

IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY MARKETING IN RETAIL BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT

The global change has affected people's behavior and people have started to care more about the environment. This has increased the number of sustainable products on the markets. Customers are favoring environmentally-friendly products and thus, protect the environment. It is important to know how and where the products come from. The aim of the thesis is to get to know sustainability marketing and to understand the effects of sustainability marketing and its possibilities. The final goal is to produce a development plan for the case company and offer suggestions on how they could improve their sustainability marketing in order to persuade more customers to buy sustainable products from them.

The thesis is conducted deductively and both qualitative and quantitative research approaches will be used while conducting the research. Primary data was collected with an online survey from the case company's customers. Secondary data, which was collected from various types of information, including books, articles and Internet sources, supports the primary data.

In the thesis, the 4P's and 4C's of marketing theory along with PESTEL analysis are used to gain a deeper understanding of sustainability marketing as a part of marketing. Also, basic customer decision-making process and the idea of buying sustainable products are presented to support the research. Since an aim of the thesis is to produce a development plan about sustainability marketing for the case company, a SWOT-analysis is also used.

The research results indicated that websites are the main source of information about products' state of environmental friendliness. Important result of the research was also, that customers do not get enough information about products' environmental aspects. These and other results of the research helped create a development plan for the case company.

Key words: customer decision-making process, development plan, environmentally-friendly products, sustainability marketing

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thesis background

Environmentally, the world is changing constantly. The ongoing global change includes, for example, human population growth, over-consumption, and pollution. Because the global change affects the entire world's population, people are becoming more concerned and thus becoming more and more conscious about the environment. And, because of this awareness and concern, most people want to protect the world and thus favor environmentally friendly products. (Camill 2010.)

Due to the global change and the change in people's minds towards environmentally friendly products and services, companies have also been forced to modify their processes and behaviors in an attempt to respond to these changes. For companies, marketing is an important tool for attracting customers with slogans and packaging designs. (Investopedia 2017.) There are several terms regarding environmentalism and green ideas in business and one of the most used ones is sustainability marketing. Sustainability marketing refers to companies' processes in selling products and/or services based on their environmental advantages. These products or services may be environmentally friendly itself or produced in an environmentally friendly way. (Ward 2016.)

The case company, for this study, is a Finnish outdoor company called Partioaitta. Since 2014, Partioaitta has been owned by Frilufts Retail Europe AB. Partioaitta has 16 stores across Finland in addition to an online store. Partioaitta has their own label called "Vihreämpi valinta" (in English "Greener choice") which has been awarded for the environmentally friendly products that the company is selling. (Partioaitta 2018a.)

Partioaitta has done a lot of work towards sustainable development and they have developed the Partioaitta Way. This idea is based on the Fenix Way - a procedure developed by their owner - to achieve more in the field

of environmental performance (sustainable and environmental part of the operation). According to the case company, their label is also very attractive to people. (Partioaitta 2018a.) Due to all the above-mentioned reasons regarding the growing attention toward environmentalism, Partioaitta would like to gain more attention and create more interest in their environmentally friendly products. The purpose of the study is to help the company improve their sustainability marketing and thus reach more customers.

1.2 Thesis objectives, research questions and limitations

The following subchapter introduces the thesis objectives and the purpose of the thesis. The research questions are presented and at the end of the subchapter, the limitations of the thesis are introduced.

The thesis objectives are presented as an evidence of the researcher's sense and purpose for the research. Research objectives are used to explain to the reader how and which steps are used to answer the research questions. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, 43-44.) The purpose of the thesis also tells the reader how extensive the research is going to be. The purpose also explains what the researcher wants to find out and in which way the results of the research are planned to be used. The success of the research is also measured by checking if the purpose of the research is fulfilled. (Ghuri & Gronhaug 2010, 44.)

The thesis also aims to provide the reader an understanding of sustainability marketing and its possibilities, especially from the viewpoint of the case company. The basics of sustainability marketing will be presented and analyzed. The customer decision-making process is also explained and thought from the environmental point of view. The relationship between sustainability marketing and customer decision-making process is analyzed. The author is aiming to find a strong connection between the two previously mentioned concepts. Using that connection, the suggestions are made for the case company.

As a result of the study, a development plan concerning sustainability marketing for the case company is made. The main purpose of this is to provide the case company with ideas and suggestions on how to improve their sustainability marketing to reach more customers.

Determining a research question is a very important part when starting a research. The research question provides the reader an understanding of the research, and the question that the researcher is aiming to answer. The research question is the main question to which the researcher will provide an answer after the research is concluded. (Saunders et al. 2012, 126.)

One of the key criteria to measure research success is whether there are clear conclusions from the collected data. A good way to measure this is to look at the research questions and determine if they are clear and unambiguous. (Saunders et al. 2012, 40.) The research questions are also used to structure and narrow the research problem (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2010, 43).

In the thesis, the main research question is:

- How should the case company improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products?

As the research question concludes the whole research and thesis and thus is often difficult to answer directly, the researcher may set sub-questions. The sub-questions are the research question at a micro-level and after answering them, it is easier to answer the main research question. (Erasmus School of Economics 2017.) The sub-questions for the thesis are:

- What is sustainability marketing?
- What kind of buying criteria do ethical consumers have when buying ecological products?

- Why is the knowledge about products' environmental aspects important to the customers in the decision-making process?

There are always limitations to be considered when conducting a research. The first limitation of the research is that this research is about outdoor equipment, thus the research may not provide information on marketing other types of green products. As the segment is a Finnish company selling outdoor equipment and the customers are mainly Finnish, it may not offer information to other companies based outside Finland and concerning other nationalities as a customer-type. However, the research provides valid information for the case company and should help them shape their marketing plan by using sustainability marketing more efficiently.

1.3 Theoretical framework

The use of theory-in-practise is important. The theory provides the reader the basis of the topic. Using the basis, the reader can create links during the reading. (Ghuri & Gronhaug 2010, 59-60.) As the theory comes first in this thesis, the reader will have gained knowledge of the topic before reading about the research.

An aim of the thesis is to help the case company to use sustainability marketing in a more effective way as a part of their marketing to reach more customers. As this thesis is about the importance of sustainability marketing, the theory of sustainability marketing is presented and explained.

Because sustainability marketing is part of marketing, some marketing theories, such as 4P's of marketing, 4 C's of marketing and SWOT analysis are introduced and implemented with the focus on sustainability marketing. As sustainability marketing is part of marketing, it is important for the reader to get the big picture of marketing.

An important part of this research is to understand how customers make decisions on which products they buy and how they choose sustainable

products. Therefore, a customer decision-making process is presented and analysed as part of the theoretical framework. The researcher is also trying to find links between the decision-making process and the importance of sustainability marketing. The assumption the author is making is that the link between the decision-making process and the importance of sustainability marketing is getting stronger as people care more about the environment.

After the research is carried out and the results of the research have been analyzed, a development plan for the case company is presented. This development plan will include the suggestions for improvements in sustainability marketing.

1.4 Research methodology and data collection

This subchapter presents the methodology and data collection used in this thesis. There are different ways of conducting a research. The way is chosen after deciding what will be researched.

The first step is to choose the research approach. There are two main types or research approach: the deductive reasoning and the inductive reasoning. The main difference between these two approaches comes from the data collection process. The deductive reasoning starts with existing theories and concepts which are tested whereas inductive reasoning begins with data upon which theories are built. In deductive reasoning the premises are linked to the conclusions, it is believed that conclusions come logically from the premises when they are true, the conclusion must be true as well. In inductive reasoning, the researcher must seek premises as evidence to support the truth of the conclusion. (Saunders et al. 2012, 143-144.)

After the research approach is chosen, the researcher must think of which methodology to use. There are several different types of research methods., In the thesis, only the main two types of methodologies, the qualitative and quantitative research methods, are presented. The

methodology is chosen based on which type of data is needed for the research (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2010, 103). Business researches are often likely to combine elements from both methods in one research since it might be necessary to use different types of data collection methods which fall under different research methods (Saunders et al. 2012, 161).

Quantitative research concentrates on numeric-data and the measuring of it. Quantitative research examines different variables, which are measured and analyzed using statistical techniques. Data is often collected through questionnaires and surveys. The validity and the generalisability are important factors and thus probability sampling techniques are often used. (Saunders et al. 2012, 161-162.)

Qualitative methods, by contrast, concentrate on non-numeric data. Qualitative research studies participants' in-depth understanding of different issues to develop a conceptual framework. Getting participants' trust is important to gain information and to be able to make sense of the topic being studied. Strategies used in qualitative research are: action research, case study research, ethnography and narrative research. Data is collected by using various ways both unstructured and/or semi-structured techniques. These include interviews and observations. (Saunders et al. 2012, 161-164.)

As the goal of this research is to consider how should the case company improve their sustainability marketing to reach more customers, the qualitative research method is chosen. To be able to answer the research question, the quantitative research method must be implemented as well. The data collection methods used are questionnaire, interviews and observations.

After selecting right methods for the research, the data collection process starts. In a research, data means the facts and statistics that are collected and recorded for analysis (Saunders et al. 2012, 669). In this research, the primary data was collected from a web survey, which was conducted among Partioaitta's customers and other people interested in the topic.

This web survey was done to find out which factors are important for Finnish customers when they make purchasing decisions. Also, an analysis of the case company's web page and social media was done to figure out how the company is currently doing sustainability marketing.

Another important source for the thesis is secondary data. This is collected from literature, articles and from Internet-based sources. The following figure represents the data collection methods of the research.



FIGURE 1. Research methodology and data collection

As Figure 1 above shows, the research was conducted with a deductive approach and both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Data was gathered from primary and secondary sources.

1.5 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into two main sections: the theoretical section and the empirical section. The theory of sustainability marketing and customer decision making processes are introduced and after that supported by the research and the empirical findings. After the empirical research and data analysis, there is a development plan which offers suggestions for the case company. The last two chapters summarize the thesis. The structure of the thesis will be presented in Figure 2 below.

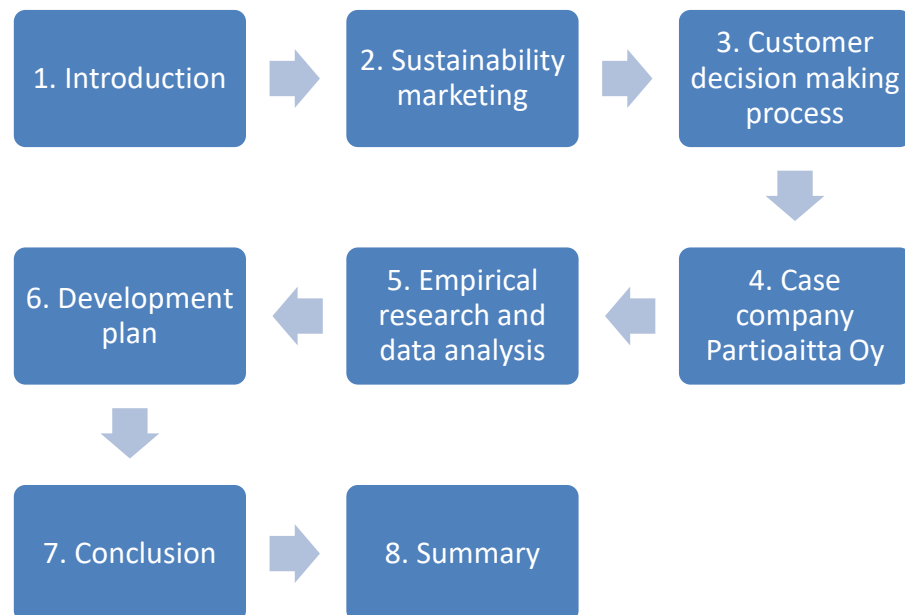


FIGURE 2. Thesis structure

The first chapter, the introduction, gives the reader a general idea of the thesis. It presents the background of the thesis, research objectives and research questions, the limitations, theoretical framework, methodology

and data collection methods. It also gives an overview of the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter introduces sustainability marketing to the reader. Some marketing tools, such as 4P's of marketing and 4C's of marketing are introduced and implemented with the focus on sustainability marketing. It explains the basics of green marketing and its role as part of marketing. The reader gets an idea of sustainability marketing's purpose and about the changes in marketing.

Since understanding customer decision-making process is important for this thesis, as it is vital for improving marketing, the process is introduced in chapter three. The chapter explains how customers make their buying decisions followed by more detailed explanation how retail customers and especially buying decisions on green products are made. Some future trends in customer decision-making process are introduced at the end of chapter three.

The fourth chapter introduces the case company. As this thesis is done for one company in mind, it is important to understand their way of doing green marketing at the moment in order to figure out how it could be improved.

The fifth chapter is all about the empirical research. It introduces the process of the research and the results are analyzed. Chapter six introduces the development plan made for the case company. The development plan is based on the theoretical research and supported with the data gained from the empirical research. The last two chapters summarize the entire research and the thesis.

2 SUSTAINABILITY MARKETING

This chapter introduces the reader to sustainability marketing. The aim is that the reader gets familiarized with the concept of sustainability marketing and understands its role as a part of marketing. At the end of the chapter, the reader gets an overview of the future of sustainability marketing and what might happen.

2.1 Definition of sustainability marketing

Sustainability marketing is defined as development and marketing of products and services that are ecologically friendly. These products and services are designed to minimize the negative effects on the environment. Sustainability marketing can be seen as a study of how can we make sure that all efforts are taken when producing, packing, promoting, distributing and even consuming the products and services so that they are responding to ecological concerns. Thus, the process includes all stages from designing the products or services to recycling them. (Dahlstrom 2011, 5.)

Sustainability marketing is done by several different players in the business. It is easiest to think of the retailers since they are the ones who are usually marketing the products to consumers. Though, in addition to retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, companies offering services and even governmental or nongovernmental organizations are doing their part of sustainability marketing. Obviously, sustainability marketing by different players is done differently and thus also seen differently but there is a common goal. Everyone is trying to limit the ecological influence associated with consumption. (Dahlstrom, 2011, 5-6.)

A very good way for companies is to do sustainability marketing with help from eco-labels. These days there are a lot of well-known labels that speak for themselves when considering product's green aspects. In a world of where there are very many different eco-labels, customers look for the familiar labels which they know and recognize. (Atkinson 2014.)

The International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) has identified three types of voluntary labels (Global Ecolabelling Network 2018). The types are presented in the Figure 3.

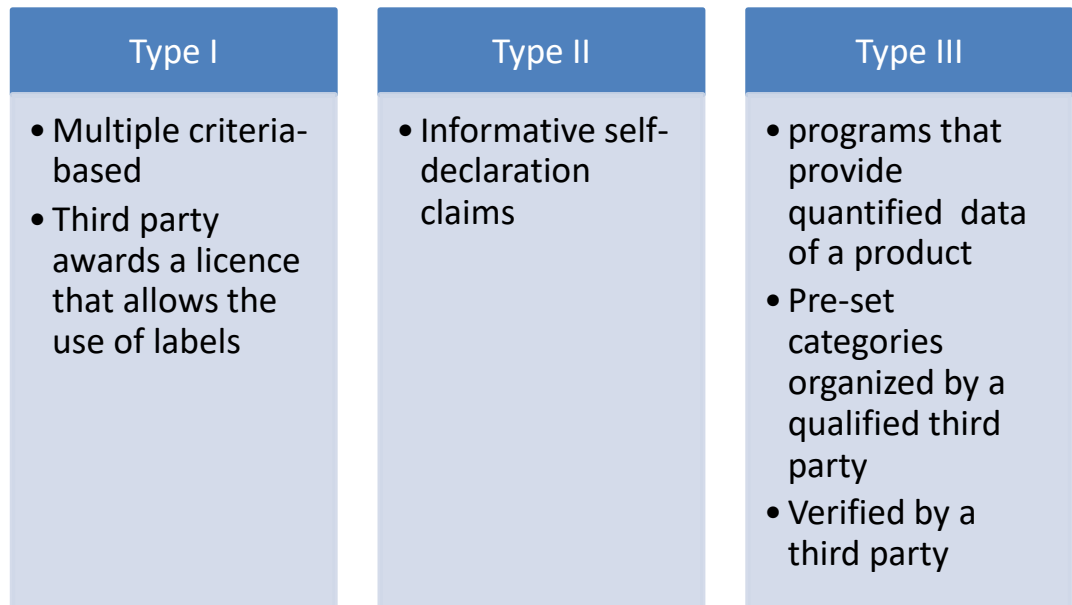


FIGURE 3. Types of voluntary labels (Global Ecolabelling Network 2018)

Since the eco-labels are usually found under the Type I, that is the only type that is explained in the thesis. In Type I, a third party is accrediting the label and afterwards, awarding a license to the company. The license is for the use of environmental labels on products or services which are using environmental options within a certain product category. The accrediting is done based on a product's life cycle. (Global Ecolabelling Network 2018.) There are over 150 different eco-labels which are indicating the environmental choices made when designing, producing, packing and/or transporting products or services. Each label indicates one or more qualities and aspects of the product's life-cycle that is made in an

environmentally friendly way. The products and services which have eco-labels cover food and beverages to personal hygiene products, clothes and furniture and even companies. (Ecolabel Index 2018.) Some of the most common eco-labels are presented in Figure 4 below.



