag and drops concept where the user can insert their content wherever they want. However, for a user with the minimum knowledge of computing can get confused with the user interface of Wix. Weebly has a simple interface which will allow a new user to get used to of all the buttons and options more quickly compare to Wix.

Additional tools and App: Weebly is the only website builder to offer an app store which called “app centre”. It allows users to install apps that added new functionality to the website. These apps help users in marketing, e-commerce, social media, communications and various tools such as pricing multilingual, tables, bookings, SEO, FAQ. Wix has a similar app market which let users integrate third-party apps. Both website builder’s apps markets have a verity of options to make the website look more attractive, and also extra tools are available which can make a developer task easier.

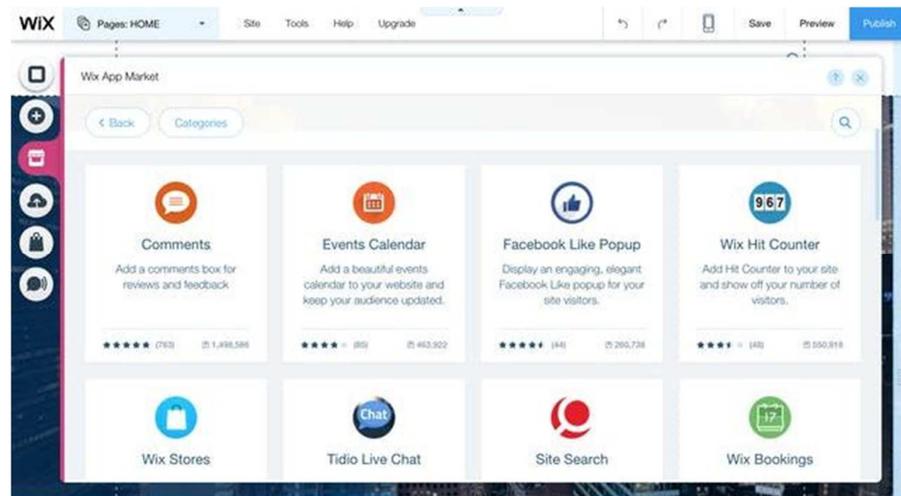


Figure 8: Wix App Market

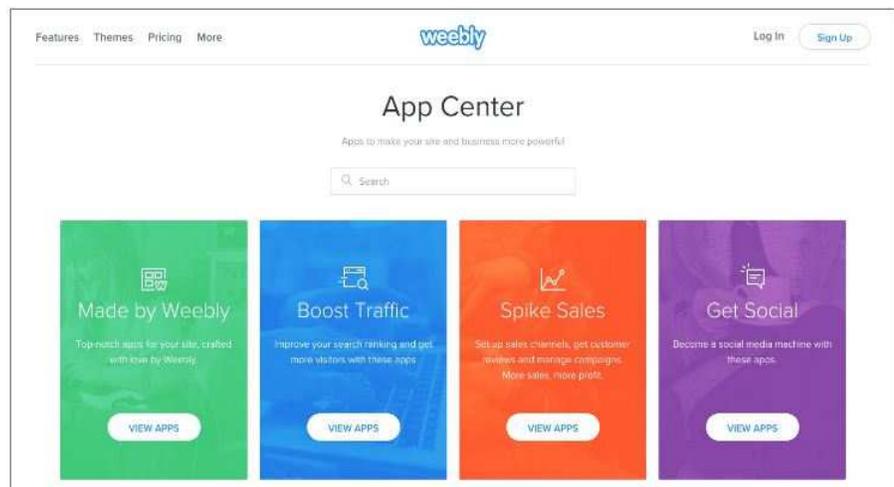


Figure 9: Weebly app centre

Comments: Both website builders have many apps which are very useful for a website functionality and to add additional features. Weebly apps are more organised and easy compared to Wix. Search engine optimisation, language options, advertising, email marketing can be done using the apps from Weebly app centre.

