



# **DEVELOPING A DIGITAL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR AN ANNU- AL B2B EVENT**

Sonja Schubert

Master's Thesis  
International Business Management  
2018

MASTER'S THESIS	
Arcada	
Degree Programme:	International Business Management
Identification number:	6609
Author:	Sonja Schubert
Title:	Developing a digital marketing and communication strategy for annual B2B event
Supervisor (Arcada):	Niklas Eriksson
Commissioned by:	BaseN Corporation
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>This study is related to the field of digital marketing and communication. The purpose of this paper is to develop a digital marketing and communication strategy for BaseN Corporation, a global full-stack IoT Operator. BaseN has established an annual event (SPIME) in 2015 and the study outlines the current situation and analyses how an effective digital marketing and communication strategy can help to bring the annual event of BaseN to global awareness and to reach iconic event status. This study outlines the different tools used in digital marketing and communication, such as Social Media, content marketing and content distribution. The frame of the present study is built using the SOSTAC, PESO and 4C's of marketing communication model. Based on the different models and a thorough literature review, a development of a digital marketing and communications strategy was carried out. This study belongs to a qualitative type of research. The author conducted expert interviews to gain valuable insights from experts that are digitally very versatile. Both experts have over 15 years' experience in planning and marketing massive global events. As there is presently no plan for the digital event marketing and communication, this paper will serve as a guidebook to BaseN and will outline a thorough digital marketing and communications plan that is centred around the annual SPIME event.</p>	
Keywords:	digital strategy, Social Media, SPIME, content hub, content distribution, SOSTAC, PESO, 4C'
Number of pages:	83 +12
Language:	English
Date of acceptance:	

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 About the commissioner.....	6
1.1.1 BaseN Corporation in brief .....	6
1.1.2 About the conference.....	9
1.2 Background information and research need .....	10
1.3 Statement of the problem .....	11
1.4 Aim of the research.....	12
1.5 Study limitations .....	13
<b>2. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Research Methods.....	16
2.2. SPIME in focus .....	16
<b>3. LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 Introduction to digital marketing and the digital landscape.....	17
3.1.1. Online presence.....	19
3.1.2 User Experience and user path in digital marketing communication .....	20
3.2 Marketing and Communication tools in the digital environment.....	21
3.2.1 Social Media .....	22
3.2.1.1 Facebook .....	23
3.2.1.2 Twitter .....	25
3.2.1.3 LinkedIn .....	28
3.2.1.4 Google + .....	31
3.2.2 Content Marketing .....	32
3.2.2.2 Content Management systems - WordPress .....	36
3.2.2.2 Traffic generation.....	36
3.2.3 Search Engine Optimization .....	38
3.2.4 Website optimization.....	40
3.2.5 Influencer Marketing .....	42
3.2.6 Public Relations .....	43
3.2.7. Meetup.....	45
3.3 Digital Marketing Planning.....	46
3.3.1 PESO MODEL .....	46
3.3.2 SOSTAC ® Model.....	49
3.3.2.1 SOSTAC +3M.....	51
3.3.3 The 4 Cs of Marketing Communication .....	53

<b>4. DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR SPIME</b>	
<b>CONFERENCE .....</b>	<b>55</b>
4.1 Situational analysis.....	55
4.2 Objectives .....	60
4.3 Strategy .....	62
4.3.1 <i>STOP and SIT as part of the SOSTAC planning model</i> .....	62
4.4 Tactical approach of the Strategy development.....	65
4.4.1 <i>Content hub creation</i> .....	65
4.5 Actions .....	74
4.6 Control .....	75
<b>5. EXPERT INTERVIEWS.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>80</b>
6.1. Future research implications and recommendations .....	82
<b>Källor / Reference .....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Bilagor / Appendices.....</b>	<b>96</b>

## Figures

Figure 1. “Internet of Things” paradigm as a result of the convergence of different visions (L. Atzori et al, 2010) .....	7
Figure 2. Internet users per 100 inhabitants. Source: International Telecommunications Union, retrieved January 21.....	17
Figure 3. Facebook growth since launch reported by TechCrunch, June 2017.....	24
Figure 4. Twitter analytic tool example taken from the commissioners account (February 2018) .....	27
Figure 5. example of analytic service for LinkedIn advertisements.....	30
Figure 6. Summary of different conceptual content marketing strategies (source: author) .....	35
Figure 7. the five stages to website optimization (optimizly.com).....	41
Figure 8. PESO model according to Dietrich, 2014 .....	48
Figure 9. SOSTAC planning model infographic, (smarinsights.com).....	52
Figure 10. 4Cs model of communication for major brands, Annmarie Hanlon (Smartinsights, 2016).....	54
Figure 11. BaseN Corporation, 2018.....	58
Figure 12. STOP strategy model of SOSTAC created by the author .....	63
Figure 13. example of tactical planning for the commissioner.....	67
Figure 14. schedule for digital Marketing and Communication postings.....	69

## Tables

Table 1: Source: Gartner, Rob van der Meulen, 2017 .....	57
Table 2: SWOT analysis, created by author .....	59
Table 3: SWOT analysis for IoT Tech Expo Global and Internet of Things World .....	60
Table 4: Digital marketing and communications strategy .....	72

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Internet and the emergence of new technologies has had a tremendous impact on marketing and the way we communicate. Successful marketing campaigns with precise measurement of Return-On-Investment are often executed online as it enables the marketer to see the campaign performance in nearly real time which allows for rapid corrective actions (Dodson, 2016). Further, digital marketing or communication campaigns can be tailored to the target audience and the marketer can easily find the right messaging by analysing the data carefully. As more and more marketers shift towards digital marketing and communication campaigns, it becomes increasingly difficult to stand out in the flood of advertisements in the hyper connected world.

Marketing communication (MarCom) is increasingly important in the digital era we live in (Young, 2014). The way that people consume media has changed tremendously over the last years. Nowadays, we tend to consume vast amount of content through various digital channels. Businesses must adapt quickly to the change to make sure that customers stay engaged and brand loyal.

Consequently, there is a vital need for differentiators in communicating with the target audience to catch their interest and to build a solid, sustainable digital strategy to raise awareness of a product, service, brand or an event (Karge, 2013). A thorough digital strategy is an integral part of today's marketing and communication efforts in any industry.

## **1.1 About the commissioner**

### **1.1.1 BaseN Corporation in brief**

President & CEO Pasi Hurri established BaseN Corporation in 2001. He garnered and expanded his expertise from his background in the Finnish Air Force. Mr. Hurri quickly developed and realized BaseN's extraordinary capabilities as a global full stack Internet of Things (IoT) operator. A full stack IoT Operator refers to an IoT Platform provider

who maintains relative independence from other service providers to maximise reliability, scalability, fault tolerance and distribution – also including connectivity management and provisioning. IoT stands for the Internet of Things which consists of various objects or physical things with different digital characteristics that are equipped with network connectivity. The Internet of Things unites all kinds of different “things” reaching from cars, to kitchen appliances or even power distribution and smart houses. The common denominator is the connectivity and the ability to send and receive data through the Internet (BaseN, 2018). Figure 1 below gives an overview about the IoT.