FIGURE 4. Eco-labels (Alter 2018)

Sustainability marketing is often linked to a company's overall work towards green activities. These activities can be measured and assessed from their corporate social responsibility (CSR) work. If companies are reliable and serious about their work, their actions in CSR work will show that. Companies who do CSR work usually publish yearly a CSR report in which they tell about their economic, environmental and social impacts from everyday activities. In the CSR report, companies also talk about their values and governance model and how they draw a connection

between their strategy and commitment towards sustainable actions. (GRI 2018.)

CSR reporting enables companies to take a close look at their actions and lets them consider the impacts they have on sustainability issues. CSR reporting also makes them transparent to their customers and stakeholders and often increases trust and identifies the risks and opportunities of the company. (GRI 2018.) As a part of CSR, a triple bottom line (TBL) theory is used as a good way for companies to consider their work through three major parts of the business (Elkington 1994, according to The Economist 2009). The TBL framework is presented in Figure 5 below.

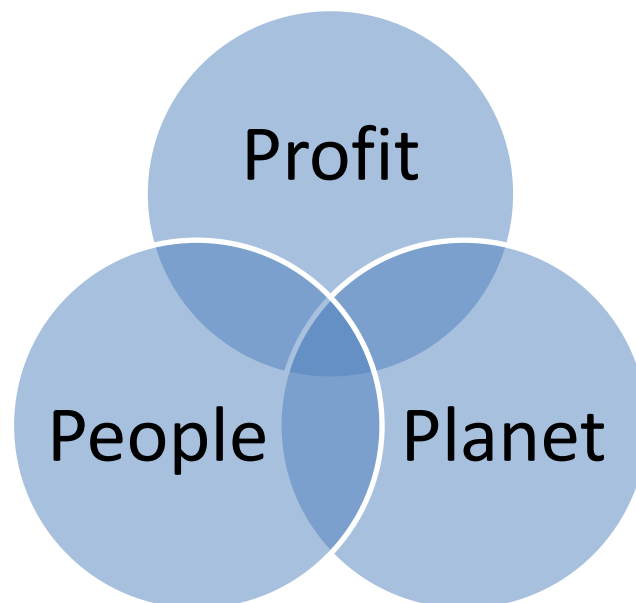


FIGURE 5. The Triple bottom line (Elkington 1994, according to The Economist 2009)

In the triple bottom line, the three factors are viewed as factors, or bottom lines, that companies should consider equally. The three are seen as quite separate matters but they should be seen together when viewing the bigger picture. Profit is the traditional measurement of a company's success. The company must be profitable to be successful. The people factor measures how responsible the company has been socially throughout its operations. The planet factor tells how environmentally responsible the company has been. (GRI 2018.)

The triple bottom line model is thus, measuring the corporation's performance economically, socially and environmentally over a certain period. The problem with the triple bottom line is that it is often easier to measure company's profit than the effects on people and planet. The three factors should be measured on the same terms, but it is often very difficult. Though, a lot of companies still use it to help themselves measure their activities. (GRI 2018.)

2.2 Sustainability marketing as a part of marketing

The goal of marketing is at the same time to attract new customers and retain the existing customers. Creating value and finding the most attractive qualities of the products or services and capturing them, are important tools of marketing. Marketing is thus a constant dialogue between the customers and companies. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 26-27.)

Sustainability marketing, as the name already says, is part of the whole concept of marketing. Companies have marketing strategies and sustainability marketing is part of that strategy.

One of the key tools of marketing is the marketing mix. The marketing mix concludes all core elements of marketing. It helps the companies to blend their products and their best qualities into their marketing strategy. The marketing mix is also called the 4 P's of marketing since it stands for Product, Price, Place and Promotion. The Figure 6 illustrates the

marketing mix and the main objectives of each category. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 76-77.)

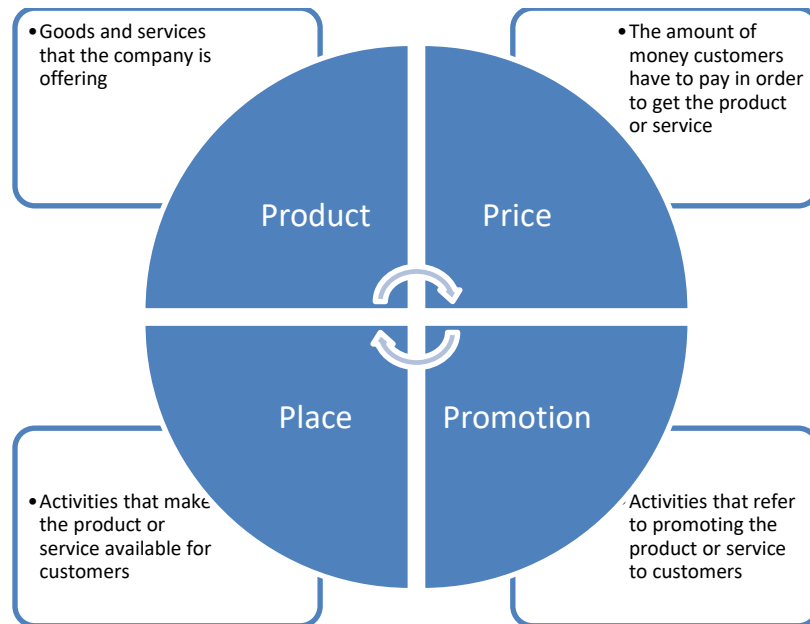


FIGURE 6. The 4 P's (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 76-77)

As the thesis concentrates on sustainability marketing, the product is the most important factor in the marketing mix. The product needs to be truly environmentally friendly and produced in a way that is the least consuming to the environment. After the product is proven good, the promotion is the second most important part. The main goal of promotion is to promote the key elements of the product or service and persuade the customers to buy it. Most important acts are advertising, marketing and selling. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 67.)

A concern with the 4 P's of marketing is that it is taking the seller's viewpoint but not the customer's. As the world of marketing today has shifted into customer markets, it is important to see the importance of customer value and strong relationships. Thus, a better way to see the customer's point of view would be with the model of 4 C's which is used more often today than the 4 P's model. The Figure 7 explains the differences in the two models. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 67.)

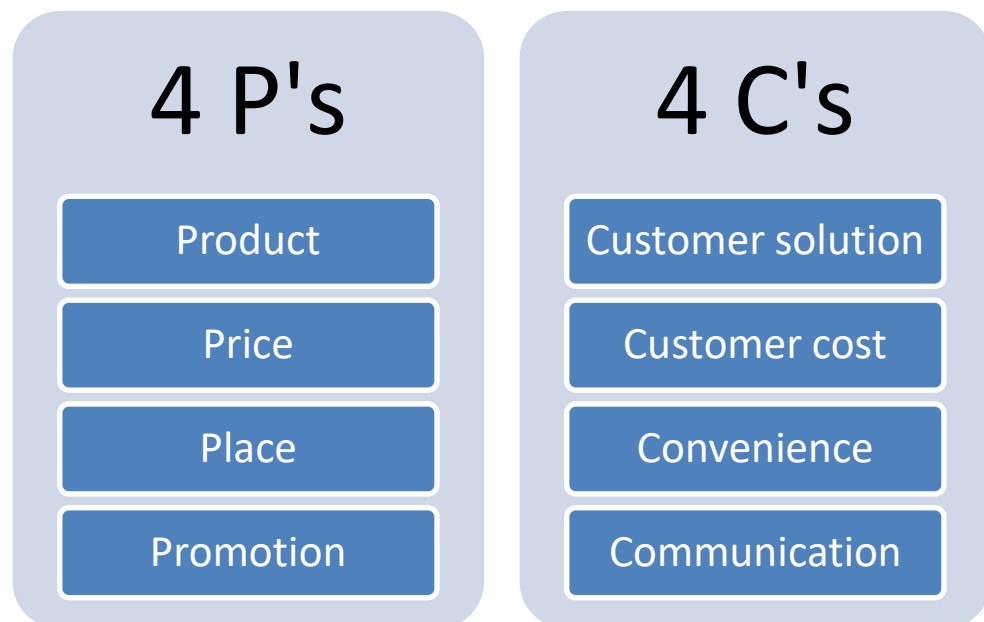


FIGURE 7. The difference between the 4 P's and 4 C's (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 66-67)

As the 4 P's of marketing focuses on the external aspects of marketing, the 4 C's entirely focuses on the customer and their needs. Customers are looking for buying solutions and help for their everyday life which makes the 4 C's profitable for companies if they truly focus on the customers. Customers are looking for the total costs of buying the product or service

and they would like the products and services to be available as conveniently as possible. They are also hoping for an open discussion between them and the sellers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 67.)

As in the 4 P's, within the 4 C's the customer solution is the most important in the thesis topic. The customer solution, the product itself, needs to be something that the customer needs, that is environmentally friendly, and which is produced in a way that minimizes the environmental disadvantages. After the customer solution is good, then the communication about it comes as the second most important aspect. The communication needs to be as wide and thorough as possible to make the customers satisfied and able to get all the information that they need before they decide to buy something. Communication is done by getting close to the customers with marketing and advertising. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 67.)

2.3 Purpose of sustainability marketing

The purpose of sustainability marketing is the same as with marketing itself, namely to create attention and interest. Well done marketing creates create long-lasting, strong relationships with customers that are buying the products or services and thus, bringing the money into the company. It is essential to have attractive and thorough communication. People are what matter and marketing should be all about the people and their needs. (Levinson & Horowitz 2010, 3-4.) Sustainability marketing is opting to attract customers who are ecologically responsible and aware of the environmental issues in the world.

Competition is very extreme in business and thus, differentiating is very important for companies. They need to figure out a way to make themselves different from other companies and create extra value for their customers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 73.) Thus, listening to customers' needs and creating products with the needs in mind, is important.

Customers are looking to do business with companies who share their ideas and values. A big part of those values these days for many customers are caring for the environment and being aware of the changes in the climate. Internet and other technological inventions have made it possible for companies to be greener by needing fewer resources and infrastructure to produce their products and services. (Levinson & Horowitz 2010, 107-108.)

2.4 Challenges with sustainability marketing

As sustainability marketing is a growing trend among companies, there is also a fear that challenges regarding sustainability marketing will grow. These challenges include both difficulties for the companies and the customers. On the company side, the biggest issues deal with defining green products and how to get customers to change their way of living towards greener actions (Ottman 1993, 49-54). Customers face situations where companies are greenwashing them meaning trying to mislead them.

Defining what is sustainability marketing or green products is not easy. There are very few completely green products, but the idea of the green product is often seen as durable, toxic free, recyclable and minimally packed. People see green products very differently and it also often differs from the product category to another and from country to another. There is no agreed method to measure exact environmental impacts of a certain product and thus, the definition is very vague and different. This frustrates both companies and customers. (Ottman 1993, 49-50.)

Another big problem for companies is finding ways to help customers make necessary changes in their lifestyle to become greener. People are often set to certain standards and expectations and it is hard to change them. Starting to use green products and living in a more sustainable way might be a big change on people. Companies also need to figure out the best way to do marketing in a way to it attracts the customers to buy their products. (Ottman 1993, 50-52.) Sustainability marketing is a good answer for this and a reason why it is increasing so rapidly.

As more and more companies are doing more good for the environment and using sustainability marketing as an important way to attract customers, there is a risk of an increase in greenwashing. Greenwashing means misleading customers regarding companies' environmental practices or environmental benefits of products or services they are selling. These can include not providing evidence to back green claims, vagueness in terms used, lying and irrelevance in using claims that are self-evident. (Levinson & Horowitz 2010, 117-122.)

Unfortunately, it is often hard for consumers to see through greenwashing since companies are trying to hide it. It is up to customers to be wise and a little bit skeptical about what is marketed to them and always check claims that are made. Companies also should be aware of possible harms caused by greenwashing and thus, if they are wise, they will stay away from greenwashing. (Weybrecht 2010, 218-220.)

2.5 Changing world of sustainability marketing

It is obviously hard to predict the future and what will happen, but it is likely that sustainability and ethical consumption will become more popular among customers. Sustainability will become the norm and the term will extend to many kinds of activities. The way people buy and consume products will change and alternative options will be offered. Thus, it is important for companies to start thinking of green and sustainable options and environmentally friendly ways of producing and operating. (Weybrecht 2010, 355-359.)

One concern for the future is that companies start doing sustainability actions because that is needed and looks good without caring about the environment. Being sustainable looks great for customers and for shareholders, so that is what companies will do. Doing sustainable actions can be like clicking a box without even thinking about it. Although sustainable activities are obviously good, it is bad if companies do it for the wrong reasons. The whole idea is lost, and customers are misled in a way. As companies are always interested in showing their best side, it is hard

for customers to see beyond greenwash and choose products and services from companies who are truly for the more sustainable future with pure minds. (Prothero & McDonagh 2014.)

Sustainability marketing and especially how companies market their products and services will become essential in the marketing mix. Since sustainable options are likely to increase, then it is important for companies to differentiate themselves so that customers find their products or services and prefer them over other competing products and services. (Weybrecht 2010, 357-359.) Creating competitive advantage, something that puts one company over the others will be equally important as these days, but with a sustainable viewpoint. Sustainability and green actions will surely be part of the strategy that creates competitive advantage. (Ottman 2011, 91.)

3 CUSTOMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This chapter introduces the customer decision-making process to the reader. First, information about how buying decisions are made is presented. Second, the customer decision-making process in retail is introduced. Buying green and environmentally friendly products and services is also covered and explained. The end of the chapter focuses on the future trends of customer decision-making process.

3.1 How are decisions to buy something made?

Consumers around the world are different and depending on the decision that needs to be made, the processes differ. The consumer can take a different role in which the decisions are made. The idea of taking a role before choosing something is called the role theory. The consumer can be a chooser – somebody who is choosing between options and exploring different criteria before making a choice. Sometimes consumers are looking for the pleasure and that is the main motivation for choosing a certain product/service. Other times, consumers might boycott a certain company or a country and choose the product/service based on that. This is called being a political consumer. The consumer can take one role or several roles simultaneously. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg 2006, 6.)

There are similarities and common factors that consumers make. There is always a decision to be made. A decision includes a choice between two or more alternative options or behaviors. Marketers often see choices between objects (products, brands), but consumers also choose between behaviors (what should I do?). There is always a cognitive process involved when consumers make their decisions. The cognitive process includes knowledge, meanings and beliefs which are activated by a memory and/or attention. (Peter & Olson 2008, 162-163.)