Pricing: Prices of different premium plans are not significantly different for both of these website builders. Wix offers five different premium plans, and our recommendation was to choose eCommerce plans which are 15\$ with a two years subscription. Weebly has the similar subscriptions in 19\$ includes many free apps. Both website builders offer sufficient storage, free domain, online stores, free marketing tools, social media communication tools.

Premium Plans

Wix gives 100s of templates, unlimited pages & top grade hosting FREE
Upgrade to Premium and get even more

VIP	eCommerce	MOST POPULAR Unlimited	Combo	Connect Domain
First Priority Support	Best for Small Business	Entrepreneurs & Freelancers	For Personal Use	Most Basic
\$25 /month	\$17 /month	\$14 /month	\$10 /month	\$5 /month
Select	Select	Select	Select	Select
UNLIMITED Bandwidth	20GB Bandwidth	UNLIMITED Bandwidth	2GB Bandwidth	1GB Bandwidth
20GB Storage	20GB Storage	10GB Storage	3GB Storage	500MB Storage
Connect Your Domain	Connect Your Domain	Connect Your Domain	Connect Your Domain	Connect Your Domain
Free Domain	Free Domain	Free Domain	Free Domain	
Remove Wix Ads	Remove Wix Ads	Remove Wix Ads	Remove Wix Ads	
\$300 Ad Vouchers	\$300 Ad Vouchers	\$300 Ad Vouchers		
Site Booster App - \$60 Value	Site Booster App - \$60 Value	Site Booster App - \$60 Value		
Form Builder App - \$48 Value	Form Builder App - \$48 Value	Form Builder App - \$48 Value		
Online Store	Online Store			
VIP Support				
Priority Response				
Professional Site Review				

Wix Premium Plans – based on 1-year plans

Figure 10: Wix Premium plans

<p>Performance</p> <p>Advanced eCommerce and marketing features to grow your business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Includes 1 year FREE of Email Marketing (with Promote Build) ✓ Includes a 1 year FREE domain <p>Choose a plan length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 1 month \$46/mo <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 year \$38/mo (save 17%) <input type="radio"/> 2 years \$35/mo (save 24%) 	<p>Business</p> <p>Fully integrated eCommerce for small businesses and stores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Includes a 1 year FREE domain <p>Choose a plan length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 1 month \$35/mo <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 year \$25/mo (save 32%) <input type="radio"/> 2 years \$21/mo (save 43%)
<p>Starter</p> <p>Connect your own domain, remove Weebly branding, and get advanced site stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Includes a 1 year FREE domain <p>Choose a plan length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 1 month \$14/mo <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 year \$8/mo (save 49%) <input type="radio"/> 2 years \$5/mo (save 68%) 	<p>Pro</p> <p>Professional site features, including site search, video backgrounds, and password protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Includes a 1 year FREE domain <p>Choose a plan length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 1 month \$18/mo <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 year \$12/mo (save 39%) <input type="radio"/> 2 years \$9/mo (save 54%)

Weebly Premium Plans

Figure 11: Weebly premium plans

Comments: Pricing of these website builders for an eCommerce website is similar. However, Weebly is ahead of Wix because of unlimited storage, free SSL security, unlimited member registration, no transaction fees any few other features.

After explaining all the features and functionality, Weebly was chosen by the commissioner to create the website for the company.

6 Implementation

This chapter describes the main stages of implementation and the outcome of creating the website. Authors created the website with a free Weebly account. Currently, the domain name of the website is “vikingoy.weebly.com”. The company is planning to buy the business package from Weebly before April 2018. As described in the previous chapter, the business package will allow the company to have the domain and other useful functionality for product marketing.

A simple, user-friendly website was created as per commissionaire’s requirements. The main aim of creating the website is product visibility and marketing via company’s website. After selecting the tool, several meetings have been held with the client about selecting the website layout, products category, contents, and functionality.

Since the commissionaire wants a simple website for product view and store information, a simple template was chosen from the website builder. Weebly offers many templates for e-commerce website with different functionality. Having different templates gives the client the opportunity of selecting the layout and design which makes developers task easy.