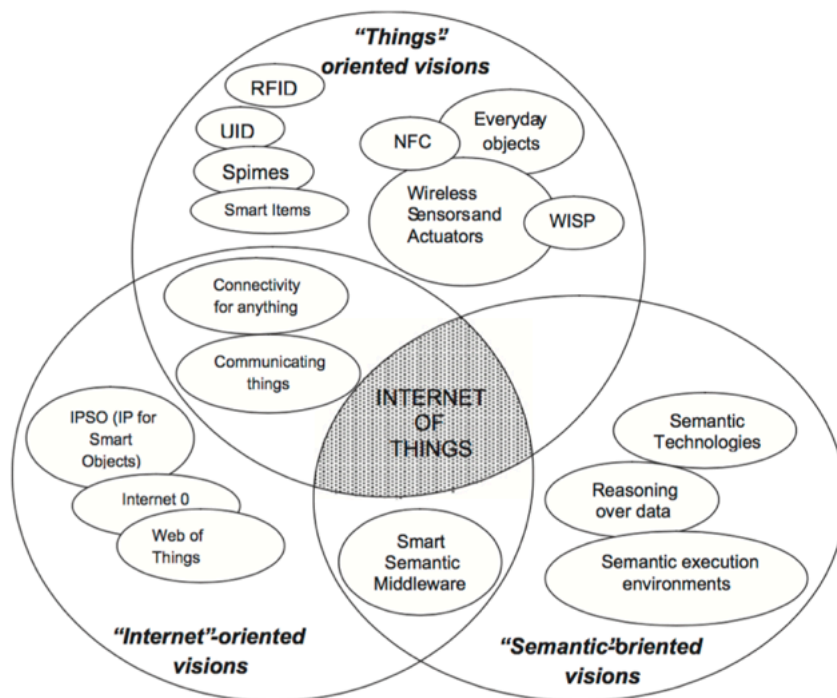


Figure 1. “Internet of Things” paradigm as a result of the convergence of different visions (L. Atzori et al, 2010)

With 16 years of experience in network monitoring and platform development BaseN has unique capabilities allowing continuous improvement and flexible deployment. Due to its distributed architecture system and scalability, the platform is not co-dependent and adaptable to billions of end-users. BaseN Platform provides the required scalability for hosting billions of things and the associated complex algorithms, which analyse and, more importantly, control all things IoT (BaseN, 2018).

The service can be easily integrated into existing monitoring and management operations. Based on open standards, and offered as Software-as-a-Service, with its low entry

costs. It significantly reduces overall costs by improving performance and fault management with SLA assurances. BaseN's next generation SaaS suite enables you to gather system, network and sensor measurement data and arrange the information in a context that is relevant to you and your customers. The immense data processing capabilities allows for easy mass customization for any product and service in any industry. With the emergence of ubiquitous connectivity of any Thing, there is a fundamental need for a platform where the digital side (spime) is stored, managed and merchandised. A spime is a neologism that was first introduced by science fiction Author Bruce Sterling (Bruce Sterling, 2005). The word Spime is a combination of the words space and time. Spime is often confused with digital twins. A digital twin is the digital 1:1 representation of a physical product. The product is connected through the Internet of Things and is equipped with sensors and various other technologies that send data over the Internet to the digital twin. The digital twin updates with the received data, making it possible to closely follow the products' lifecycle, however, a spime describes a digital representation of a product even before the product is built. It holds all the digital components that were used to make the product and all the indispensable programming is done in the cloud. As the spime is the virtual master of a physical product, it enables rapid development cycles as the hardware can be exchanged without data loss at any given time (BaseN, 2018)

BaseN Platform offers an inherently scalable computing platform for hosting billions of spimes, the core objects of the IoT. Currently BaseN handles over one million spime transactions per second. The platform is based on a redundant computing grid that is linearly scalable, flexible and resilient. The components in the grid work together and can function independently and automatically take each other's roles. The grid architecture also allows for quick deployment of new resources without interruptions (BaseN, 2018).

The platform is a distributed system that collects massive amounts of data that can be delivered to millions of users simultaneously. Unlike traditional architectures, the BaseN Platform is not a piece of static software but an organic system. BaseN Platform is the most scalable, resilient, reliable and cost efficient architecture on the market.



Out of 12 data centres globally, BaseN serves about 80 customers ranging from Industrial, IoT, Telecommunications or Smart Life initiatives. BaseN further offers fully secured in-house installation options as well as fully owned Intellectual Property Rights. With the platforms design to be real-time, extremely scalable, fault tolerant and in inherently distributed it is the perfect platform for mission critical applications such as emergency call centres. BaseN's customer base includes companies such as Trimble, Fujitsu, Deutsche Telekom, DNA, Amcor, ABB, Telefonica, Responda 113 as well as Sulzer to name only a few (BaseN, 2018).

### **1.1.2 About the conference**

BaseN's paramount IoT event was established in 2015 and took place in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The conference is structured in industry presentations for delegates on the first day and a hackathon on the second day, for both business delegates and developers. A hackathon is a gathering of developers that focuses on developing a new software or program or product. Usually this event has a certain topic set by the organizer. The commissioner of this thesis held already several hackathons introducing BaseN Platform to participants and letting them experiment on a top-notch development environment (BaseN, 2018).

When discussing with attendees the feedback is always that the conference as well as the presenters and topics are excellent while the opinion of the locations differs. The commissioner has been able to establish a lasting relation with the keynote speaker of each conference.

The commissioner focuses on targeting decision makers and visionaries from any industry. The Internet of Things (IoT) is the primary focus of the event. Speakers demonstrate market changes and new technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how these technologies are shaping the present and future in any industry. Artificial Intelligence describes i.e. the ability of machine learning without human interaction or alternatively, when a machine can be mistaken for a human to sufficient degree (The Turing Test, Alan Turing, 1950). Artificial Intelligence is based on complex algorithms to detect anomalies or similarities in data and advance the machines capabilities automatically.

The machine continuously develops itself. Artificial Intelligence is applied in various sectors reaching from healthcare, smart homes, smart grids, computer science, mathematics and many more. It is estimated that a machine will be more intelligent than any human by the year 2029 according to Ray Kurzweil, Director of Engineering at Google (The Guardian, Nadia Khomami, 2014).

The Hackathon is open to anyone and demonstrates BaseN Platform's unprecedented scalability for mission critical applications. The conference reoccurs annually and is held in a different city each year. The places are chosen by relevance regarding new projects the commissioner is working on. The overall theme remains IoT, but the focus of the event changes each year relating to new trends in technology and global business.

## **1.2 Background information and research need**

The IoT conference was established in 2015 and is to reoccur annually.

The completed thesis will serve as a guide book for creating top notch and sustainable events in the digital era, blurring the line between virtual and physical environments. The study will illustrate the efforts of developing a marketing communications strategy in the digital environment. Nowadays, consumers are overwhelmed with the amount of advertising and content they are exposed to (Mühlenbeck, 2016). Many entities that offer performance based marketing such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Google promise to optimize conversions by showing ads only to people in a selected target group enabling also content marketing to create a better digital strategy. Naturally, performance marketing offers an immediate ROI (Hauser & Wenz, 2012), but it is not suitable to engage with a user over a longer period. A digital marketing communications strategy is vital to attract customers, also in a B2B environment.

The commissioner's online presence currently consists of BaseN Platform production environments, website and several social media platforms. The online presence serves the commissioner as a communications tool. All digital and analogue actions of the commissioner are communicated through the online presence (BaseN, 2018).