Understanding consumer behavior helps companies to develop their marketing strategies. They need to be able to identify the key elements of

the process and the factors that are affecting it, in order to focus on creating the best strategies to get consumers' interest in their products and/or services. Understanding the customer emotions in the decision-making process is important for companies since emotions create a link between experiencing the service and the customer behavior. (Fisk, Russell-Bennett & Harris 2013, 93.)

3.2 Customer decision-making process in retail

As mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, consumers make different purchasing decisions. As it is impossible to understand all consumers, marketing professionals are trying to find trends among the consumers and with those trends, reach the people who are most likely to buy their products. All consumers go through a customer decision-making process before buying a product/service. Without even realizing it consumers are at some stage of the process. (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 67.) The Figure outlines the customer decision-making process.

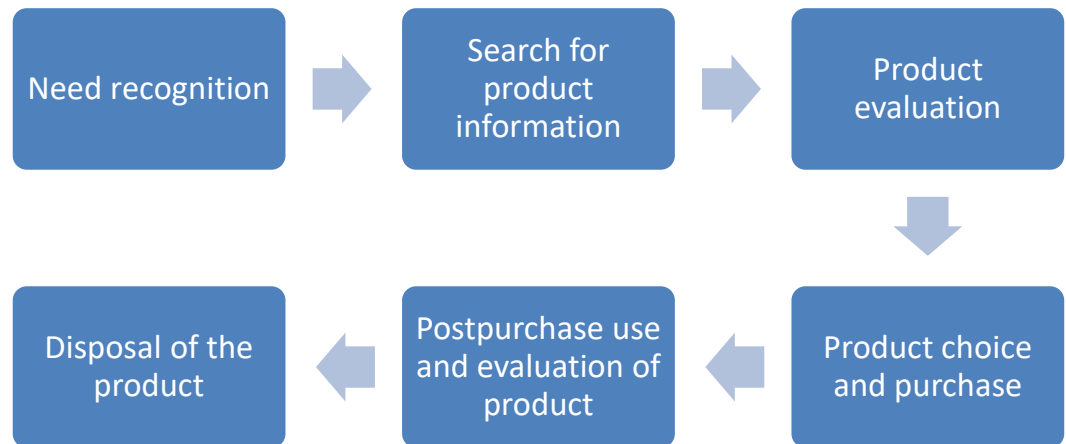


FIGURE 8. Customer decision-making process (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 68)

Stage one is customer recognizing their need for a product. The need can be stimulated through internal or external sources. (Fisk et al. 2013, 88.) For example, starting from the feeling of thirst after an activity which leads to buying water through to a planning a world trip and realizing the lack of a bag which leads to buying a suitcase. There are different ways to characterize the needs, one of the most common is the Maslow's hierarchy of needs which specifies five categories of needs. The five categories are: physiological needs (for example water and food), safety needs (for example security and shelter), social needs (for example affection and belonging), ego needs (for example self-esteem and prestige) and self-actualization. (Fisk et al. 2013, 88-89.)

Stage two is the information search. Once the consumer has realized a need, they start to look for the solution. They start to search options to fulfill the need. This stage can be very different depending on the need. It

can be very long and systematic or very brief and habitual. If the need is, for example, a haircut, the customer most likely calls their favorite hair stylist and makes an appointment. This is a habitual process. But if the need is, for example, a new car, the process is very long and thorough. This stage is where a good marketer can show their skills. It is important that the information search is as smooth and easy as possible for the consumer. (Fisk et al. 2013, 89.)

When customers search information, they try to find alternatives and as much information about them as possible. Peter & Olson (2008, 168) suggest that the alternatives can be divided into two groups, the unknown brands and the familiar brands. The unknown brands group is furthermore divided into brands never found, brands found accidentally, and brands found through intentional search. The familiar brands are divided into the evoked set (brands activated from memory) and unrecalled brands. The actual alternatives for the customer are thus, in this process, the brands found accidentally, brands found through intentional search and evoked set. When the company wants that their products are taken into consideration in the decision-making process, their products need to be found by the customer in one of the three categories. (Peter & Olson 2008, 168.)

The third stage is evaluating the product/service options. After the consumer has searched information about the products, the options need to be narrowed and evaluated. Typically, the evoked set, meaning the group of brands that the consumer is familiar with when thinking of making a purchasing decision, for services is smaller than for products. This is because the number of alternatives is often more limited, and it is harder to find information about services. (Fisk et al. 2013, 90.) A consumer may set up evaluation criteria to narrow down the options (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 69).

The fourth stage is choosing the product and purchasing it. In addition to deciding on which product to buy, the customer also chooses from where, when and how to purchase it. The criteria for this can include for example

price, ease of buying, customer experience and time management. (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 70.)

The fifth stage is the post purchase use and evaluation of the product. During this stage, the consumer experiences the product/service and decides whether the purchase was good or bad. If the consumer feels the purchase was bad, the consumer might suffer from post purchase dissonance where the decision feels wrong and they start to wonder if they should have waited or rethought on which product/service to buy. The post purchase dissonance is very bad for the marketers since the consumers might return the product, never buy anything from that seller again or tell their friends about the bad purchase. Companies are trying to prevent the post purchase dissonance from happening with for example guarantees, warranties or extensive help from the salesperson to find the right product. (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 70.) This stage is important because the feeling from the use of the product often influences the consumer's subsequent decision making, for example, intentions to repurchase the product/service (Fisk et al. 2013, 91).

The sixth stage, the last stage, is the disposal of the product. The disposal of the product is becoming more and more important as environmental matters and knowledge are increasing. Recycling or reusing products is growing and people are concerned about how they can recycle products. This makes companies think as well and create as easy ways to recycle as possible. (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 70-71.)

3.3 Buying environmentally-friendly products

When buying green products, the decision-making process can be described in the same way as buying non-green products. In that case, there are extra matters in each stage that the consumer would think about. But there are also other ways to segment green consumers. One example shown in the figure below is to segment green consumers by their interests. (Ottman 2011, 29.)

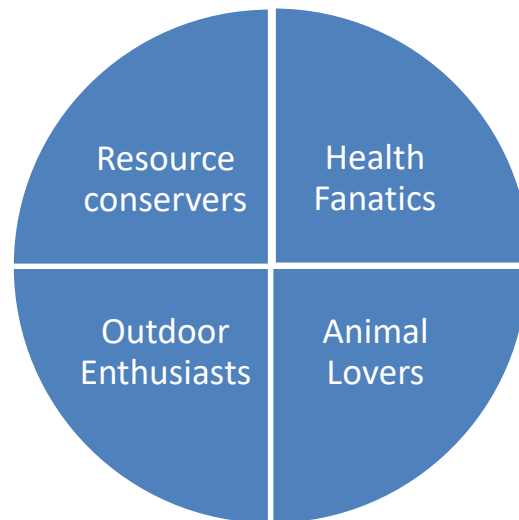


FIGURE 9. Segmenting green customers by interests (Ottman 2011, 29)

The above figure showing segmenting is based on the idea that green consumers tend to prioritize their environmental concerns relative to other concerns. Their priorities are likely to belong to one or more of the above-mentioned categories. The priorities may also change throughout their lives. The resource conservers hate waste and thus, do everything to avoid waste. They drink from reusable bottles, carry canvas shopping bags, read from online newspapers and recycle all used electronic devices. (Ottman 2011, 31.)

Health fanatics worry about their own health and what different ingredients, chemicals, weather and food do to their health. They try to prevent anything causing them harm and thus, they are willing to buy natural products. Natural fanatics are experts on telling which ingredients are good and natural and which are harmful to your health. They buy

natural cosmetics and apply sunscreen, buy organic food and non-toxic cleaning supplies. (Ottman 2011, 31.)

Animal lovers are passionate about animals and are pro-animals. They care for all animals, whether it is their own pets or animals on the streets. Animal lovers are likely to be vegetarian or vegan. They use cosmetics that are not tested with animals and they are concerned with marine life harms caused by using plastic bags. (Ottman 2011, 32.)

Outdoor enthusiasts love the outdoors and spend their time doing outdoor activities such as camping, hiking and skiing. They favor spending their vacations in natural parks or other places where nature and activities outdoors are possible. Outdoor enthusiasts want to minimize the harmful impacts on the environment by using products that environmentally-friendly. They, for example, buy clothes that are made from recycled materials, avoid littering the environment and use soaps and other hygiene products that are natural and do not harm the environment when washing dishes or hair. (Ottman 2011, 32.)

Though all these segments are green consumers, in the same as non-green consumers, they are also all individuals with their own interests and habits, they all respond to the universal needs presented in the previous sub-chapter 3.2 in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Their needs transform into different buying strategies. (Ottman 2011, 32.) Their needs and the strategies are presented in the figure below.

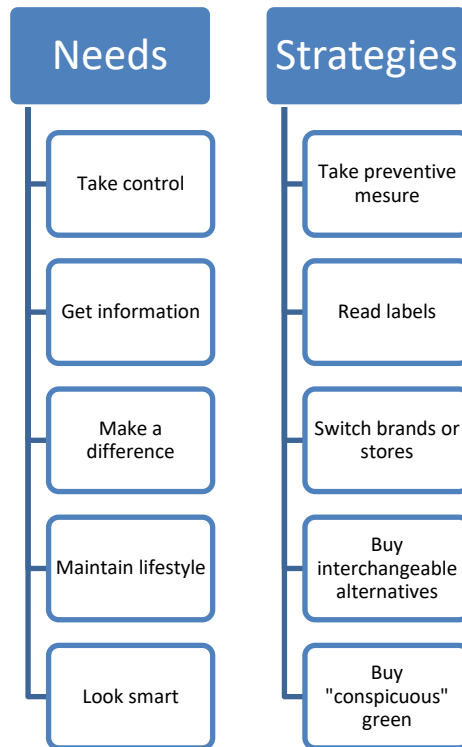


FIGURE 10. Green consumer motives and buying strategies (Ottman 2011, 33)

Green consumers are very keen on taking control and one key reason for this is that consumers do not trust the manufacturers or retailers. Consumers are not sure whether they are offered credible information or whether the manufacturers and retailers are telling them a tempered improved version. Thus, the consumers like take control and prevent bad things with extensive precaution. These measures can be for example not only checking prices but also looking for environmentally-friendly descriptors in packaging (such as pesticide-free and recycled) and getting to know the full product life-cycle during the buying decision. (Ottman 2011, 33.)

As with non-green consumers, the green consumers need to get information about the brands and products before the decision-making. In today's world, getting information is easier than ever before but consumers

need to be very careful and critical about the information they get and from what sources. Green products are often marked with an eco-label, examples of which were presented in sub-chapter 2.1, which can tell the consumer a lot about the product itself. As mentioned in the sub-chapter 2.1 there are more than 150 different eco-labels, so it is hard for the consumer to know which label means what and which to trust. Also, not all environmentally-friendly products have an eco-label, but when they do, then that can help the consumer in making better decisions. Some environmental terms used may be misleading or easily misunderstood so the consumers must be careful when reading the packaging and getting information. (Ottman 2011, 36-38.)

As mentioned before, the world is spinning, and green consumers want to think they can make a difference and thus, gain some control over what is happening. The difference can be made with for example questioning own needs and the amount of consumption and perhaps buying less or buying greener and more environmentally-friendly products. People want to do good and often doing good whether it is changing something or helping others, makes people feel better, more confident and responsible. (Ottman 2011, 38.)

Most people care about what others think about them and thus, they want to maintain their lifestyle so that they are not talked about negatively. Maintaining lifestyle in purchases is important to many and people tend to buy products and brands that they already know, which makes it hard for new products to succeed. Whether green or not, people buy products that are cost-efficient, effective, attractive and easy to find from the stores. Good marketing slogans (including words like sustainable, recyclable, energy efficient) help but they cannot make customers love the product. Most consumers are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally-friendly, but they also need to be assured that the product is good and effective and trustworthy. The eco-labels for example help with this information issue. (Ottman 2011, 39-41.)

As people know there is a global change to which people can affect, sustainability and green products are becoming more and more popular. As people want to do good, they seek other people who are also doing their best for the environment. Thus, green is very trendy. People look up to celebrities, who are promoting sustainable products. Marketers are catching up and promoting products more by their natural and environmentally-friendly aspects. Buying sustainable products sends a good message to other people. (Ottman 2011, 41.)

3.4 Future trends in retail business and customer decision-making process

Future is always hard to predict. Nobody knows for sure what will happen. There are though, ways to prepare and think of possibilities of what may happen. In 2016 Sitra (Nissinen 2016), the Finnish institution that predicts future events states that in Finland there are three major forces of change. These three issues are technological development, interdependence and the sustainability crisis linked to climate change and the excessive use of natural resources. (Nissinen 2016.) The sustainability crisis and the actions that must be taken to get through the crisis will surely affect the retail business. This will most likely also influence customer decision-making process.

A study made by Sitra and Alice Labs (Korkman & Greene 2017, 14) in seven different markets shows that the relationship between people and goods is changing from the abundance model towards a multifocal model. The multifocal model tries to satisfy different sociocultural needs and values simultaneously whereas previously the consumption was primarily personal identity and status matter. Products are starting to represent behaviors relating to the entire field of needs. Among these behaviors, four themes were identified. The four themes discovered are alongside the traditional customer behaviors which are presented in the previous sub-chapters. (Korkman & Greene 2017, 14.) The four themes are presented in the figure below.

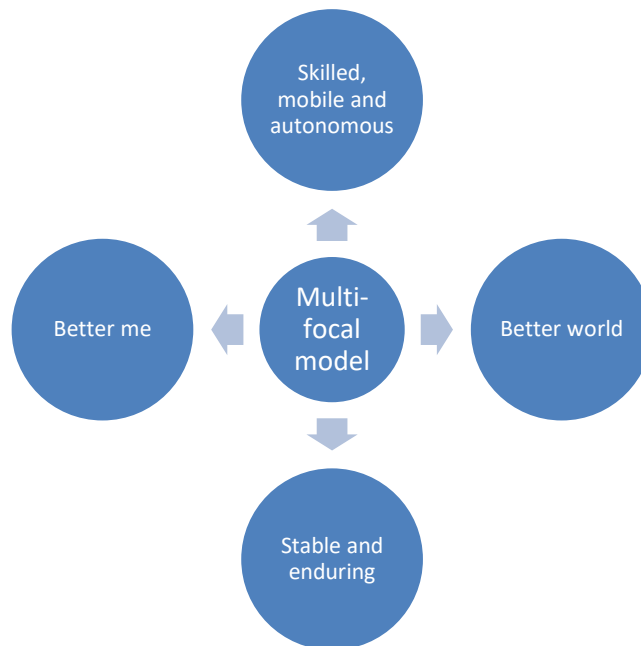


FIGURE 11. Changing needs of consumers (Korkman & Greene 2017, 15)

The skilled, mobile and autonomous means that consumers are making their lives more simple and convenient. Consumers become mobile alongside the changes in the world and autonomous through control. In the better world, these consumers are looking for long-term impact on their choices. Consumers want the products to connect to a larger narrative, whether it is environmentally or socially. In the stable and enduring theme, consumers are hoping to balance their need for mobility with products that offer them an idea of stability and durability. The better me theme means that consumers are looking for goods to focus and get control in the changing world. Some goods are also expressing consumers' efforts to become more non-materialistic. (Korkman & Greene 2017, 14.)

In the future, the idea is to move towards sharing economy. Though, a lot of consumers do not see renting equipment and products as an attractive option since the services of sharing economy are not easy and desirable. When trying to move towards a sharing economy, there needs to be both change in the way people think but also positive examples of services in sharing economy that will make it easy and desirable for consumers.

(Nurmi 2017.)

The future looks like consumers are buying better and more responsible products. Resources are already very limited and solutions to improve the situation is to boost the production, improve product quality and increase recycling. The more permanent solution though is to reduce production and consumption and move towards sharing economy. (Nurmi 2017.)