Choosing the templates makes it easy and fast to build a new website by replacing the existing template contents. As per client requirements, the templates chosen by the authors have three main pages. A homepage with the company’s product view, an “about us” page which describes the company background and a “contact us” page with contact information and store location.

6.1 Homepage

The homepage of the website was created with the company’s product information. Products were organised into six different categories. The intention of creating this website was to attract the customer about company’s beautiful products, and that is why the products have been shown on the “home page” with slide shows. A visitor can choose the category which will bring them to a different page where they can see all the products in that category.

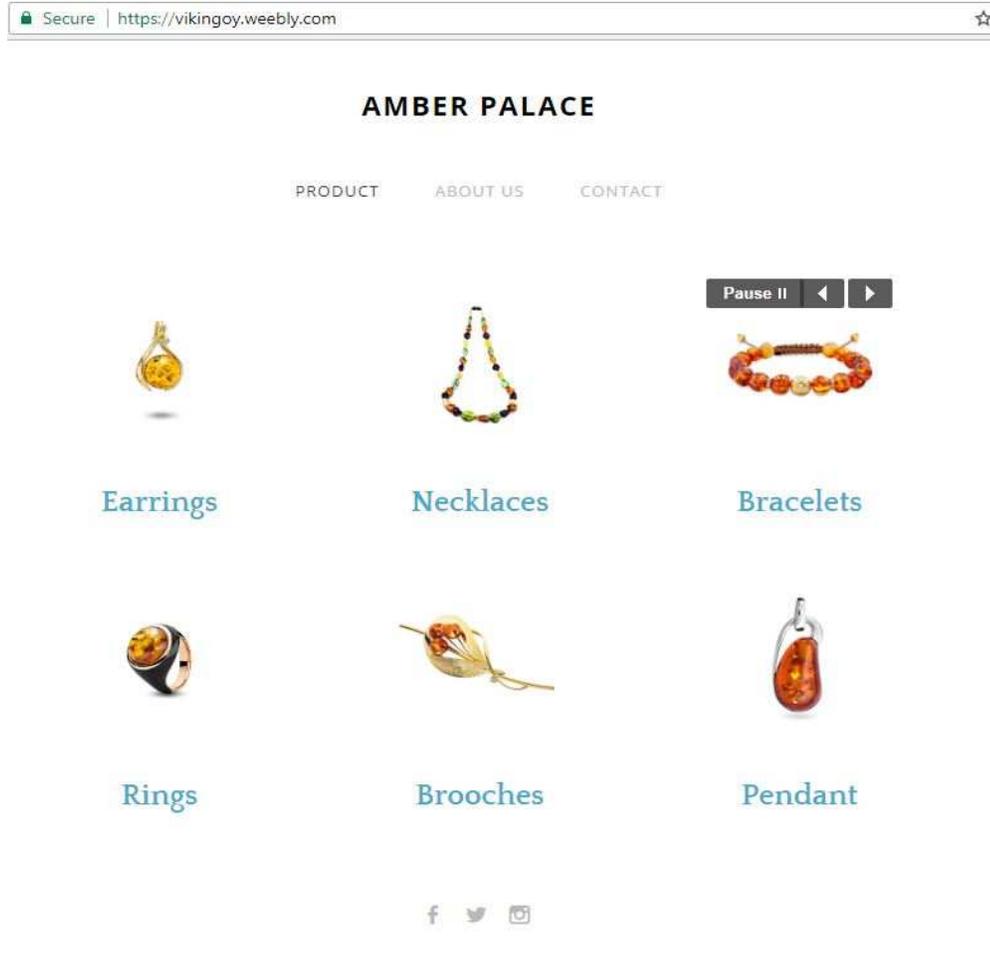


Figure 12: Home page

The background colour of the home page, texts colour and images are chosen by the client. Since there was no logo for the company, a simple text used to show the store name and clicking that button will always bring visitors to the home page. Social media buttons have been put on the bottom of the home page which will be linked to company's social media pages.

6.2 About us

“About us” page contains a short description of the company, some information about the product authenticity and the primary source of the product. Two images were also added to the page to show the inside view of the store.