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

The Commissioner, BaseN Corporation, established an annual Internet of Things conference, named SPIME, in 2015 replacing a lower key anniversary event. BaseN has a special challenge in marketing as it is propagating a totally new technological and business concepts which are mostly incompatible with the traditional marketing strategies. Therefore, an own, fully controlled SPIME event is seen as the best option. The SPIME event is a B2B focused conference and the commissioner would like to ensure that the event becomes an important tool for enhancing existing customer loyalty and simultaneously to draw interest from new customers, prospects and media. In addition, the event must serve as an ultimate brand platform.

The current problem of the commissioner is the lack of participation for the event. The commissioner has no problems to engage speakers as most of the commissioners' customers are happy to join the conference as speakers and discuss with other customers about the solution. However, the commissioner has not been able to fill all open seats for the conference and has further not been able to make the event commercially successful. In addition, there has been no success in attracting journalists.

Due to some unforeseen internal changes, the commissioner has not yet established a timeframe or a marketing and communications plan for the event. This far, the commissioner has set up an own Twitter account for the event and an event webpage. Further, the commissioner did Social Media sharing but without a budget, hence the reach of the social media posts was quite limited (Hauser & Wenz, 2012). Another problem showed up when looking at the event planning as there has been no exact planning of who does what and when. The goal of this paper is to set up a detailed schedule to plan the marketing and communication strategy for the event. As there is currently no thorough strategy in place, the author will start from scratch.

The commissioner and the author worked out a partner package together. Also, the commissioner has a good graphical library for use when designing new marketing material.

## 1.4 Aim of the research

The aim of the research is to provide a strategy guide, a handbook, on how to establish a sustainable and successful IoT focused B2B conference to the commissioner. The writer of the thesis will investigate the problem from different perspectives. The impact of a thorough digital marketing and communication strategy will be examined. Further, it will be explored what channels other iconic conferences use. Expert interviews will capture the perspective in terms of hearing about the conference to illuminate what successful conference drivers are. The research questions below will guide the thesis work:

- Where is the commissioner now and where does the commissioner want to be?
- What are the digital strategies that are used and how can the strategic and tactical approach be improved?
- How is the strategy implemented and what are the key performance indicators?

The author will investigate the key drivers for making the event sustainably successful and aligned with the company's rapid expansion strategy.

Further, the author will develop a thorough marketing and communication strategy to sustain a globally successful event. The strategy will illuminate different marketing and communication methods. Possible avenues could be to combine content and performance marketing to develop a thorough digital strategy to create awareness. The commissioner and the author agreed to focus on a digital strategy. The author will focus on developing a marketing communications strategy that uses various channels to promote the conference and to drive conversions. All marketing actions aim to increase the conversion rate of potential customers. The increased conversion rate is used to generate leads and turn leads into paying customers. It can also be used as an effective public relations tool to increase awareness of a brand or product. In this case, the goal is to get as many website clicks as possible and hence increase ticket sales of the conference.

The research will demonstrate different digital marketing areas such as social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing and performance marketing. The tactics used will spread over inbound and outbound marketing. Furthermore, the author will consider several Public Relations options and explore their effect in the strategic communication approach (Scott, 2015).

## **1.5 Study limitations**

Digital marketing and communication tools are constantly evolving and expanding their offerings which makes it very difficult to investigate all different tools. This study will focus predominantly on the SOSTAC, 4C's and PESO model. The focus of the study will be set to social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing and performance marketing with inbound and outbound techniques. Further, the study will look at a few content distribution tools and will also explore the possibilities of Public Relations.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The author of this thesis is developing a new digital marketing and communications strategy with major focus on Social Media and content marketing for the commissioner's annual event SPIME. The thesis belongs to a qualitative type of research that also includes a thorough literature review on existing marketing and communications models and tools. In the planning phase of the thesis, the author started working for the commissioner as a Communications Officer and has full access to previous marketing communication plans and any other material needed to support the thesis work. After the finalization of the thesis, this document should serve as a guide book to plan the actions of marketing and communication and to establish best practices to make the annual conference a successful global event. The author will focus on three major marketing and communication Models after a thorough discussion with the commissioner while defin-

ing the research need. The framework includes the SOSTAC model (developed by PR Smith in the 1990's), the PESO model (Gini Dietrich, 2014) and the 4 Cs of Marketing Communication (Jobber & Fahy, 2009) that will be used to develop the strategy for the commissioner. As there is a vital need for a thorough digital marketing and communications plan for the commissioner, the author has decided on the above mentioned three different models to design the plan for the commissioner. The reason for the author's choice is the detailed examination and planning that is carried out through the SOSTAC model. It is a great benefit to detail the plan by identifying all the different actions of the SOSTAC planning model. It enables the author to not only look at the strategic approach, but also plan the tactical approach and define how to exactly carry out the strategy. Another important part of the SOSTAC planning model is the actions and control analysis. Currently, the key performance indicators (KPIs) have not been clearly identified. Further, there has also not been a plan for accountability. The plan needs to clearly line out who is responsible for what and when. Ideally, the plan will also highlight the importance of different departments and their input to bring the out the need of teamwork.

Regarding the 4C's and the PESO model, these are great methods to ensure that the communication is concise, clear and credible. The author decided to use the 4C's model as the author noticed during communication with the commissioner that the commissioner often assumes that communication and channels are clear to everyone. This happens often in companies that are experts in one area of business. The communication is often unclear for the end-user without these companies being aware of it (Steinke, 2015). The 4C's model serves as a guide to clear communication. The PESO model will be used when evaluating the effectiveness of the communication and upon deciding which options are the best for the commissioner.

The empirical research included expert interviews. An expert interview can be conducted with one person at a time, but there is flexibility in how many people to interview. The interviewee is an expert in the defined field and can give valuable insights on best practices and lessons learnt (Gläser & Laudel, 2009). This type of research is defined as qualitative research (Flick, Kardorff, Steinke, 2005). Further, the author wants to understand and translate the qualitative data from a diverse group into a new strategy. The different perspectives, perceptions and opinions of the experts will help to crystalize and

overcome the currently faced challenges. The author contacted several experts in the field of Event Management with deep knowledge of the role of marketing and communication to create a successful strategy. After reviewing the expertise together with the commissioner, the author picked two experts that were fulfilling the criteria set by the commissioner and the author. The interviews were conducted over the phone as both experts currently do not reside in Finland. The author developed a questionnaire based on the SOSTAC, 4C's and PESO model which can be found in the appendix. However, during the conversation, the experts had also the chance to add anything that was not asked but what they considered as important for creating a sustainable plan to develop a marketing and communication strategy for event promotion. The questionnaire that guided the expert interview can be found in the appendices, appendix 1.

As the author is an employee of the commissioner, there was the chance to collect primary data through various sources as an ongoing process allowing for very deep insights. Examples for primary data collection are meetings, office discussion, customer feedback, employee feedback when the employees return from a conference. The primary data collection bears many positive aspect, but also some negative aspects listed below:

**PRO:**

- Continuous feedback loop
- Valuable and immediate feedback (when employees return from conferences)
- Diverse ideas and opinions
- Team work and idea input for the coming SPIME conference from everybody

**CONTRA:**

- Risk of losing focus to represent the commissioner and make the event a unique experience with the BaseN twist when input comes from all sides
- Risk of having “too many chefs in the kitchen”
- Opinions are often too subjective

## **2.1 Research Methods**

The author will give an overview about digital marketing communications strategy in a B2B conference context. The paper will focus on qualitative research and consist of primary data collected through expert interviews. The author will conduct the expert interviews and use the gathered data to guide the thesis structure. The author and the commissioner will further discuss the structure of the thesis in several meetings as the Chief Marketing Officer has focus areas that she would like the author to carefully examine.