4 CASE COMPANY PARTIOAITTA OY

This chapter introduces the case company of this study. Their marketing is first looked on an overall level. At the end of the chapter, sustainability marketing is introduced and evaluated on each channel.

4.1 Introduction to the case company

Partioaitta Oy was founded in 1928. The first Partioaitta Oy was owned by different scout organizations in Finland. However, since 2011, the owner has been Fenix Outdoor AB. Moreover, since 2014, the owner has been Friluftss Retail Europe AB, owned by Fenix Outdoor International AG by 60%. Partioaitta Oy has 16 stores in Finland and they are in Espoo, Helsinki, Hämeenlinna, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti, Lempäälä, Oulu, Saariselkä, Tampere, Turku and Vantaa. The number of employees varies depending on the season, but the amount of part-time and permanent employees is always over 150 persons. (Partioaitta Oy 2018b.)

Partioaitta is focused on retailing outdoor, camping and backpacking equipment. Partioaitta's mission is to promote outdoor activities and well-being by providing quality equipment to their customers. A wide selection of products supports their efforts for sustainable development and well-being accessible through outdoor activities. (Partioaitta Oy 2018b.)

4.2 Marketing in the case company

Partioaitta is very active in different channels and is effectively using marketing opportunities in each channel. Partioaitta has a company website, blog site, Facebook account, Instagram account, Twitter account, and a company magazine. Furthermore, they are also marketing through different newspapers such as Helsingin Sanomat and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat. In addition, some stores have their own Facebook page and each store has their own Instagram account as well.

In Facebook, Partioaitta's official page has 36,387 people liking it. The first picture on Facebook was posted in summer 2010. The posts are covering videos, events, information and general greetings, such as Christmas greeting, sharing 365 club members pictures, During the last seven days (5-11. January 2018), Partioaitta posted on their page seven times. From those seven posts, two were Partioaitta's own videos, one was an event, one was a repost from a 365 club member, one was a repost of a sale advertisement published by one Partioaitta store, one was a sharing of a YouTube video and one was for general information. (Partioaitta Oy 2018c.)

In Instagram, the official Partioaitta account has 10,135 followers. Partioaitta has posted 1,028 times since posting their first picture on January 19th, 2013. Partioaitta has their own hashtags which include #partioaitta, #ulkonaperillä and #365klubi. With #partioaitta, there are 8,000 pictures, with #ulkonaperillä, 21,961 pictures and with #365klubi 7,799 pictures. (Partioaitta Oy 2018d.) Although Partioaitta is actively owning the hashtag #ulkonaperillä, there might be some pictures with that hashtag without any connection to Partioaitta, which explains the big amount of tags.

The official Partioaitta Facebook page and Instagram account publish the same content and in addition, the Facebook page publishes more content. This extra content is especially different events, such as day trips, hiking trips and advisory nights in the stores, that Partioaitta offers to their customers. A big part of marketing is for Partioaitta's own 365 club members to whom most of the events are for. Partioaitta is often reposting pictures from their club members which have been marked with Partioaitta's own hashtags #ulkonaperillä and #365klubi. (Partioaitta Oy 2018c.)

In Twitter, Partioaitta has 1,450 followers. Partioaitta has been a member of Twitter since October 2011 and since, has tweeted 1,362 times. Last Partioaitta's own tweet was a month ago (18.12.2017). In Twitter, it is easy to see that Partioaitta is not equally active as on Facebook or Instagram.

In Twitter, Partioaitta is tweeting videos, advice about packing and giving presents, pictures, advertising their job openings and retweeting from other people. (Partioaitta Oy 2018e.)

The blog on Partioaitta's webpage has been active since May 2011. The last post was a month ago (12.12.2017). In 2017 there were 101 stories posted on the blog. For example, the blog is giving assistance with packing and choosing equipment and sharing travel stories and customer reviews of the products. (Partioaitta Oy 2018f.)

4.3 Sustainability marketing in the case company

The following sub chapter focuses on the sustainability marketing at the case company. First, the reader is given an overview of the sustainability marketing in the company and after that each channel is introduced and analyzed.

As mentioned previously in this chapter, the case company is actively using social media, blog and emails to their 365 club members. Marketing is very strong, active and diverse but actual sustainability marketing is not so visible within Partioaitta's marketing channels.

"Vihreämpi valinta" ("Greener choice" in English) is Partioaitta's own eco-label that they have created. It is mostly visible on the web page, but it can sometimes be seen on the social media channels as well. The Figure 12 shows the "Vihreämpi valinta" label. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.)



FIGURE 12. Partioaitta's eco-label "Vihreämpi valinta" (Partioaitta Oy 2018a)

The "Vihreämpi valinta" label, showed above, has strict criteria, that Partioaitta has decided on, that the product must meet is able to get the label. The brands that have products with the label have decided to make the product ecologically friendly even though the products might not be 100% environmentally friendly. The products might be made of recycled materials or used natural materials, the process has been free from toxic chemicals, they might be energy efficient or it can be recycled. The label nevertheless helps both the customers and the employees to find out the most environmentally friendly products. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.)

4.3.1 Sustainability marketing in social media

As mentioned previously, from social media channels, Partioaitta uses Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. From those, the content on Facebook and Instagram is mostly the same and then on Twitter, it varies a bit. Twitter is not so actively used as the previous two channels.

A quick look at the social media channels does not reveal much sustainability marketing. The posts reveal nature pictures and information about sales, events and product introductions. (Partioaitta Oy 2018d.) As

Partioaitta's website says Partioaitta is constantly increasing the sustainable development and they actively talk to the producers about production methods, packing materials, human rights and animal rights. Although they are not showing sustainability itself alone, it could be part of their everyday work and everything they do. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.)

On a deeper look at the social media channels, sustainability comes up. Partioaitta's social media channels have stories about how Partioaitta has donated money to the protection of the Baltic Sea, advertising and explaining some environmentally friendly products, such as Guppyfriend-washing bag and their Cleaning tour where the 365 club members cleaned 613,7 kg of trash from nature. Partioaitta had a campaign on Asunnottomien Yö (in English, this means Homeless People's Night) where people could bring their old jackets to the stores and then they were donated to the homeless people. On Black Friday 2017 they had a campaign where 5% of customers' purchases added up to the Environment Bonus. They called the campaign "Green is the new black". (Partioaitta Oy 2018d.)



FIGURE 13. Partioaitta’s Black Friday campaign advertisement (Partioaitta Oy 2018d)

4.3.2 Sustainability marketing on the website and blog

Partioaitta though has a very good page on their website about sustainable development. That page covers sustainable development within the company, the green steps and actions the company takes, their “Vihreämpi valinta” label, how to recycle at the stores, different environmentally friendly materials, their own plastic bags and some words about how the employees travel both to work and business trips. Their own eco-label “Vihreämpi valinta” (Greener choice in English) is the most visible sign about sustainable development on their website. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.)

On Partioaitta’s website, there are 100 items of clothes, 27 items of equipment and 11 models of shoes with the “Vihreämpi valinta” label. Thus, the total amount of products with the label is 138. The products with the label vary greatly, for example in clothes there are products from socks to rain jackets and from scarves to winter pants, so there are options for the customers if they decide to choose an environmentally friendly product. The following two pictures (Figures 14 and 15), taken from Partioaitta’s website (Partioaitta Oy 2018g), show an example of a product with the “Vihreämpi valinta” label.

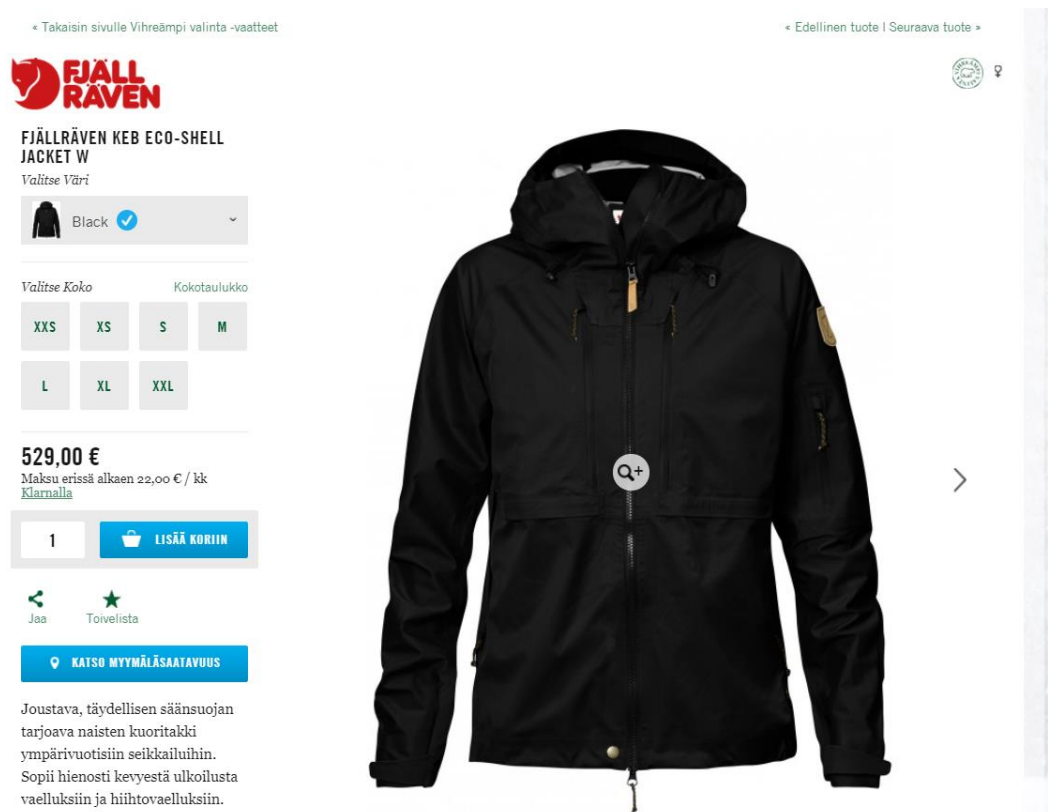


FIGURE 14. Example of a “Vihreämpi valinta” product (Partioaitta Oy 2018g)

The product in this example is a women's Keb eco-shell jacket by the brand Fjällräven. On the right upper corner, there is the small "Vihreämpi valinta" label. Other than the label, the picture is not any different to any other product on the web page. However, in the text part of the product listing, where there are the details of the product, there is more text and explanation about the label and what it stands for in this product. (Partioaita Oy 2018g.)

TUOTEKUVI
ARVOSTELUT JA KOMMENTIT (2)
TOIMITUSEHDOT JA PALAUTUKSET
LÄHETÄ KYSYMYS

Joustava, tekninen naisten kuoritakki vaativiin seikkailuihin vaihtelevissa sääolosuhteissa ympäri vuoden. Materiaalina on joustava Eco-Shell, jolla on korkea suorituskyky ja rasittaa mahdollisimman vähän ympäristöä. Materiaali kestää kulutusta ja seuraa luonnollisesti kehon liikkeitä sekä päästää ulos liikkuessasi muodostuvan kosteuden. Täydellinen valinta vaellukseen ja hiihtoretkille, kun etsit vahvaa suojaa säältä.

Leikkaus on huolellisesti suunniteltu siten, että se istuu täydellisesti ja helpottaa liikkumista. Hyvin istuvassa hupussa on tilaa kypärälle, ja se on säädettävissä siten, että se suojaa erinomaisesti rajoittamatta näkyvyyttä tai pään liikkeitä. Takissa on kaksisuuntainen vettähylkivä vetoketju, jonka saa kummastakin päästä auki ventilaatiota varten. Vetoketjun alla on suojäläppä.

Tilavat rintataskut piilopalkeilla ovat käytettävissä myös silloin, kun käytetään kiipeilyvaljaita tai lantiovyöllä varustettua rinkkaa. Niissä on joustavat verkkosisätaskut, joissa matkapuhelin ja muut pikkutavarat pysyvät paikoillaan. Sivujen kaksisuuntaiset vetoketjut päästävät ylimääräistä lämpöä ulos. Helmaa voidaan säätää kiristysnauhalla ja hihansuita tarranauhalla.

Eco-Shell on vedenpitävä, hengittävä ja kestävä kuorivaatemateriaali, jossa on fluorihiihtön kylläste. Eco-Shell on valmistettu kierrätettävästä polyesterista (sekä kierrätetyistä että uudesta) ja kaikki tuotannon ja kuljetuksen aikana syntyvät päästöt on ilmastokompensoitu.

Paino koossa M.


SKU	P-F89600
Paino (g)	520
Hinta	529,00 €
Tuotemerkki	Fjällräven
Sukupuoli	Naiset
Vihreämpi valinta	
Materiaalit	100% Polyester
Aktiviteetti	Laskettelu, Talviretkeily, Vaellus
Vesipilariarvo	30000 mm
Hengittävyys	26000 mm

FIGURE 15. Example of a "Vihreämpi valinta" product (Partioaita Oy 2018g)

The text part of the product presentation tells the reader that the product is made from a material that is the least inconvenience to the environment.

The material is recycled polyester and all emissions from the production and transportation phase have been compensated. (Partioaitta Oy 2018g.)

The case company's blog itself does not have articles only covering sustainability or sustainable products. Naturally, though, sustainability marketing is found on the blog since there are tips and pieces of information about sustainable choices within the articles. There is, for example, an article about the quality of products and how to recognize that. The article also covers the sustainability aspects which often bring a little extra cost to the product. There are also product reviews and travel stories which include remarks to sustainability and sustainable products. (Partioaitta Oy 2018f.)

4.3.3 Sustainability marketing for 365 club members

Partioaitta started their 365 club in April 2016 and the club now has over 60,000 members. Members get special discounts and they get a 365 magazine twice a year. As mentioned before, Partioaitta also organizes different events and hikes to the members. The most important part of the club on the environmental aspect is that 1% of the purchases by the club members are adding up to the Environment Bonus. After each year the amount is donated to alternating causes that can be related to the environment, kids, youth, elderly or joint responsibility. The members of the club vote to which causes the money is donated. In 2017, the amount of the Environment Bonus was 94,464€ which was divided into three different causes. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.) According to Partioaitta's blog, on the club's first anniversary, the members of the club said that the highlight of the club was the Environment Bonus (Partioaitta Oy 2018f).

The 365 magazine is published twice a year. The topics in the magazine vary but there are always some stories, product reviews, tips and parts of the product catalog presented. The magazine also has sustainability marketing as there are tips on sustainable traveling and introduction on the "Vihreämpi valinta" products. The magazine itself is also very sustainable as it is printed on Grapholvent paper which has won several

environmental awards. As the paper is completely chlorine free, the carbon dioxide emissions are minimized. All this information can be found on the first pages of each magazine making it a very noticeable place. (Partioaitta Oy 2018h.)

5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter familiarises the reader with the empirical research done for the thesis and analyses the results gained from the research. First, the design and the formulation of the research are presented and after that, the research itself is presented. The empirical part consists of a survey done for the customers of the case company. The questions for the survey can be found from the appendices (see Appendix 1). The results of the survey are introduced and analyzed in this chapter.

5.1 Design and formulation of the empirical research

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, there are two main research methods, qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research concentrates on non-numeric data and getting an in-depth understanding of the issues. Quantitative research, on the other hand, focuses on numeric data and measuring variables by using statistical techniques. (Saunders et al. 2012, 161-164.) As a goal of the thesis was to find ways for the case company to improve their sustainability marketing, both qualitative and quantitative methods were implemented.

An analysis of the case company's web page and social media channels was done as a primary data to find out how the case company is doing sustainability marketing now.

The primary data for the empirical research was conducted via a web survey. The purpose of the survey was to find out which factors are affecting the target audience's, the customers of the case company, buying decisions. Another important purpose of the survey was to find out how the ecological aspects of the products are affecting the buying decisions.