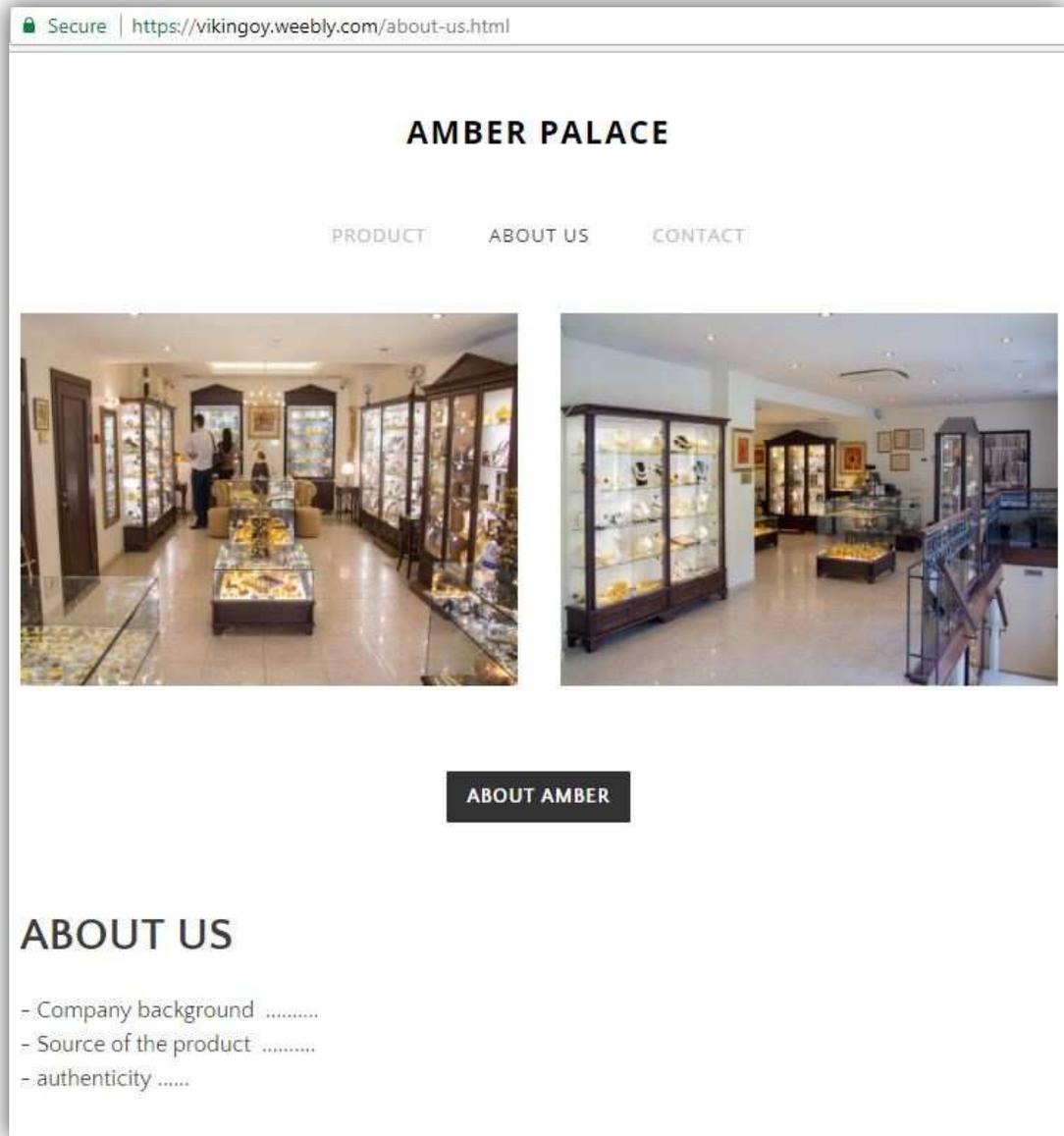


Figure 13: About us page

A button named “ABOUT AMBER” is linked to a page where a customer can know about the amber and amber made jewellery. This was recommended by the company employees because some customers do not know the necessary information about amber.