The secondary data will be gathered through literature review of current digital strategy development and will present the main strategic framework that will serve the commissioner with a thorough theoretical approach to implement. The commissioner will also contribute to the structure of the thesis as the thesis shall serve as a handbook to the commissioner when setting up events. There is solid background literature available in digital marketing (Dodson, 2016, Wright and Snook, 2016) and content marketing (Pulizzi, 2013). However, the writer could not find literature that analyses the impact of a profound marketing communications strategy for an annual B2B conference. The writer will research strategies for digital marketing including Social Media marketing (Hinton & Hjorth 2013), Public Relations (Meermann Scott, 2015) and Content Marketing (Hanly, 2016).

## **2.2. SPIME in focus**

The annual SPIME conference targets decision makers and visionaries from any industry, with the common denominator of the Internet of Things shaping the future. The commissioner argues that the future cannot exist without advanced technologies in any industry. The expert interviews will be conducted with decision makers and executives who have excelled globally.

The interviews aim to find out what were the common successors of iconic events and what models were used in their marketing and communications strategy that helped advancing the event. Further, the expert interviews will reveal their best practices in a B2B focused event digital communications strategy and how digital marketing and communication has developed as a powerful tool over time.



### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Introduction to digital marketing and the digital landscape

Digital marketing and the way we communicate and consume information is constantly changing. When referring to digital marketing, the author consolidates the digital landscape as well as the different technologies that are used to experience the world. In the past years, the industry has seen a rough shift from traditional marketing such as newspaper ads, use of advertising columns or posters (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2014). With the emergence of the Internet these traditional marketing tools start to become more and more obsolete. Marketers must adapt to the ever-changing consumer behaviour. The trend to consume online content started in the 1990's and has since then been growing tremendously (International Telecommunications Union, 2018) like shown in figure 2 below.

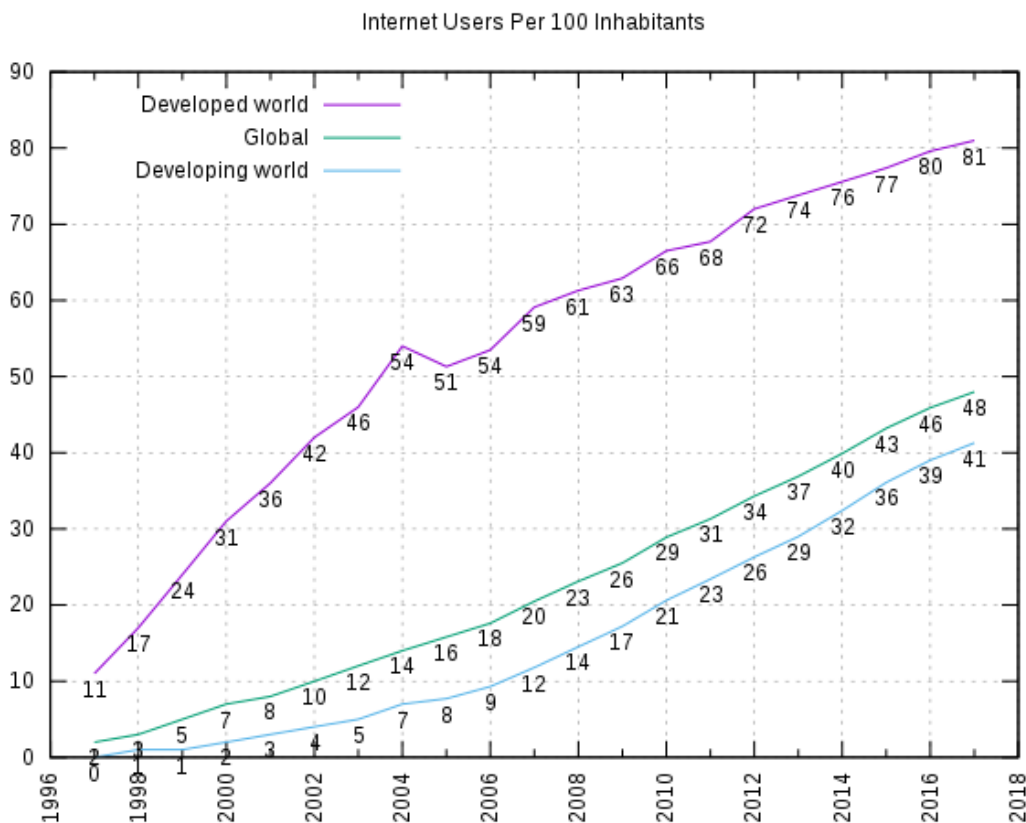


Figure 2. Internet users per 100 inhabitants. Source: International Telecommunications Union, 2018)

To stay competitive, companies should adjust their marketing and communication strategies to reach their target group. As figure 2 above shows, the use of the Internet as a communications platform is growing steadily. Further, the trend also shows that more and more content is consumed with mobile devices such as mobile phones or tablets. When looking at the digital landscape Marketers must ensure that their content is optimized for various operating systems as well, as there are several tools available to access the internet for information (Schröer, 2017). An operating system is the software that is running on hardware. The most commonly used operating systems are open source Linux based operating systems such as Google's Android and Apple's IOS, as well as Microsoft's Windows operating system (The Register, Gavin Clarke, 2017)

Most of the industries have at least three existential challenges (Schröer, 2017) in their business environment:

- Maintaining existing customer base with the influx of new and cheaper marketing from competition.
- Expanding and redefining existing customer base due to technological disruption.
- Analysing existing assets (customer contacts, long term relationships and brand in general) to generate new products and business models.

Further, the digital landscape includes all assets that are online and intangible. The commissioner argues (Pasi Hurri, BaseN 2018) that:

- All the value will be in the digital realm around the physical assets no matter how traditional provider or manufacturer a company is.
- Maintaining and protecting the intellectual property will be real time and very technical, requiring new skills.

The digital landscape further describes the importance of the online presence (explained in chapter 3.1.1). The commissioner has a thorough online presence in form of a website and various Social Media channels. Further, the content to users is delivered via

various channels that are found online in form of graphical content, text content and video content. The content that is distributed by the commissioner predominantly serves to educate, nourish and establish a solid customer base and customer trust. Additionally, it offers a great way to engage with potential customers and keep a dialogue.

### **3.1.1. Online presence**

*“Every “Thing” will have an online presence in 2040. All the value is online”. (Pasi Hurri, BaseN President and CEO, 2018).*

As the digital landscape builds the base for digital marketing, it is essential to have an online presence. An online presence is the collective existence of a company or individual (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2014) in the Internet.

Experts argue that a company without online presence cannot stay in business (Uys, 2010). Though there are still some businesses without online presence, most of them have stagnated or declined in revenue. An online presence also serves as a positive user experience and as a social proof which gets more and more important. When speaking of social proof the author refers to a recent development on social media networks. A business, product or service gains higher credibility when people have rated it on a social media network (Hinton & Hjorth 2013). Further, the social proof is important as many customers turn towards social media networks when seeking contact to a business or service. A business should always keep Social Media channels updated and respond to questions and feedback to gain social proof. In addition, many followers, fans and comments improves the credibility of a business or service.