As the case company has very loyal existing customers, the survey was done among them. The survey was circulated by the case company to their customers by using their existing communication channels. The researcher also distributed the survey through her connections especially

within the guiding and scouting community in Finland. The survey was done only in Finnish as native Finns are the primary customers of the case company.

The survey included nine multiple-choice questions from which four questions allowed the respondent answer freely if none of the options were suitable. The survey also had, in addition, four questions to identify the respondent. The answers from these last four questions were used only for the analysis of the respondents. The survey form can be found from the appendices.

5.2 Data collection

This sub-chapter provides the information about the data collection phase of the thesis. The Figure 16 shows the different phases of the data collection and when each phase was done.

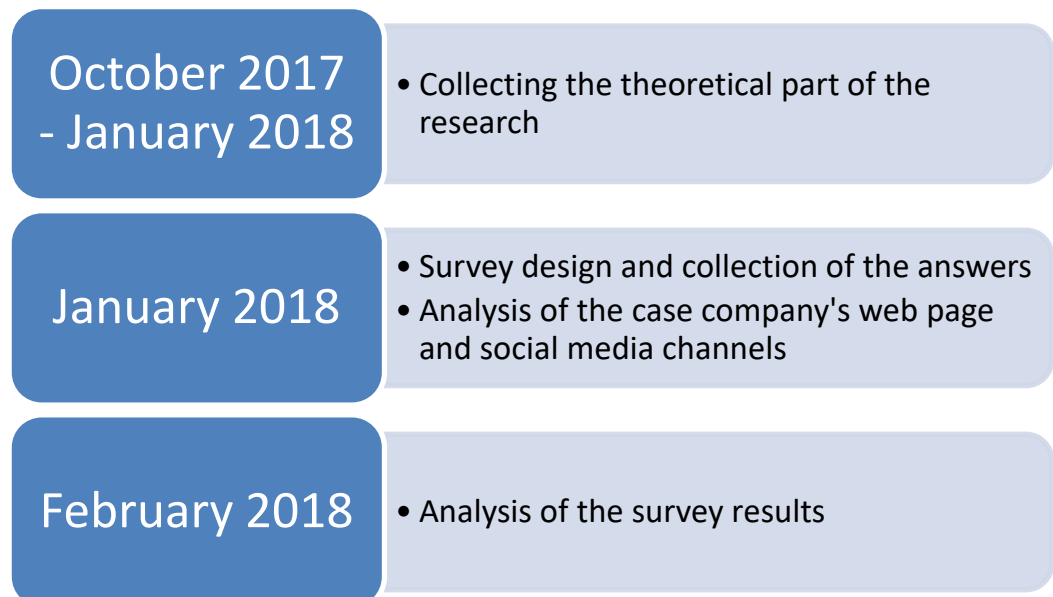


FIGURE 16. The data collecting process

The writing process of the thesis started in October 2017. The first steps were to formulate the research questions and find the case company. After this, the introduction was written. After the introduction, the literary review of the existing data from sustainability marketing and the customer decision-making process was collected.

At the same time as writing the last parts of the literary review in January 2018, the survey for the customers was prepared. The survey was first tested with 12 people who provided feedback which allowed the researcher to fix some inconsistencies. The survey was launched during the Week 4 (January 2018) and it was open for 10 days. The survey was done using Webropol and the link to the survey was sent by the case company via email to the customers of the case company. The case company also sent the link via their social media channels to their customers. The author also distributed the link through her personal connections in the guiding and scouting community, of which many are customers of the case company.

All in all, 288 responses to the survey were received, which was enough to be able to analyze and get a good sense of the results. The next sub-chapter introduces and analyses the results of the survey.

5.3 Data analysis

This sub-chapter analyses the data gained from the empirical research. The results of the survey are presented and analyzed. All questions of the survey were obligatory for the respondents so the amount of answers to each question is the total amount of answers, 288.

The first five questions tried to find out how customers make their buying decisions. What are the factors that matter, and which actions are made before the decision of buying? The first question was about which factors matter when people are choosing which of the case company's stores they visit. The respondents were able to choose as many bases as applied to them. Two hundred and sixty-seven respondents chose the location which

made it by far the most important basis to choose a store. One hundred and two respondents chose a selection of the store making it also an important basis. Something else, what got 13 answers and those bases were, for example, quality customer service, professional staff and the availability of a certain product. The answers prove that location is what almost all people value when choosing a store and the selection in each store should be sufficient enough since that is also an important factor.



FIGURE 17. Bases to choose a store

The second question asked which actions the respondents are making before going to a case company's store/web store. The answers show that people do very different actions and only 47 of the respondents do not do any actions before going to a store. The most used action is price comparison which 180 respondents chose. Then came getting to know the options which was chosen by 159 respondents and reading product reviews which was chosen by 135 respondents. Something else, what,

which was chosen by 13 respondents, included for example figuring out own needs, looking for the sales and googling. This shows that product prices need to be competitive and equal what other stores are having. Also, the information about each product is very important and the case company could ask their employees or customers to review more products since that is also an important factor.

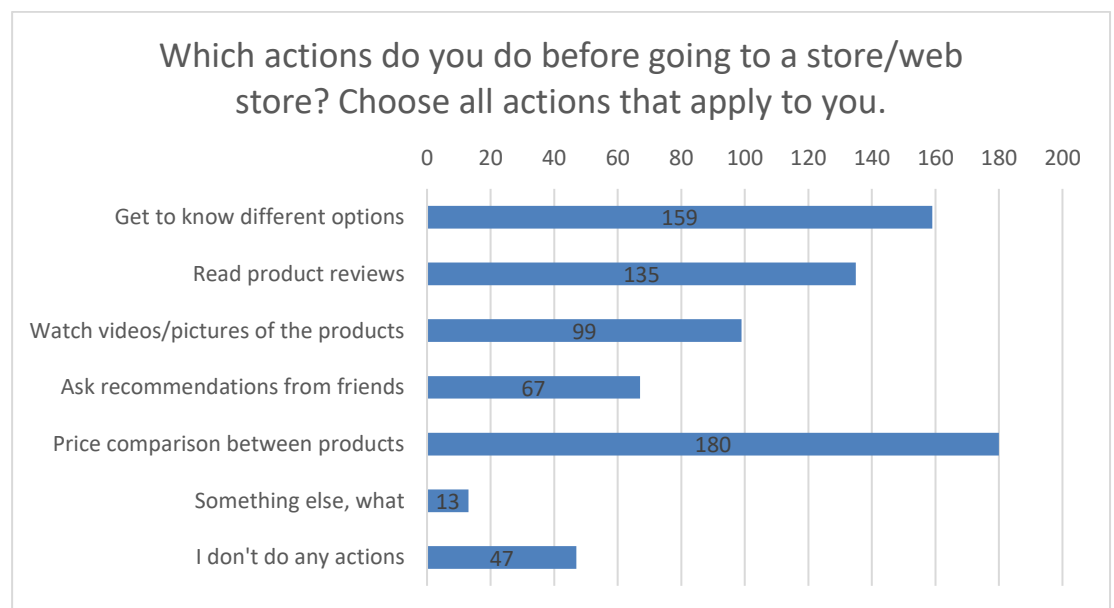


FIGURE 18. Actions done before going to a store

The third question was about which sources are used to find information about products. The respondents, again, could choose all options that applied to them. By far, the most used source, chosen by 255 respondents, was Partioaitta's website. The second most used source, chosen by 147 respondents, was the Partioaitta's 365 magazine. Something else, chosen by 18 respondents, included, for example,

YouTube reviews, producer's website and Google search engine. Only six respondents said that they did not use any sources.

When analyzing the answers by age, some differences in the answers can be seen. The older the respondents were the more important sources of information were the emails and the 365 magazine. For example, only 9% of the respondents in the groups under 18 and 18-25 years old said that they seek information from Partioaitta's emails whereas 29% of the respondents in the groups 46-55 and over 56 years old said that they look for information from the emails. A huge different was also with recommendations which 53% of respondents in groups under 18 and 18-25 years old use as a source of information in comparison to only 24% of the respondents in groups 46-55 and over 56 years old.

Women (39% of respondents) seek recommendations from friends much more often than men (22% of respondents) whereas men (46% of respondents) read product reviews more often than women (34% of respondents).

The website is the most important source of information in all age groups, though very surprisingly groups under 18 and 18-25 years old use website the most (94% of respondents). These answers show again that Partioaitta's website is very important to the customers and that should be as inclusive as possible.

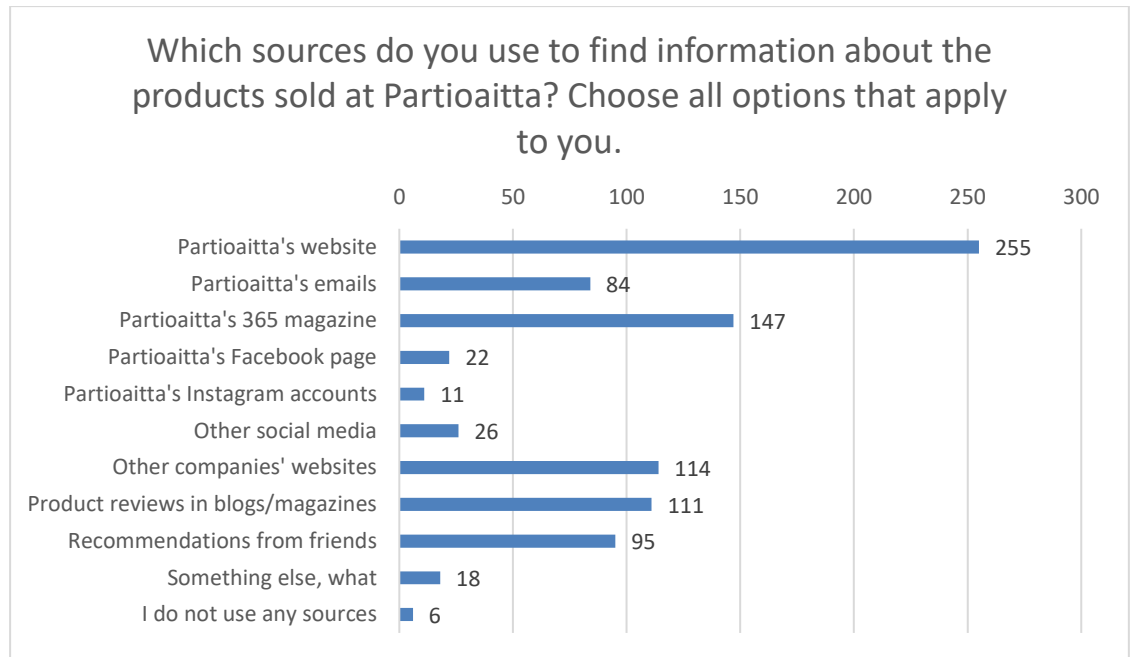


FIGURE 19. The sources used to find information about products

The fourth question asked the respondents to put the following in order of importance when buying a product. The purpose of this question was to find out which factors are the most important when customers are choosing products to buy. Since six was the most important aspect the respondent could choose, the higher the average is, the more important aspect it is. By far, the most important aspect to the respondents was the suitability of the product, with an average of 5,3. The next important factor was price, with an average of 4,1, and material, with an average of 3,92.

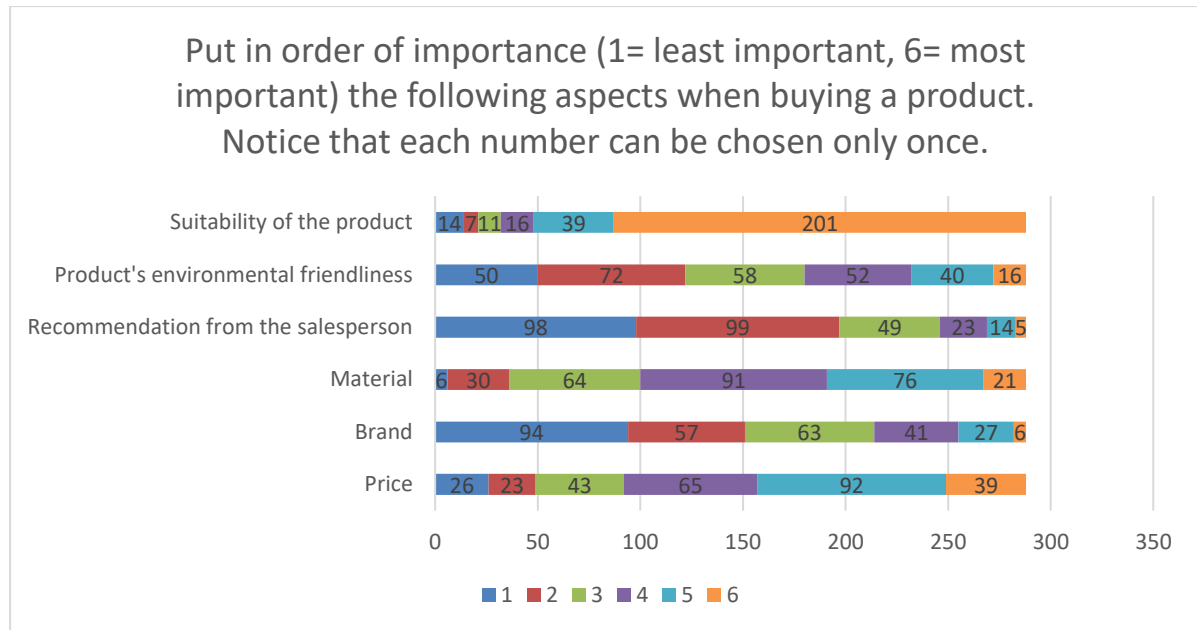


FIGURE 20. Order of importance when buying a product

The fifth question asked the respondents their opinions on some claims. Since 5 was “completely agree”, the higher the average is, the respondents agreed with the claim. The most agreed claim was “I rather buy products from a familiar brand than from an unfamiliar brand” with an average of 3,7. “I am willing to pay more if the product is environmentally friendly” got an average of 3,55, so people tend to somewhat agree with the claim. Important things to realize are also that people often ask salesperson’s help when visiting a store, with an average of 3,42, and customers more often go to the store to see and/or try something without buying, an average of 3,26. So people tend to trust the brands they already know, and most people are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally friendly. So maybe Partioaitta could expand environmentally friendly products from the familiar brands.