6.3 Contact us

The contact us page is created to help users to find all the contact information of the company. All the contact information and store address are shown on the left side of the page.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the contact page for Amber Palace. The browser address bar shows the URL <https://vikingoy.weebly.com/contact.html>. The page title is "AMBER PALACE". There are navigation links for "PRODUCT", "ABOUT US", and "CONTACT". A Google Map shows the store's location in Ullanlinna, Helsinki, with a red pin on Kasarminkatu. Below the map, the "Contact Us" section includes the text "Please feel free to contact us about any matter", the address "Amber Palace, Kasarminkatu 4, 00130, Helsinki, Finland", and the phone number "+358451269874". The contact form contains the following fields: "Name" (split into "First" and "Last"), "Product No.", "Email", and "Comment". A "SUBMIT" button is located at the bottom of the form.

Figure 14: Contact us page

A contact form created for the customer wants to reserve a product or sending a message to store. To reserve a product, the customer can fill the form with their name, email, the

product number and there is a comments box for messages. A Google map is embedded in contact us page believing that it will be easy for a visitor to find company location.

6.4 Functionality

The design of the website was created in a way that visitors can navigate the website easily. A customer can browse the product from home page which is well categories with simple slide shows. Each category will lead them to a separate page where all the product has been displayed. Each product has different information and different product number. If a customer wants to reserve a specific product, they can reserve it by pressing “RESERVE THIS ITEM” button which will take them to contact us page where they can fill the form and send a message to the store. The store will receive customer message by email, and they can take the necessary steps. As for employees who will make the changes to the website, they will be able to make changes by using the Weebly account. This website design will allow them to change the product and product information easily.

6.5 Recommended Further development

Further development suggestions can be implemented gradually. Since the company is using the website for marketing their product, there are several recommendations made by the authors after creating the website. The most important recommendation is to buy a business package from Weebly to make this website more useful. A business package will allow the company to have its own domain and unlimited storage. To make the website more visible, proper search engine optimisation should be done. There are many additional website apps which will be available for search engine optimisation and website visibility. Making the website in different languages is also recommended by the authors. There is need of company logo in the website and social media pages linked to the website will bring more visitor to store.

7 Training and guideline

Training and proper guideline to employees was an essential part of this project. After creating the website, the login information was handed over to store manager for future website changes and maintenance. However, Training did not require the preparation of extra documentation. There were many oral instructions, and hands-on exercise sessions have been done with the employees who will maintain the website. The most critical areas

of guidelines were for general administration. All the employees were instructed how to administer the site includes uploading new product pictures to different sections of the website, update written information, receiving comments from customers, changing website background, formatting fonts, linking social media pages to social media buttons. There were several tutorial videos about Weebly was showed to them to learn more about website maintenance on this platform. At the end of our project, all employees were able to make changes on the website which makes this thesis project successful.

8 Conclusions

The overall objective of this thesis project was to create a new website for an amber made jewellery store owned by the company “Viking fortune oy” and use a platform which is easy for website maintaining for a person who does not have unique IT skills. The website was created successfully according to company’s requirements. An online website builder was chosen to create the website which is allowing the employees to maintain the website easily after giving them training and proper guideline. From the beginning to the end of the project, there was a good coordination with the commissioner in every section of web development such as; a clear description of requirements, choosing the platform for creating the website, website layout and design, functionally, managing contents. Finally, the company got a new website as per their requirements. Now they company employees are able to update the contents of the website and can make necessary changes.

Authors had an opportunity to learn and gained experiences of using an online website builder. Browser-based online website builder was a new website development platform for both authors. Besides learning a new website building platform, the communication skills has been improved because of several meetings and training session with company employees. Many other experiences were achieved based on real-life working environment. Face to face interview with the company’s customer was a great experience to learn about the need for a customer. Authors have learned many new aspects of marketing by studying the importance of having a website as marketing tools and importance of website usability.

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