Moreover, the online presence allows a business to showcase their excellence for very little cost. As the commissioner of this thesis is a technology forerunner it is essential for her to have an excellent online presence highlighting both the current and future technology developments.

### **3.1.2 User Experience and user path in digital marketing communication**

User experience and user path are merely all about building a relationship with the customer.

When using different digital marketing and communication channels to communicate with a customer, it is also important to carefully analyse and understand the customer. Technology has given us the tools to understand our customer needs and wants much better (Szabo, 2017). There are several analytics services available that can be used to carefully analyse user behaviour and the user journey. Marketers have the possibility to enhance the communication by displaying only relevant content to their target groups.

When marketers have the chance to analyse the users better, it is easier to implement change and create engaging and relevant content for the users. All digital tools allow to see an exact user path (Szabo, 2017). It is possible to see what content the user is interested in, what did he or she click on, where did he or she spend most time and at what stage he did not longer engage with the provided content. The idea of digital marketing is to make the user experience as pleasant as possible to stay in a dialogue with the potential customer. With the help of digital marketing and communication tools, a business can show tailored ads to people who have previously shown interest in the company. Further, it is essential to understand what was the content that was most relevant for the user and to discover through which channel the user was reached. In addition, it allows a business to create more engaging material as it gets almost real time feedback from the user (Szabo, 2017). However, in the current systems there is a risk that singular purchase decisions create unnecessary marketing to the same target group as the context may not be understood by the automatic system. It happens often that ads continue to display for a user though he or she already bought the product or the product is something that is only purchased once per ten years.

However, before starting the digital marketing communication efforts a business should have designed a user path already. The user path defines what the business wants the user to see and to experience. All digital marketing and communication channels allow to enter a call to action i.e. to make the user click to a website to find more information or read more content. A call to action in digital marketing means that if a marketer wants a certain reaction to the shared content, it is good to tell the target audience what

to do. Some examples are: click here, read more here, buy now (Eisenberg, 2010). Content receives more attention if a call-to-action is added to the campaign.

The user path usually comes in two designs, one design for completely new users and one for returning users. A commonly used practice for returning users is to ask them to sign up for a newsletter or to create a user account which allows the business to keep the dialogue with the user. It is important to add a call to action within the user path as research has shown that the interaction with users is significantly higher (Eisenberg, 2010). A call to action often includes a discount on a product or service to create a sense of urgency and affect a user's decision upon a purchase.

### **3.2 Marketing and Communication tools in the digital environment**

There are several different digital marketing and communication tools that ensure a sustainable channel for keeping the dialogue with the customers. When looking at developing a digital marketing and communication strategy it is of importance to carefully examine and evaluate the flood of different tools and to pre-define the goal of any digital marketing or communication campaign (Kotler & Kartayaja, 2017). The tools should enable the marketer to track consumer behaviour and conversions, but it should also be helpful to create relevant content the user can engage with and share. Creating shareable content increases the reach of a post tremendously. According to Facebook (Facebook Business Audience Network, 2018) the reach of a post is defined by how many unique users have seen an ad or a post. The same measure applies to other Social Media Networks.

To track the outcome, a website should have analytic tools integrated. There are many different service providers such as Google analytics, Meltwater analytics and almost all Social Media channels have their own analytics tool already integrated. A tool for web analytics allows to collect and analyse data. The marketer can base decisions on the data analysis and increase the Return on Investment (ROI). Analytic tools gather information like:

- Referrer
- Demographic information
- Most successful campaign timing and messaging
- ROI

### **3.2.1 Social Media**

Social Media means decentralized communication between the end-users (peer to peer), however, made possible by technical platforms. Social Media emerged after network technologies became affordable to private users. Most Social Media channels are free of charge to the end-user as they pay with their data (Goodson, 2012). However, on Social Media, people have the chance to build a network, professional (LinkedIn) or privately and share their life with other users. End-users are enabled to share just an update on what they are doing, newspaper articles, pictures or anything else one can think of. The end-user updates are shared with the end-user's network of friends, followers and so on. In a way, Social Media has become more and more important over the years, particularly for younger persons, and you often find people discussing virtually more than in the real world (Hinten & Hjorth, 2013). Further, users tend to pretend to live in a world that does not match up with their real surroundings.

Other important aspects about Social Media are for example that the content shown to peer users is controlled by intricate algorithms which are advertisement driven and not disclosed to end-users (Professor Mc Neal via Forbes, 2014). In the recent years, the Social Media platform Facebook has confessed to have manipulated user feeds to do an experiment to control emotions (The Guardian, Robert Booth, 2014)

Social Media consists of several different platforms that are web based and enable virtual communication between users (Uys, 2010). Users can see and share updates, articles, images or videos. Social Media is not limited to any user interface and is hence used in all devices with mobile connectivity. The most used hardware is Computers, Laptops, Smartphones or Tablet Computers.

Additionally, Social Media allows also business pages so that any business can share information such as press releases, blog posts or other content with their followers or within a community (Uys, 2010). Social Media is the umbrella description for virtual user based networks. There is a vast amount of different social media channels but the author focuses on the following Social Media channels based on the commissioners need and strategic marketing and communications approach:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Google +
- WordPress
- Outbrain
- Triberr

### **3.2.1.1 Facebook**

Facebook is an American company headquartered in Menlo Park, California and was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes in 2004 (Carlson, 2010). The biggest Social Media platform to date has been publicly launched in 2006 allowing everyone to join who is over the age of 13. Since the launch of Facebook, the user base has grown steadily and Facebook quickly became the biggest Social Media platform crossing the two billion active users mark in June 2017 (Zuckerberg, 2017, TechCrunch 2017) and is still growing. Further, Facebook is the third most visited website according to its Alexa Internet rating (Alexa Internet rating, 2018). Alexa Internet was founded in 1996 and acquired by Amazon in 1999. Alexa analysis and provides global web traffic for millions of websites. Alexa provides the ranking of the websites based on their web traffic (Alexa Internet Inc., 2018).