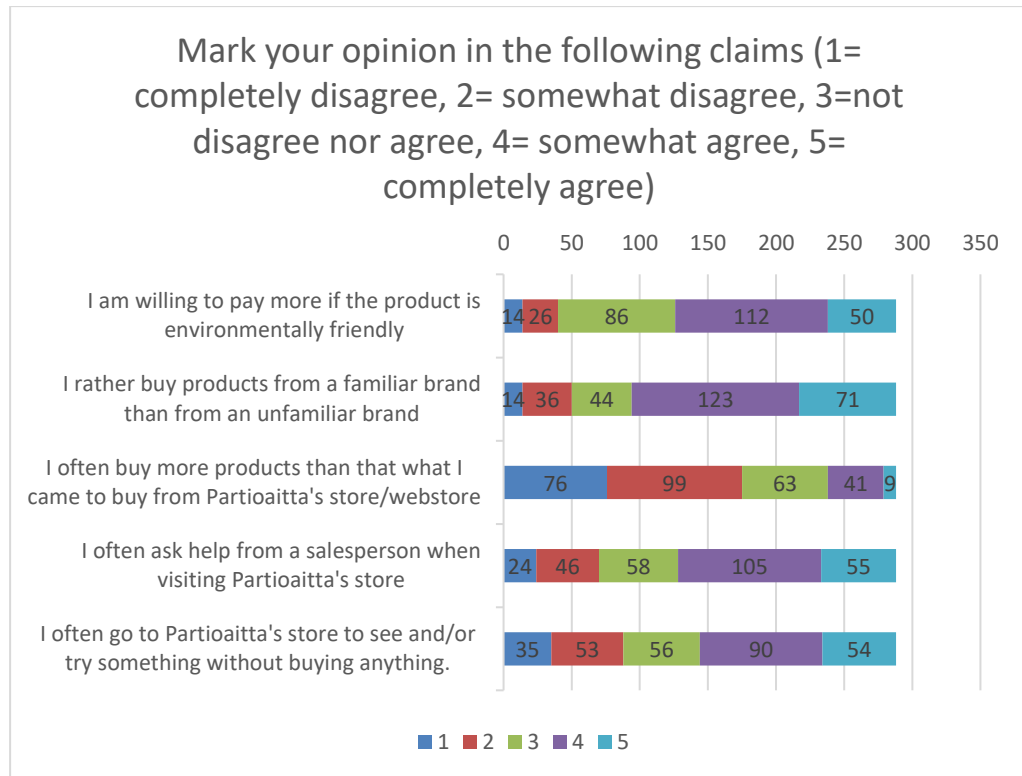


FIGURE 21. Opinions on different claims

From the sixth question onwards, the questions were focused on Partioaitta's environmental aspects and what the respondents think about those. The sixth question was a background information on whether the respondents knew Partioaitta's "Vihreämpi valinta" ecolabel. One hundred and sixty-two respondents answered yes, and 126 respondents answered no. That means that 56% of the respondents know the label.

There is a big difference in the answers if analyzed by the age groups. The answers from the age groups under 18 and 18-25 were as following: 37,5% of the respondents said they know the label and 62,5% of the respondents said they do not know the label. In the other age groups, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and over 56 years old, the answers were the following: 62% of the respondents said they know the label and 38% of the respondents said they do not know the label.

These answers show that the percentage is not very high and the number could easily be better with marketing and providing more information about the label. Though, it is easily seen that older people know the label much better than younger people.

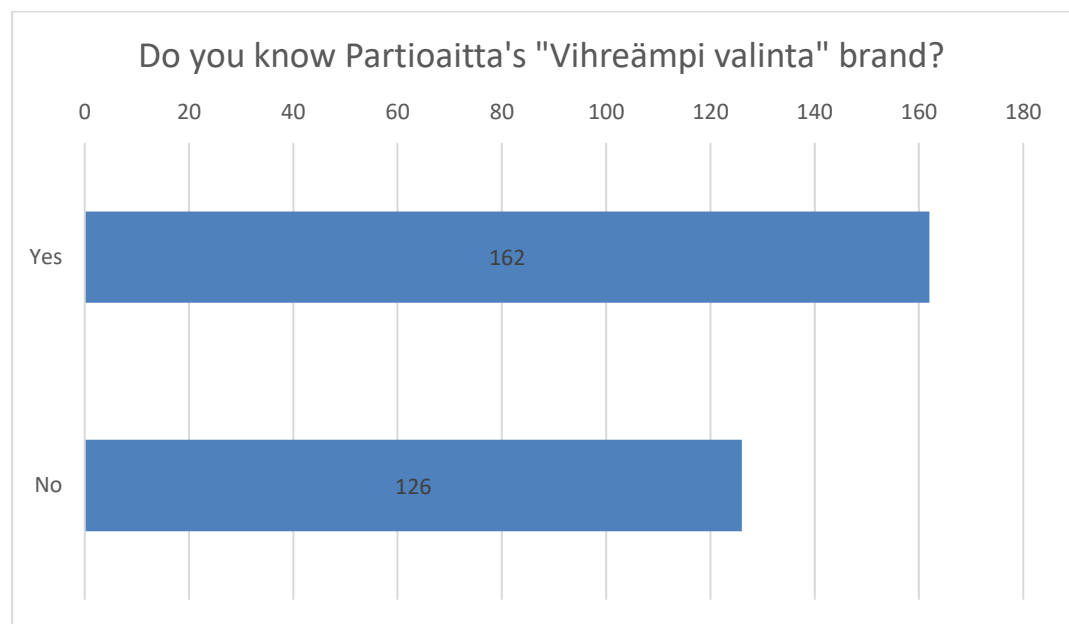


FIGURE 22. People's knowledge about the "Vihreämpi valinta" brand

The seventh question asked the respondents from where they search information about product's and/or brand's state of environmental friendliness before making the buying decision. The two most used sources are Partioaitta's website, chosen by 169 respondents, and brand's website, chosen by 160 respondents. Somewhere else, what, which was chosen by 11 respondents, covered tags in the products, talking to friends and hiking and camping magazines. Interestingly, 63 respondents, so 22% answered that they do not search information at all. That is quite a big amount of people.

Quite surprisingly when analysing the answers by age groups, it shows that younger people (out of the age groups under 18 and 18-25, 34% of the respondents) do not search information about the products' environmental friendliness as much as older people (out of the age groups 46-55 and over 56 years old, 14,5% of the respondents answered this). It is often thought that younger people may buy environmentally friendly products more often than older people. Maybe the results can be explained by the fact that younger people are generally more aware of the environmental friendliness than older people.

These answers highlight that both Partioaitta's and brand's websites are the most useful sources to find information about products. This saying, all necessary information should be on Partioaitta's website and perhaps even a link to the brand's own website about the product.

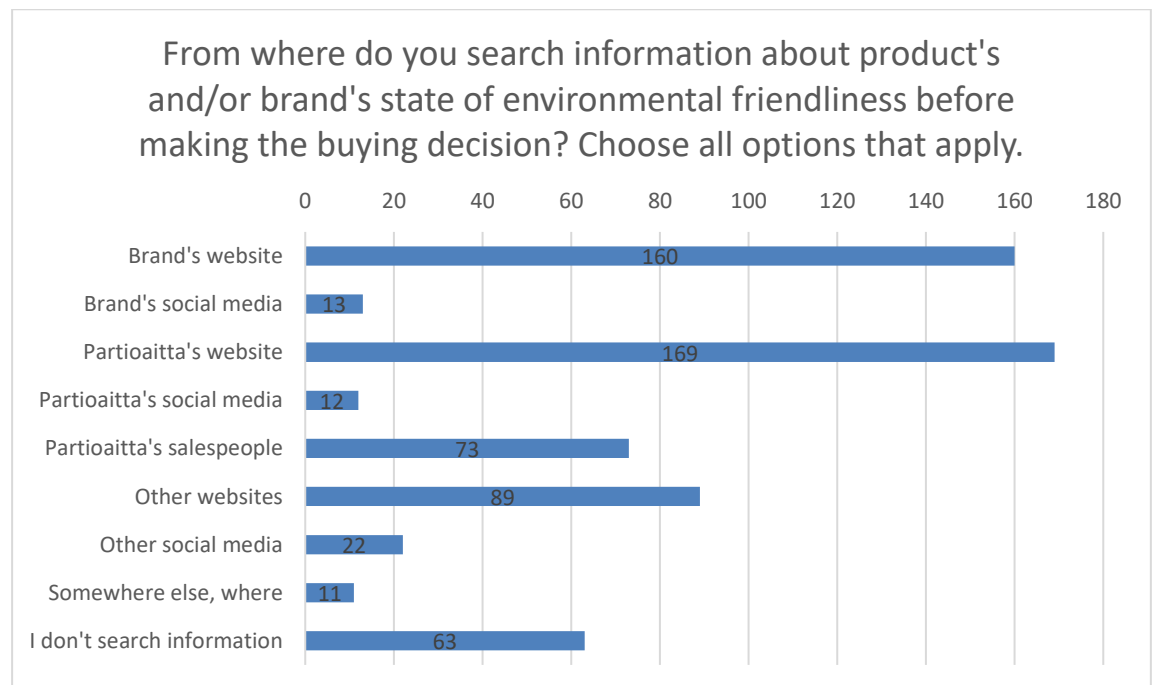


FIGURE 23. The sources used to find information about the state of environmental friendliness

The eighth question was about how much some environmental factors matter to the respondents' buying decision. Since 1 was "affects very much", the lower the average is the more important factor that is. The most important factor was materials, with an average of 2,64. Second important factors with almost the same average were recyclability, with an average of 2,93 and producing country, with an average of 2,97. So these three factors, the materials, recyclability and the producing country would be, if known, in the product information at Partioaitta's website since they are the most important factors that the customers want to know.

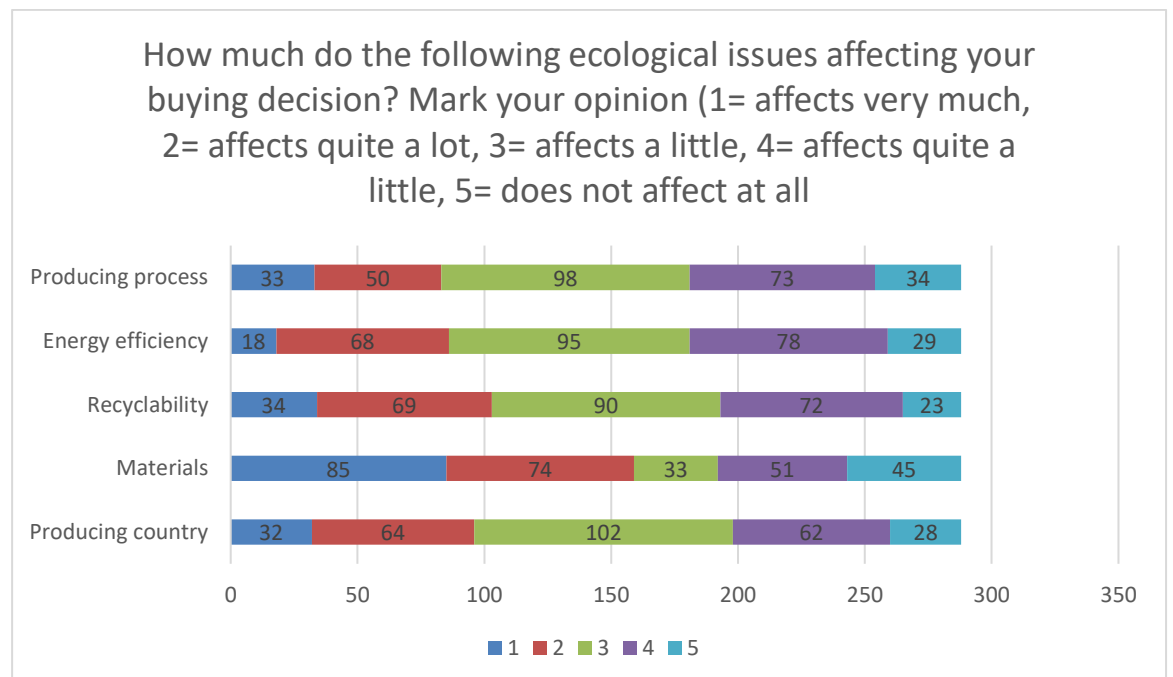


FIGURE 24. Significance of ecological issues

The last question about the Partioaitta's environmental operations before the background information was the ninth question which asked the respondents how much information they get about products' environmental friendliness from Partioaitta's marketing and stores. One hundred and thirty-four respondents, so 46% of the respondents said that they get some information. Only 76 respondents, so 26% of the respondents said that they get enough information. Quite surprisingly 64 respondents said that they don't know. This may be explained by the fact that people do not think about what kind of information they get.

Analysis of the answers by the age groups again shows a significant difference between age groups. The age groups under 18 and 18-25 seem to be getting the least amount of information about products' environmental friendliness. Only 17% of the respondents said they get enough information and 8% of the respondents answered that they do not get any information. Those age groups also had the highest percentage of the response "I do not know" (37,5% of the respondents). The corresponding results from the age groups 46-55 and over 56 years olds were: "enough information with 36,5% of the respondents, "no information" with 2% of the respondents and "I do not know" with 13,5% of the respondents.

Still, the fact that out of the overall results, nearly half of the respondents answered that they get only some information proves that Partioaitta has a lot to do with providing information to their customers.

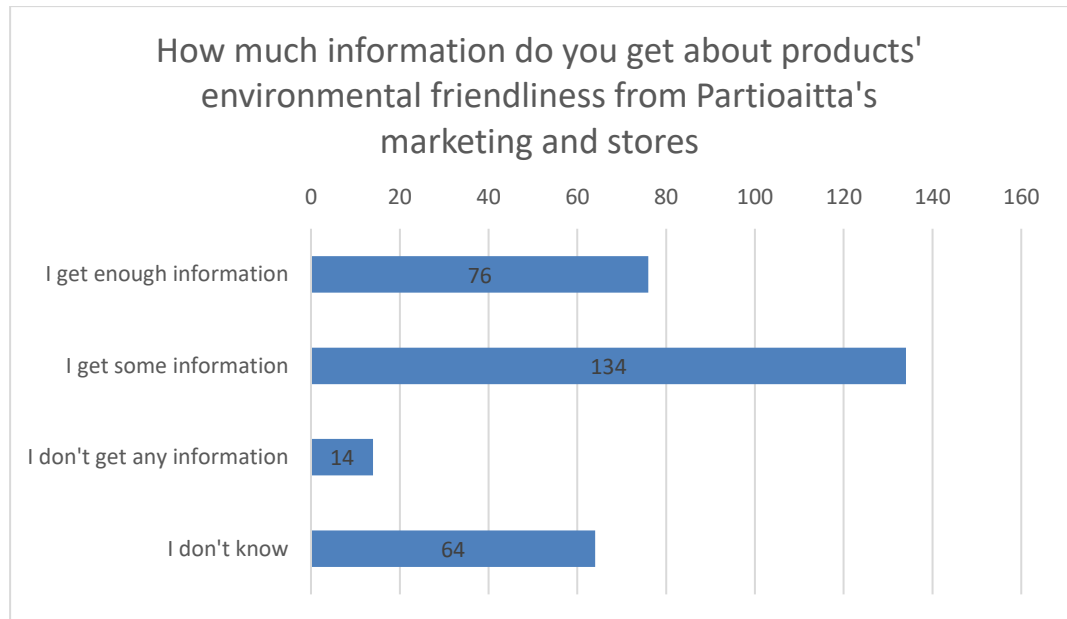


FIGURE 25. The amount of information about products' environmental friendliness

The last four questions were background questions so providing information about the demographics of the respondents. The tenth question was about the respondents' sex. 180 of the respondents were female, 105 were men and 3 of the respondents did not want to answer.

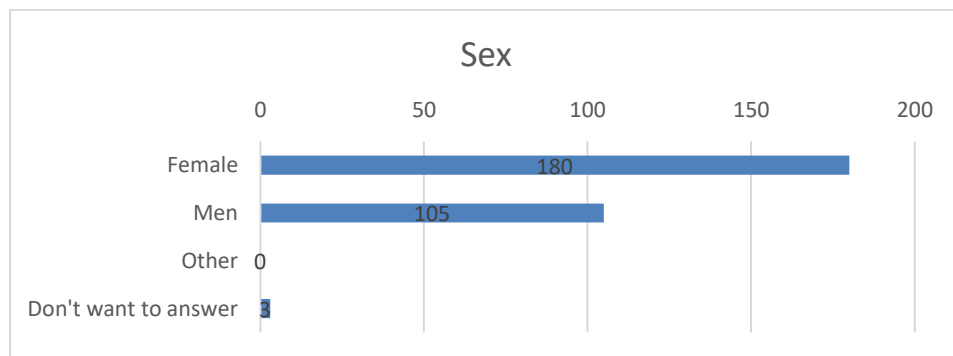


FIGURE 26. Sex of the respondents

The eleventh question asked the respondents' age. Most chosen age group was 26-35 years old, to which belonged 70 of the respondents. There were 61 respondents in the 18-25 years old age group and 57 respondents in the 36-45 years old age group. These numbers show that the survey was answered by a very good mixture of people from all age groups.