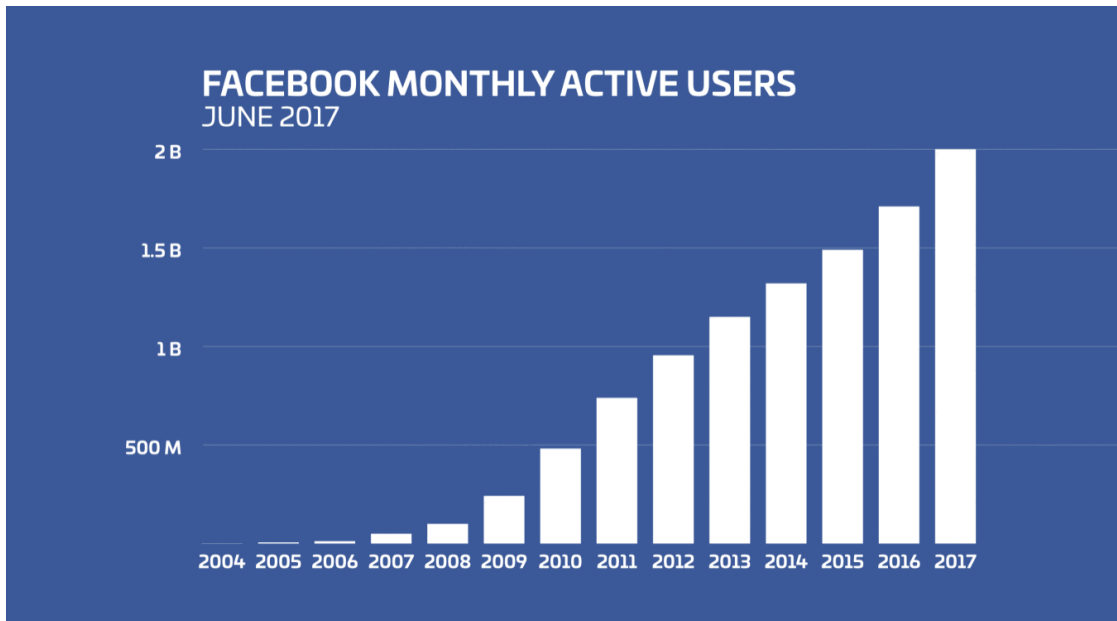


Figure 3. Facebook growth since launch reported by TechCrunch, June 2017

Facebook offers a platform for users to sign up for free and connect with friends, family, relatives, colleagues or anyone else. The user can upload pictures and videos, or they can write posts on their wall or on their friends' wall and similar (Facebook help pages, 2018). To regain your privacy, Facebook further allows you to group different acquaintances into lists so that the user can freely decide with whom he wants to share any of the own updates (Facebook help pages, 2018). Users can further share their opinion about other users posts by liking them or expressing their opinion with different emoticons. Emoticons consist of numbers and letters to express an emotion. Users can also like other pages such as business pages or fan pages (Facebook Business help page, 2018) of famous people and subscribe to their updates. This way, Facebook will use the push notifications to show to the user that a liked and followed pages has a new post. Users also can rate a page and write a review about their experience to serve as social proof (Facebook Business help page, 2018).

When looking at Facebook from the business perspective, there are several considerable options. First of all, Facebook allows to create business pages. So, each company can create a business profile on Facebook (Facebook Business help page, 2018). This allows a business to easily engage with users, share their own content and reply to questions. There are also several performance based marketing options where the marketer can



choose the goals. If the marketer just wants to raise awareness, then a sponsored post can be targeted to exactly the right users as Facebook, through several acquisitions of other Social Media platforms, has an enormous amount of data and knowledge of a user (Facebook Business help page, 2018). This sponsored post will appear in the user's newsfeed and likely raise awareness as the targeting options in Facebook advertising are very defined.

Another option is to use Facebook's advertising tool, called power editor (Facebook Business help page, 2018). This tool is used by marketers to generate leads and is mainly used for B2C businesses. It is essential that there is a Call to Action on the ads that are placed in power editor. They are costlier than the posts for awareness but they allow for conversion tracking, usually done by integrating the Facebook conversion pixel to your own webpage or by applying simple tracking codes from any analytics platform (Facebook Business help page, 2018).

Further, Facebook lets Marketers create specific events and by paying for a high impression rate, the event gets a lot of attention. In combination with the power editor, Marketers can give early bird discounts or invite students for free and the like. It has been reported that Facebook ads have a lower click through rate than other Social Media platforms, but nonetheless many users follow brand and business pages to get discounts and sweepstakes (Karge, 2013). Though this is a very user-centric approach and belongs more to the B2C concept when a business wants to sell directly to a consumer, Facebook offers similar options for B2B customers – i.e. webinars, or as previously mentioned to promote events and increase awareness across industries.

### **3.2.1.2 Twitter**

Twitter is another social media platform that was founded in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone and Evan Williams (Twitter, 2012). The company is headquartered in San Francisco. Twitter is a micro blogging service where registered users can send messages of 280 characters either publicly or limited to their followers only (Twitter help pages, 2018). Further, Twitter also offers a direct message service that you can disable at any given time. If a user likes content seen on Twitter there is the possibility to

retweet the original tweet so it will show up on the user's page but will show from whom the original content is. It is also possible to like a tweet. Retweeting is a powerful tool to gain impressions and reach to get the message out (Twitter help pages, 2018). Impressions are defined to be either equal or higher than reach. Impressions include all unique users who have seen the ad or post. The reason for the possibility of the reach being smaller is that a unique user can see the same ad or post twice (Facebook Business Audience Network, 2018).

Another popular feature of Twitter are hashtags. Twitter shows to the user what kind of hashtags are currently trending (Twitter help pages, 2018). This indicates that many people are tweeting about the same topic. As you can also search for specific hashtag it becomes a nice tool to spread content to a targeted audience. These use cases are free on Twitter.

Like in other Social Media platforms, companies can create a business profile on Twitter and can run paid campaigns (Twitter for Business help page, 2018). The targeting options on Twitter are more defined than on Facebook as Twitter analyses user messages and businesses can break down their targeting as much as to what kind of cereals a user prefers for breakfast (Mikko Hyppönen, Republica 2015 presentation). There are two different advertising options in Twitter. One being promoted tweets and the other Twitter cards. The promoted tweet is usually a tweet that will be pushed to a users' newsfeed. Naturally, the Marketer can define the target audience of the tweet very detailed (Twitter for Business help page, 2018). This technique is used if a business wants to push the content to users without a call to action. It can be used for awareness and for gaining followers.

There are several options that can be tailored to the marketers need. Twitter cards are tweets that have a call to action, usually in form of a small button in the tweet you can click. The marketer can define the tweet and what is written on the button i.e.: "read more" or "buy now" (Twitter campaign page, 2018). This is often used when marketers want to start a dialogue with the users as they are clearly defining a target audience and a call to action. Further, there are many journalists active in Twitter so there is a potential to reach and engage with media to improve public relations. However, also Twitter cards work in the way that they are pushed to a user's newsfeed.

Twitter’s own analytic tools are very defined, making it easy for the marketer to see reactions to tweets and advertisement like presented in figure 4 (Twitter campaign page, 2018).

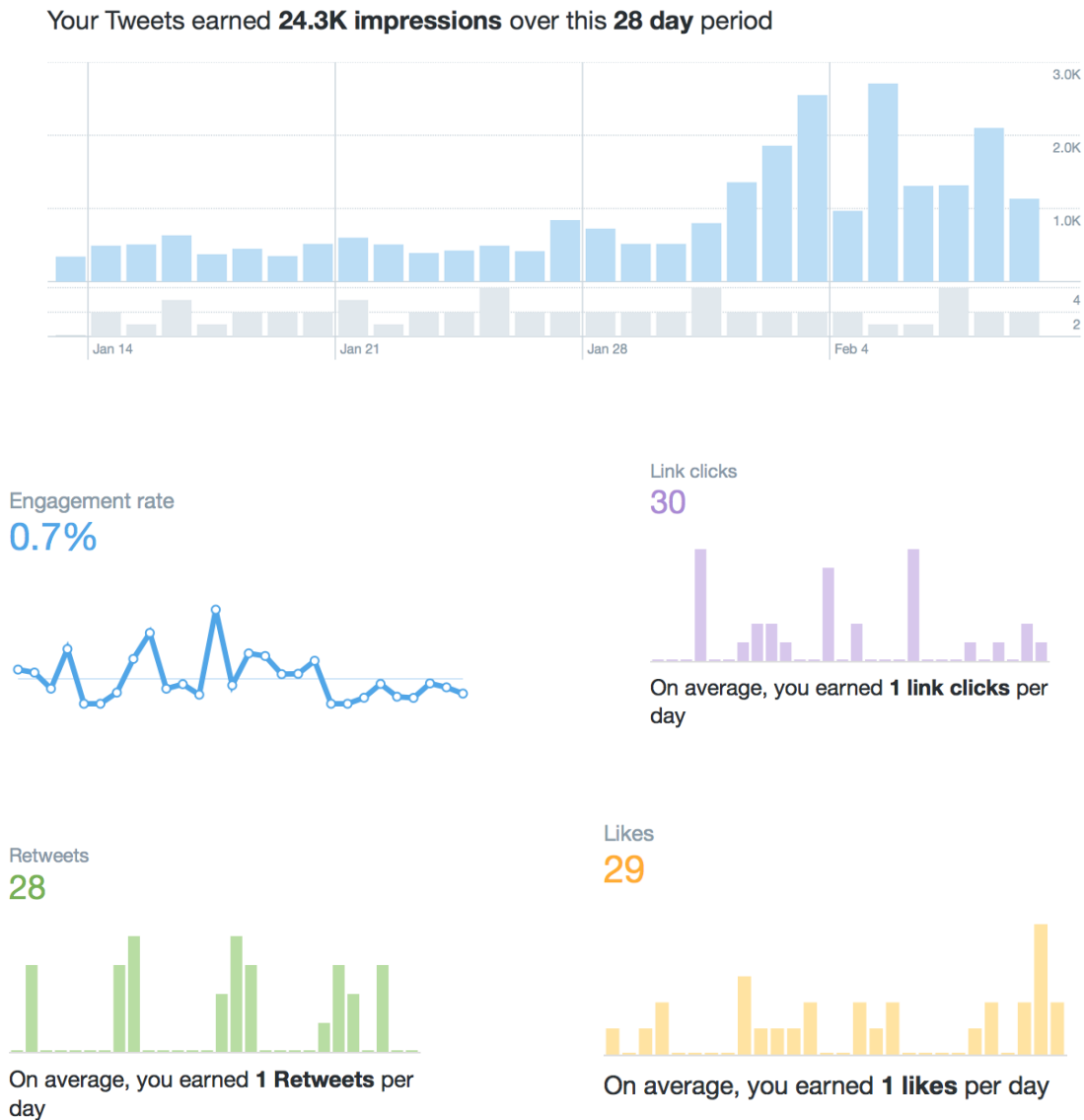


Figure 4. Twitter analytic tool example taken from the commissioners account (February 2018)

Twitter has approximately an amount of 330 million monthly active users (Twitter, 2016). The PEW research centre found out that most of Twitter users are millennials. Millennials are also often called generation Y. It refers to people who were born be-

tween the early eighties and late nineties. Another characteristic of millennials is that they are very tech savvy (Social Media fact sheet, 2018).

Twitter itself states that this audience are usually wealthy and that 80% of the users access the platform on a mobile device and an astonishing amount of 93% consume videos on Twitter on a mobile device (Twitter, 2018). Further, the global Alexa Internet rating of Twitter make it the 13<sup>th</sup> most popular website globally.

There is no concrete data available on the amounts of tweets sent per day at the moment, but the company stated in 2014 that more than 500 million tweets per day were sent. According to a whitepaper by the research company Research Now 93% percent of people who follow a small or medium sized company on Twitter intend to purchase from that SME. Further, 69 percent stated that they already purchased.

Additionally, many users turn to a business via Twitter to seek help from the customer service. As responses are public, the customer service on Twitter is usually very good. Further, many large organizations have received such a tremendous amount of customer requests that they started to establish another Twitter company account that solely focuses on customer support (Twitter for Business help page, 2018). Further, according to the annual report of Twitter, advertisement prices are decreasing. As an example, they state that the cost per engagement (customer dialogue) declined over the years by 54% while the engagement increased by 99% (Shareholder report 2017).

As Twitter introduced livestreaming options consumers state that video advertisement is less intrusive to them and that they think a promoted account for an SME is helpful. According to Twitter, a tweet is more likely to get more retweets if a video is incorporated. However, a marketer should keep in mind that the vast amount of Twitter traffic results in a decrease of a tweets lifespan. On average the lifetime of a tweet is 18 minutes as stated by Twitter.

### **3.2.1.3 LinkedIn**

LinkedIn was found by Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly and Jean-Luc Vaillant in December 2002 but launched only on the fifth of May 2003

(LinkedIn Corporation, 2018). The company's headquarter is in Sunnyvale, California and the company is owned nowadays by Microsoft.

LinkedIn was built for professional networking (LinkedIn Corporation, 2018) and is also heavily used by corporations to advertise their business or also for recruiting talents. Further, it is also a great tool to share any business relevant content (LinkedIn help page, 2018). LinkedIn has an advantage to represent a professional network that a user built over the years virtually. As LinkedIn has the Alexa Internet rating of being the 20<sup>th</sup> most popular site, the New York Times (2016) has published an article that Social Media experts recommend to American high school graduates to create a LinkedIn profile for improving their admission chances to a college.

Further, LinkedIn has become a very powerful virtual tool to build strong professional relationships. Many employees prefer to get a recommendation about them posted on LinkedIn instead of in written form like before. When recruiting a new employee, it is easy for the hiring manager to look the potential employee up on LinkedIn to see business connections (LinkedIn help page, 2018) and capabilities that can also be rated by the professional network. Naturally, also the recommendations gathered in LinkedIn can be very important when looking to hire a new employee.

When looking at LinkedIn's advertising options they are very similar to other Social Media advertising tools (LinkedIn help page, 2018). The network states itself (LinkedIn Corporation, 2018) to have a total of 500 million members out of which 73 million are senior level influencers, 45 million decision makers and 7.3 million are C-level executives. LinkedIn offers four main advertising options:

- Native ads for sponsored content: this advertising option is mainly used to share and distribute your content. It is an easy way for content marketing for a business. Once the content has been shared, you can select a target group that suits your goals (LinkedIn help page, 2018). The marketer can select all kinds of demographic options such as gender, country, language and interests. This is a very good and powerful tool to create awareness and to get shares and likes. While promoting your content LinkedIn has a built-in analytic service that allows you to track your campaigns (LinkedIn help page, 2018) to get the best ROI for each campaign. Naturally, it will also allow you to analyse the data to

see what is the content that gets shared a lot so that the marketer can replicate similar campaigns to even further increase the ROI. Further, if the marketer wants to grow the follower base for a business to achieve greater social proof, placing content marketing ads (LinkedIn help page, 2018) is an effective way. Like on Twitter and Facebook, the organizations content will be pushed to the user's newsfeed within your target group.