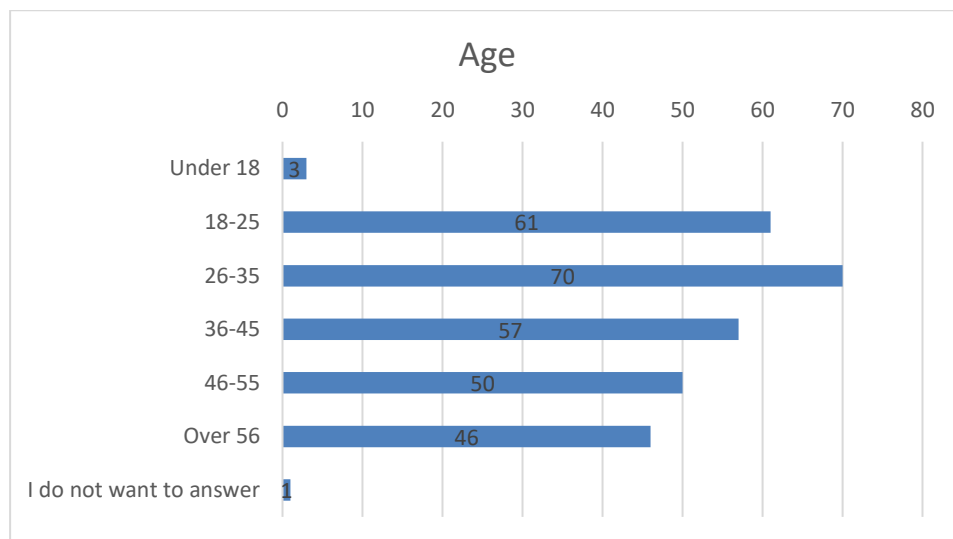


FIGURE 27. Age

The twelfth question was whether the respondents had bought anything from Partioaitta within the last six months. 224 respondents said yes, and 64 respondents said no. These numbers were not a big surprise since the survey was marketed to people who are directly Partioaitta's customers,

known to be interested in hiking and camping equipment and have ever visited Partioaitta.

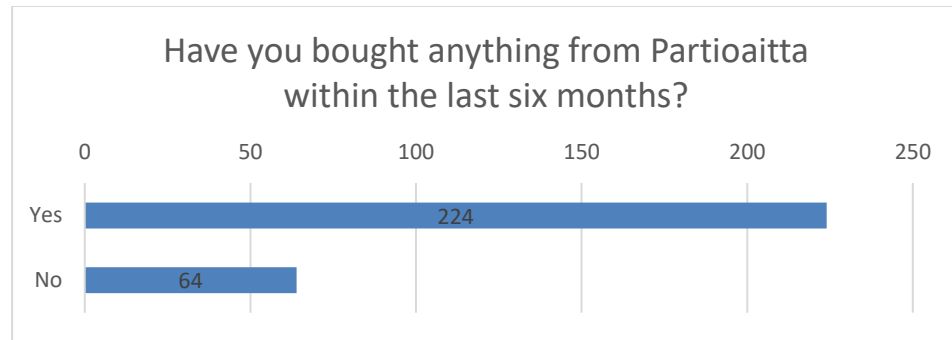


FIGURE 28. The people who have bought something from Partioaitta within the last six months

The last question, so the thirteenth question was about how many people are Partioaitta's 365 club members. 223 respondents said yes, and 65 respondents said no. These numbers again were so surprising since the survey was targeted to Partioaitta's customers, people known to be interested in hiking and camping equipment and people who have visited Partioaitta's store. Partioaitta also marketed this survey in their Facebook group for the 365 club members.

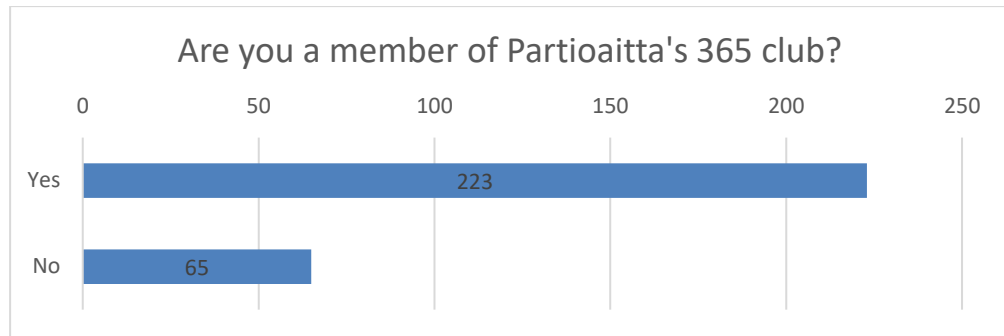


FIGURE 29. The number of members of the 365 club

6 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Now when the author has studied about marketing and is familiar with the concept of sustainability marketing and how customers make their decisions and search for information, it is time to conduct a development plan for the case company. The development plan is done after the empirical research and divided into different sub-chapters. The first chapter is analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of SWOT analysis. The analysis is focusing on the internal and external environment of the case company's sustainability marketing. The information gathered for the SWOT analysis helps the author to conduct the final development plan for the case company. The second sub-chapter introduces the action plan including the suggestions how the company could improve their sustainability marketing to reach more customers. The last sub-chapter focuses on Finnish customers and reaching them with sustainability marketing.

6.1 SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in the company or a project. SWOT analysis is also used when the objectives have been set to help pursue them. (Weybrecht 2010, 284.) When conducting a SWOT analysis, companies assess how they can change challenges into opportunities and thus, create a competitive advantage (Phyper & MacLean 2009, 51). The factors in the SWOT analysis are explained in the figure below.

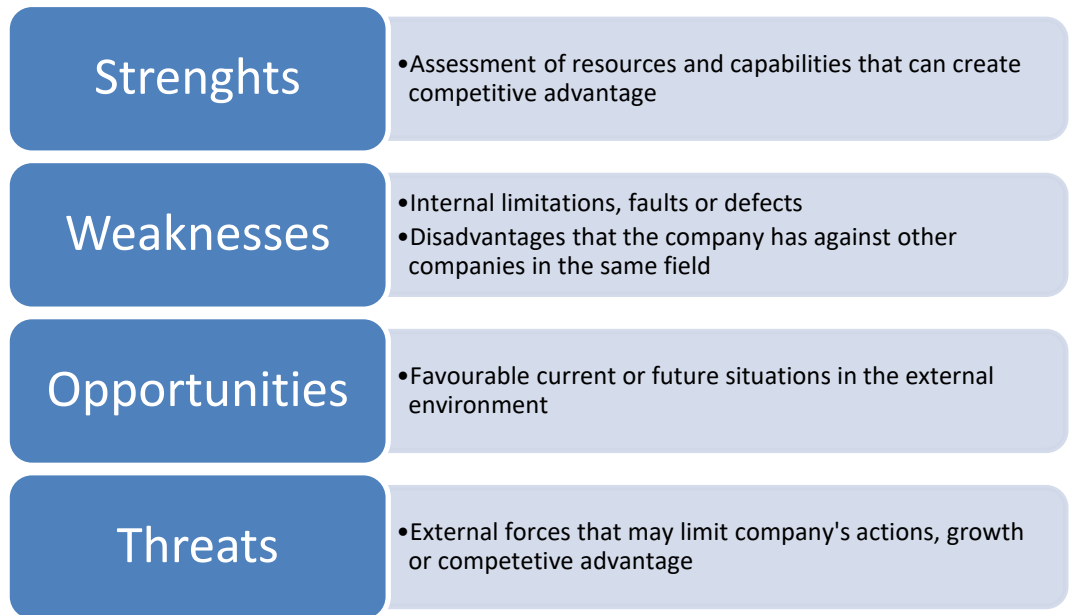


FIGURE 30. The factors in the SWOT analysis

The following SWOT analysis is organizing the information about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with sustainability marketing in the case company. The analysis is based on the theoretical and empirical research done for this thesis. Benchmarking company's profiles on different marketing channels has also affected on the SWOT analysis, especially when on evaluating the internal environment. The SWOT analysis can be seen in a figure below followed by a more detailed explanation.

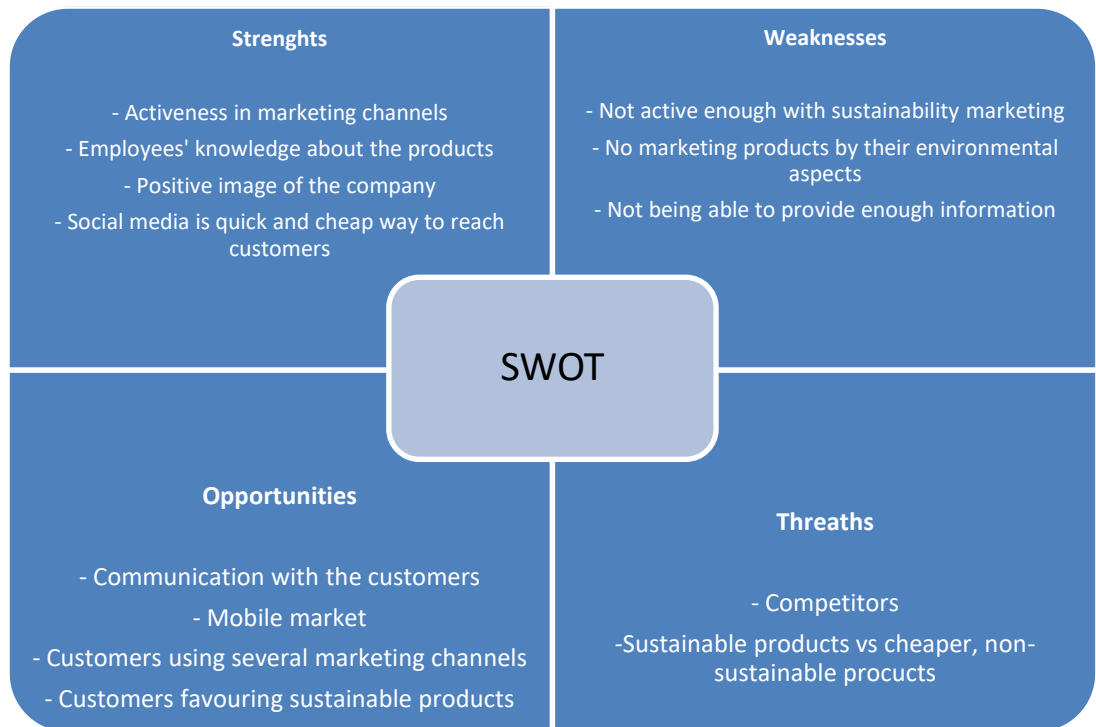


FIGURE 31. SWOT analysis of the case company's sustainability marketing

The strengths of the case company in sustainability marketing include activeness in marketing channels. As was analyzed in chapter 4, the case company is using their website, blog, emails and the 365 magazine, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other newspapers. Especially Facebook and Instagram are in active use. The survey done for the customers showed that from Partioaitta's marketing channels, the most used channels for the information search are the website, the emails and the 365 magazine. Some people also use social media to find information. People also looked for product reviews and asked for recommendations. This proves how important it is to be active in many marketing channels as people are different.

Another strength of the case company, are its employees and the knowledge they have. 25% of the respondents to the survey answered

that they ask the employees about products' state of environmental friendliness. As was said in Chapter 2, the most important part of the concept of 4C's is the customer solution, meaning the product, which means that it is very important that the employees have a good knowledge about the products and their qualities.

An important strength is that the case company has a good reputation. Especially the Environmental Bonus that has now been donated twice has gained a lot of attention and praises from the customers and in the media as well. (Kuittinen 2018.) Using social media, as a marketing channel, is a very efficient, quick and cheap way to reach the customers. Even though the survey for the customers proved that not so many customers search information about the products from social media, the numbers of followers that Partioaitta has in social media, presented in Chapter 4, say that they have a lot of people interested. In social media, people are most likely looking for inspiration and ideas rather than actual product information.

Weaknesses of the case company lie in not being active and efficient enough. As said in Chapter 4, the case company is not using sustainability marketing as active and efficient as they may be capable. Products presented in social media especially are not marketed by their environmental aspects. Fifty-six % of the respondents to the survey said that they completely or somewhat agree with the claim that they are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally friendly. That says that most people are willing to pay more for a sustainable product. This naturally requires that people are aware of what are the sustainable products.

The last and the most concerning the weakness of the case company is, that they are not able to provide enough information about sustainability and the environmentally friendly products. Only 26% of the respondents said that they get enough information about the company's environmental friendliness. Fifty-one % of the respondents answered that they get some or no information about the environmental friendliness. That is a big concern that the case company should try to change.

Opportunities for the case company in sustainability marketing are in communication with the customers and mobile markets. Both on the website and on Facebook page, the case company is having a chat option where the customers may ask anything, and the employees are answering the questions. This is very good since as mentioned before, 25% of the respondents ask advice about the environmental friendliness from the employees. Communication is also, as said in Chapter 2, the second most important part of the concept of 4C's. The mobile markets are growing constantly, and it is an opportunity for the case company. Seventy-five % of the Finns have a smartphone and in 2017, 75% of the smartphone owners used the Internet in their smartphone at least once a week (Tilastokeskus 2018a). As said before, the case company is active in social media and they also have a good mobile version of their website making it easy to search products with a smartphone as well.

Other opportunities for the case company are that customers are using several marketing channels and that customers seem to prefer buying environmentally friendly products. The survey revealed that customers search information from Partioaitta's website, the 365 magazine, other websites, product reviews and recommendations. Information about environmental friendliness is searched from brands' websites and other websites, Partioaitta's website and Partioaitta's employees. It is good that several channels are used since then the case company can be seen in a wide selection, but it also means that all channels need to be active and efficient and easy to reach.

The biggest threat for the case company is its competitors. There are many companies with similar or same products as the case company. Competitors are after the same customers with often very similar marketing efforts in the marketing channels. It is very important to beat the competitors in attracting the customers. A very important superiority that the case company has over its competitors is that the owner of the case company is Friluftis Retail Europe AB, owned by Fenix Outdoor International AG by 60%. Fenix Outdoor International AG also owns, for example, Fjällräven, Tierra, Primus and Hanwag, very popular outdoor

equipment brands, thus giving the case company a huge advantage over its competitors. (Fenix Outdoor International AG 2018.)

A threat to the case company in sustainability marketing is also the battle between sustainable products and the non-sustainable products. Often the non-sustainable products are cheaper than the sustainable products making the competition difficult. As the survey revealed and as was mentioned before, 56% of the respondents to the survey said that they completely or somewhat agree to the claim that they are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally friendly. Still, this confrontation creates an obvious threat. The environmentally friendly products clearly have good sides and very positive aspects, but the price is a very important factor in the decision-making process. According to the survey, 63% of the respondents, do price comparison and price was valued the second most important aspect of the product after the suitability. Price thus won over material and product's environmental friendliness.

6.2 Action plan for the case company

The main research question of the thesis was "How can the case company improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products?" and an important part of answering that question is to develop an action plan for the case company. The idea of the action plan is to provide ideas and suggestions on how to improve sustainability marketing to reach more customers. As the theoretical and empirical research is completed, it is time for the action plan for the case company. The suggestions are based on the theoretical and empirical research done for the thesis. Also, the SWOT analysis of the case company's sustainability marketing, presented in sub chapter 6.1 is used as a tool to complete the action plan. The following sub chapter is going through the phases in customer information search process and the decision-making process.

6.2.1 Reaching customers during the information search

As said in sub-chapter 3.2, understanding the customer information search process is important for the marketers. When marketers understand the need and how customers want to search information, they can provide as easy and accessible information as possible. This makes the search process fast and smooth for the customer. (Fisk et al. 2013, 89.)

The survey done for the customers asked about the sources which are used to find information about the products being sold at the case company. The most used sources were the case company's website, the 365 magazine, other companies' websites, product reviews in blogs/magazines and recommendations. These, thus, are the places where the products need to be found to be included in the consideration of alternatives.

In the survey, there was also a question about some claims. One of the claims was "I rather buy products from a familiar brand than from an unfamiliar brand". The rating was from 1=completely disagree to 5=completely agree. The claim got an average of 3,7 meaning that most people tend to agree with the claim. This shows that though in Peter & Olson's process there are three options where the actual alternatives come from, the most liked is the evoked set (Peter & Olson 2008, 168). This means, that the brands should be made familiar and known to the customers so that the products are liked, known and thus, most likely bought often.

6.2.2 Reaching customers during the decision-making process

As presented in sub-chapter 3.2 the decision-making process is a continuation of stages and most likely a customer is always at one or more steps all the time (Tanner & Raymond 2010, 67). Marketers must understand each stage and what is included in them, to focus and present correct efforts in each stage (Fisk et al. 2013, 86-87).

The first stage of the decision-making process is the need recognition (Fisk et al. 2013, 88). As the case company is working in the retail sector, the will and desire their customers mostly face is the need to buy equipment. The equipment is related outdoor, camping and backpacking since the case company is an outdoor company. As sub-chapter 3.2 introduced the Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the five categories of needs, the need may be physiological, but it may also be for example ego need (Fisk et al. 2013, 88-89). This proves that it is important for the case company to be seen in different marketing channels because seeing an advertisement may rise the need to buy something.

The survey revealed that a lot of customers, prior to going to a store, customers have already recognized their needs and they go to the store to fulfill the need. As people may find to need from going through social media, it would be a good idea for the case company to ask customers to share their experiences with the products and review them in their social media accounts. The case company itself could also share more product pictures and in those pictures, mention the sustainable qualities of the product. Alongside with posting about products' environmental aspects in social media, in the case company's blog and the 365 magazine, there could be more reviews made by either the customers or the employees who have tried the products. These would both increase the sustainability marketing which is not done enough and increase the knowledge about products' environmental friendliness that the case company is offering to its customers. This is especially important since the survey revealed that only 26% of the respondents get enough information about products' environmental friendliness.

At the moment, it is possible for the 365 club members to write reviews under the products in the case company website but there do not seem to be many of them (Partioaitta Oy 2018g). This thus requires a lot of marketing to the customers so that they know of this possibility and would start using it and writing reviews.

After the need recognition, the next stage is the search for product information. This stage was thoroughly explained in the previous sub-chapter. The next stage is the product evaluation (Fisk et al. 2013, 90). To highlight this stage, the survey revealed that prior to going to a store, the most done actions are price comparison, getting to know product alternatives and reading reviews. This shows that the easiness of evaluating the alternatives is very important.

As a suggestion for the case company, they may find it a good idea to launch tool at the website to evaluate two or more options. This may be done by choosing the products that need to be evaluated and then the most important qualities, including the price, would be seen in one screen. This tool could be made for the "Vihreämpi valinta" products, so the tool would show the environmentally friendly aspects of the products thus increasing the sustainability marketing. Now, the customers can already search only the "Vihreämpi valinta" products among all products, but this tool would take it even further since it would show the environmental aspects in one glance. The survey revealed that the most important environmental aspects are materials, recyclability and the producing country.

Since the survey revealed that customers are searching information about the environmental aspects mostly from case company's website and brands' website, it may be an idea for the case company to add direct links to the brands' own site about the product to increase the easiness of finding the information. This could be done in a way that for example the Fjällräven Keb Eco-Shell Jacket W, introduced in sub-chapter 4.3.2, that the case company is selling, on that screen of the product, there would be a direct link to Fjällräven's own site about the jacket.

The last parts of the customer decision-making process, the product choice and purchase, post-purchase use and evaluation of product and finally disposal of the product, also highlight the use of sustainable actions to make the process smoother and better. Evaluation of products has been already mentioned in the form of posting pictures and writing

reviews. One thing that the case company could still do, is about the disposal of the product. The case company has in each store a recycling point where customers may bring textiles, shoes and bags. The products are recycled in partnership with I:CO, internationally leading recycling companies. (Partioaitta Oy 2018a.) This could be marketed to the customers even more often so that customers would be more aware of this. Now, this information is mostly found through visiting a store and seeing the recycling point or if the customer goes to the sustainable development part of the website. The information could be posted to the social media accounts as well alongside with other information about sustainable products.

The research was done in Finnish and only concentrating in Finland as a market. Customers can only choose between Finnish and Swedish when they go to the case company's website. It is though, very important to realize that there are many people living in Finland who do not speak Finnish. At the end of 2016, there were 354,000 foreign-language, meaning something else than Finnish, Swedish or Saami, speakers in Finland (Tilastokeskus 2018b). That is quite a big amount so one suggestion for the case company is to translate the website into foreign languages.

Quite surprisingly the survey highlights the importance of websites as a source of information. By far the most used source was the case company's website. This shows that the case company should focus on improving the website. That is already the place where most of the sustainability marketing is happening which may explain why that is seen as the most important source. It would be interesting to see if the importance of the website changed if the case company made changes in what kind of pictures they post on the social media. As it is now mostly inspiring pictures and not so much about the products being sold. If the case company changed that into posting more about the products and their environmental aspects, whether the importance of the website as a source of information would change as well.

A table including the above-presented suggestions for the case company is below.

TABLE 1. List of suggestions for the case company

Suggestion	Action
Increasing product marketing in marketing channels	In all marketing channels, start marketing more products alongside the existing inspirational pictures
Increasing sustainability marketing	Start marketing products based on their environmental aspects
Environmental aspects in product pages	Write out the most important environmental aspects, materials, recyclability and production country
Videos and pictures	Add more videos and pictures to the products on the website
Product reviews	More product reviews on Partioaitta's blog, website and the 365 magazine.
Alternatives evaluation tool	Launch a tool for the website which allows customers easily evaluate alternatives
More co-operation with bloggers and known explorers, hikers and climbers	Offering co-operation in the form of equipment or other benefits in return for writing product reviews/videos/pictures
Direct links to brands' product page	Put direct links to the brands' product website to Partioaitta's product site
Translation of the website	Translate the entire or at least most important parts of the website into English

7 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the thesis and presents the information collected during the research. The answers to the research questions are presented. Reliability and validity of the thesis are analyzed. At the end of the chapter, the researcher makes suggestions for further research.

7.1 Answers to research questions

The research focused on sustainability marketing and how customers make their buying decisions. The main research question was: How should the case company improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products? The research question is answered later in this sub-chapter, but as mentioned in sub-chapter 1.2, there are sub-questions which are answered first. The sub-questions are presented and answered below.

What is sustainability marketing?

Sustainability marketing is the development, production and marketing of ecologically friendly products and services. Sustainability marketing covers all stages from designing the products to recycling them. These ecologically friendly products and services are designed to minimize the negative effects on the environment. Sustainability marketing is done by all players in the business, from manufacturers to retailers and even governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Though all players do sustainability marketing differently, the general idea of trying to limit the ecological influence associated with consumption is the same.

What kind of buying criteria do ethical consumers have when buying ecological products?

The decision-making process is the same as buying regular, not-sustainable, products but there are often extra matters that ethical consumers take into consideration. There are different ways of segmenting green consumers and depending on the segment, the consumers may do

their decisions based on avoiding waste, eating and using natural ingredients, buying products which in the production process have not harmed animals or want to minimize the harmful impacts on the environment. What is similar to all ethical consumers, is that they all want to get as much information about the products or services and the brands as possible before making their decisions.

Why is the knowledge about products' environmental aspects important to the customers in the decision-making process?

According to the survey, customers are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally-friendly. Since that is the case, it is important to have the knowledge. Also, according to the survey, the most important environmental factors mattering in the customers' buying decisions are materials, recyclability and producing country. Also, the eco-labels are an important piece of information to the customers as eco-labels are all given to a product or service only when it follows certain rules and regulations. That is why the labels are mostly convincing evidence that the product or service is environmentally-friendly.

Now, as the sub-questions are presented and answered, it is time to answer the main research question, which was:

How should the case company improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products?

Analysis on the marketing channels of the case company showed that sustainability marketing is already used by the case company. However, as the analysis and the survey revealed, it does not reach its full potential and the customers of the case company feel that they are not getting enough information about the environmental practices and environmentally-friendly products. Case company uses social media actively, but posts are currently mostly inspirational and informational about events and sales. Therefore, the author is suggesting adding more posts about the products and in those posts highlighting the environmental aspects of the products. Also, the author is suggesting that the case

company should market their “Vihreämpi valinta” label more since the survey showed that it is not known so well by the customers.

The empirical survey for the thesis, which was conducted among 288 customers of the case company revealed that the most used sources to find information about products’ environmental-friendliness are case company’s website alongside the brands’ websites. Therefore, using resources to improve the website is essential. The respondents answered that the most important environmental aspects are material, recyclability and producing country. That is why the author suggests adding this information at least to all case company’s “Vihreämpi valinta” products.

The survey revealed that people like to look at pictures and videos and read product reviews before making their buying decisions. Thus, other suggestions include adding more videos and pictures about the products to the website. Also adding product reviews both on the website where product presentations are and putting more reviews on the case company’s blog is encouraged. The case company could possibly cooperate more with bloggers and known explorers which would increase the number of product reviews and information available. As there are a lot of foreigners living in Finland, translating at least parts of the website to English may help the case company to gain more customers.

7.2 Validity and reliability

The main purpose of this research was to find answers to all the research questions. In this research, the objectives were met with answers to the research questions were found. Information for this research was gathered from secondary and primary sources. Secondary sources were gathered from literature and the primary source was the survey. The survey was made to find out how the customers make their buying decisions and how they feel about environmentally friendly products. 288 people answered the survey which was enough to draw conclusions. This makes the research reliable. According to these statements, the research is valid and reliable.

7.3 Suggestions for further research

As mentioned at the beginning of the thesis, this research only focused on a company operating in Finland, thus only covering Finland as a market. To get a broader idea of the meaning and significance of sustainability marketing, further research on sustainability marketing in companies selling outdoor equipment in other countries is suggested. Also, since this study only covered a company selling outdoor equipment, it would be interesting to see further research on other types of companies to see if the meaning of sustainability marketing is different. These further studies would also be beneficial for the case company as they would offer more information on the topic.

8 SUMMARY

An aim of the thesis was to provide a deeper understanding of how sustainability marketing can be used as a part of marketing and what role does it have in the customer decision-making process. The final goal was to create a development plan which offers suggestions for the case company and answers the main research question on how the case company could improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products from them.

At the beginning of the thesis, the author introduced the concept of sustainability marketing and its role in marketing. The basic customer decision-making process and the concepts of buying environmentally-friendly products were also introduced. An introduction to the case company and an analysis of the case company's marketing channels was also conducted.

As the author wanted to find out how Finns make their buying decisions and how they search information generally and especially about sustainable outdoor-related products, an empirical survey was conducted among the existing and potential customers of the case company. The survey revealed that products' sustainability is important in the buying decision and websites are especially used to search for information about products.

The final part of the thesis was to produce a development plan for the case company and offer suggestions on how the case company could improve their sustainability marketing in order to get more customers to buy sustainable products from them. The development plan was produced using both theoretical and empirical data.

The findings of the research are that providing customers with enough information about product sustainability is important and customers are willing to pay more if the product is environmentally-friendly. Websites are the main channel where customers search information from companies so those should be extensive and provide all necessary information.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1. Survey

1. Millä perusteella valitset tietyn Partioaitan myymälän, jossa asioit? Valitse kaikki sinua koskevat. *

- Valikoima
- Sijainti
- Tuttu henkilökunta
- Aukioloajat
- Myymälän tuttuus
- Alennukset
- Jokin muu, mikä

2. Mitä seuraavia asioita teet ennen Partioaitan myymälään/nettikauppaan menemistä? Valitse kaikki sinuun sopivat toiminnot. *

- Tutustun huolellisesti eri tuotevaihtoehtoihin
- Luen tuotteista arvosteluita
- Katson tuotteista videoita/kuvia
- Kysyn suosituksia ystävistä/tutuilta
- Tuotteiden hintavertailua
- Muu, mikä
- En tee mitään toimintoja

3. Mistä eri lähteistä etsit tietoa Partioaitassa myytävistä tuotteista? Valitse kaikki sinulle soveltuvat lähteet. *

- Partioaitan nettisivu
- Partioaitan lähettämät sähköpostit
- Partioaitan 365-lehti
- Partioaitan Facebook-sivu
- Partioaitan Instagram-tilit
- Muu sosiaalinen media
- Muiden yritysten nettisivut
- Tuotearvostelut blogeissa/lehdissä
- Ystävien/tuttujen suositukset
- Muu, mikä
- En etsi mistään lähteistä tietoa

4. Laita tärkeysjärjestykseen (1=vähiten tärkein, 6=tärkein) seuraavat seikat tuotetta ostaessasi. Huomioi, että jokaisen numeron voi valita vain kerran, jolloin jokaisella seikalla on eri numero. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hinta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Merkki	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Materiaali	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Myyjän suositus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuotteen ympäristöystävällisyys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuotteen sopivuus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Merkitse seuraaviin väittämiin mielipiteesi (1=täysin eri mieltä, 2=jokseenkin eri mieltä, 3=ei eri eikä samaa mieltä, 4=jokseenkin samaa mieltä, 5=täysin samaa mieltä) *

	1	2	3	4	5
Olen valmis maksamaan tuotteesta enemmän, jos se on ympäristöystävällisempi.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ostan mieluummin tutun merkin tuotteita kuin minulle tuntemattoman merkin tuotteita.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ostan usein useampia tuotteita kuin niitä tuotteita, joita tulin myymälään/Partioaitan nettikauppaan ostamaan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kysyn usein myymälässä ollessani myyjän apua.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Käyn usein Partioaitassa katsomassa ja/tai kokeilemassa tuotteita ilman, että ostan mitään.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Tunnen Partioaitan ”Vihreämpi valinta” merkin *

- Tunnen
 En tunne

7. Mistä etsit tietoa tuotteen ja/tai tuotemerkin ekologisuudesta ennen ostopäätöksen tekemistä? Valitse kaikki sinuun sopivat. *

- Tuotemerkin nettisivuilta
 Tuotemerkin sosiaalisesta mediasta
 Partioaitan nettisivuilta
 Partioaitan sosiaalisesta mediasta
 Partioaitan myyjiltä
 Muilta nettisivuilta
 Muualta sosiaalisesta mediasta
 Muualta, mistä
 En etsi tietoa tuotteen ja/tai tuotemerkin ekologisuudesta

8. Kuinka paljon seuraavat ekologisuuteen liittyvät seikat vaikuttavat ostopäätökseesi? Merkitse mielipiteesi (1=vaikuttaa erittäin paljon, 2=vaikuttaa melko paljon, 3=vaikuttaa jonkin verran, 4=vaikuttaa melko vähän, 5=ei vaikuta ollenkaan). *

	1	2	3	4	5
Valmistusmaa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Materiaalit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kierrätettävyys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energiätehokkuus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Valmistusprosessi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Kuinka paljon saat tietoa tuotteiden ympäristöystävällisyydestä Partioaitan markkinoinnista ja myymälöistä? *

- Saan riittävästi tietoa
 Saan jonkun verran tietoa
 En saa ollenkaan tietoa
 En osaa sanoa

10. Sukupuoli *

- Nainen
 Mies
 Muu
 En halua kertoa

11. Ikä *

- Alle 18
 18-25
 26-35
 36-45
 46-55
 yli 56
 En halua kertoa

12. Oletko ostanut jotain Partioaitasta viimeisen 6 kuukauden aikana? *

- Olen
 En ole

13. Oletko Partioaitan 365 klubin jäsen? *

- Olen
 En ole