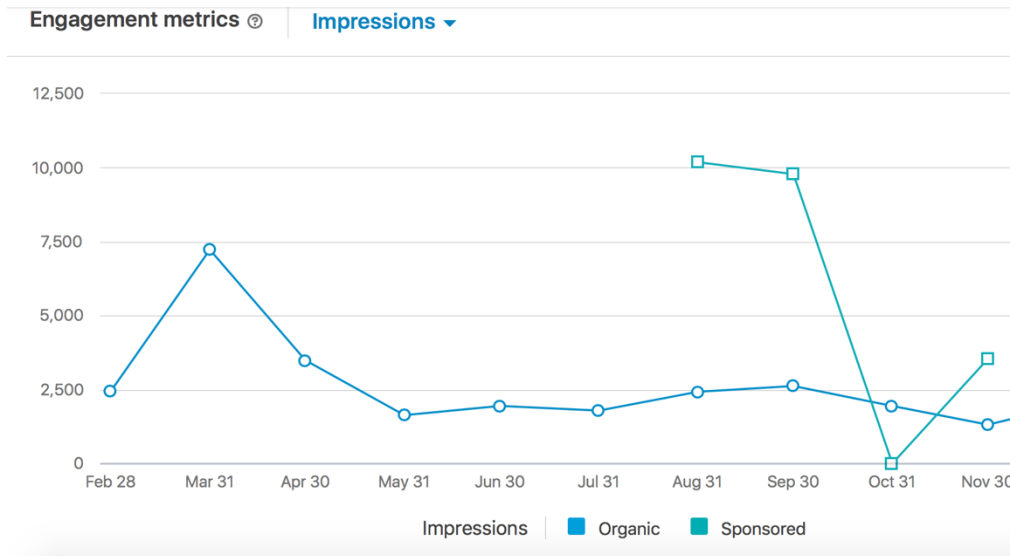


Figure 5. example of analytic service for LinkedIn advertisements taken from commissioner's account (February, 2018)

- Text ads to drive traffic and generate leads: Above each users' newsfeed on LinkedIn is a small area to place a text only. The advantage of choosing this option is that you pay per click only while you pay for impressions and reach on the sponsored content option (LinkedIn help page, 2018). The marketer can again select the target audience based on the need of the business. This is a cheaper option as only people who are really interested in your text ad will click the link. The marketer should however have a landing page and analytic tools in place to see if the bounce rate is too high or if the user is really interested and checks out more on the webpage than just the landing page. A bounce rate defines a single session on the webpage of a unique visitor. This means that the visitor came to the website of a business and the website received only one single request. This basically means that the visitor did not click on any other con-

tent on that website. In the case of the commissioner a high bounce rate reflects negative campaign outcome as the landing page is only the vector to other content on the website.

- Sponsored InMail to target the most useful people (i.e. decision makers): Advertising via InMail is seen as a very powerful tool as it allows a marketer to tailor the audience to individuals (LinkedIn help page, 2018). This is a great tool to start the dialogue directly with a decision maker or C-level executive while it usually is very difficult to get a hold of them. However, the marketer needs to be very careful in using InMail for marketing messages only. Apart of carefully selecting the individuals, it is also important to not appear as spam.
- Display ads: display ads appear on the right side of the LinkedIn page like in Facebook. These ads are also paid per click ads (LinkedIn help page, 2018). The click through rate varies between different networks, but according to a Google research (2015) the reputation of banner ads being ineffective is wrong as they still have a good click through rate and further strengthens other marketing activities. Another advantage is that users reconnect with the brand by recalling having seen a display ad of the same business before.

#### **3.2.1.4 Google +**

Google+ was launched in 2011 to replace Google buzz. It was created by Vic Gundotra and Bradley Horowitz (Google, 2014). Like other social media channels, Google+ allows to create user and business profiles. You can like the posts of other people if you follow a user or a business, it is called to be in someone's circle. A user or business can also limit the visibility of a post by sharing updates only with their circles.

Google+ allows the user to post images or video content. The Google+ feed shows updates of the circles a user is in. There is also an option named "discover" that lets the user search for other content he or she might be interested in. Google+ is highly visual so it is important to support postings on Google+ with a picture.

As Google+ is a google service, creating a business page also adds value for a business as it will improve the page ranking and make the company profile more dominant on google my business (Google + support page, 2018). It is important to add a phone number, office ours and pictures to the business page in google plus as it will look more professional when individuals are searching for the company online and again improves the social proof as Google+ allows also for rating a business and leave comments.

The advertising is fairly limited on Google+. Like on other Social Media platforms, there is an option to promote the posts to gain bigger reach and impressions.

### **3.2.2 Content Marketing**

The idea of content marketing is to create highly valuable content for users. This can be in form of an infographic, a regularly updated blog, interesting case studies and in form of videos (Eschbacher, 2017). The most important part of the content marketing is to create relevant and valuable content. When done in a good and concise manner, content marketing should strengthen the sales and help expanding the customer base as well as create additional awareness.

Content marketing differs quite strongly from other digital marketing activities such as display ads or Social Media marketing. Content marketing can have a call to action i.e. “sign up here for receiving our weekly newsletter” but can also be a stand-alone to help strengthen the brand awareness (Eschbacher, 2017). When creating content marketing it is also unnecessary to over float a user with the latest developments and updates of the brand, the core of content marketing should always be that the shared information is valuable and interesting for the user.

One example of perfect content marketing was done by Volvo Trucks in 2013, called the “Epic Split” and was done in cooperation with Jean-Claude van Damme and a creative agency. Instead of using the traditional marketing approach, Volvo Trucks decided that it needs more than simple display ads and Social Media Marketing to catch truckers interest since the digital media landscape keeps on changing. To introduce their new dynamic steering and its precision, they recorded a live video where van Damme stands



on two parallel moving trucks that started to split bit by bit until van Damme did a split between the two still driving trucks. This was not the first video by Volvo Trucks but the 6<sup>th</sup> in a row and has received to date 88,064,369 views on YouTube. Further, as mentioned above, the awareness raised by Volvo Trucks was outstanding. According to Fast Company, *“Volvo Trucks’ Live test films generated 100m+ YouTube view and were shared nearly 8 million times.”*

According to the creative agency Forsman & Bodenfors *“the campaign generated 20,000 media reports worldwide equivalent to an estimated \$172.6m USD /126m Euros. And in a recent survey of 2,200 owners of different truck brands, almost half of those who have seen the films say they are now more than likely to choose Volvo next time they buy a truck.”* (Meg Carter, Fast Company, 2014)

Naturally, the example above was very costly, nonetheless, the ROI was a lot higher (Forsman & Bodenfors, 2014). The easiest way to start out with content marketing is to start writing a blog. The post should incorporate interesting and new things that are tailored for the target audience. To create valuable content, it is important to also educate about something new (Hanley, 2016). Naturally, the content creator can also mention the company’s name and how the company is connected to what he is writing about.

Content marketing has become such an important marketing tool that it is used to support other marketing activities such as Social Media marketing and Inbound marketing (Ansari, 2017). Further, search engines reward high quality content with better SEO rankings. Also, when looking at public relations, it is important to publish valuable and relevant content that journalists take an interest in. Once the press has picked up a good story from a company’s content marketing they will look closer at the company which likely results in free media coverage such as interviews or introducing new industry trends.

### **3.2.2.1 Hero, Hub and Help Model**

When looking at the 3H model, defined as hero, hub and help content, it is important for the marketer to define the different type of models when looking at the content market-

ing perspective. The hero-hub-help model has been strongly recommended by Think-with-Google (Google, 2015).

When a marketer starts planning for a content marketing strategy it is important to group the content into different categories. According to Think-with-Google it is better to plan the hero content after having thought out a thorough help and hub content strategy. Ideally, both are launched before looking at the hero content which can be very costly (Google, 2015). To start with help content, the marketer should investigate the target audience carefully and define what are their main questions. This content section should answer all frequently asked questions (FAQ) in a concise manner.

The brand or business marketing should be kept low. Further, the content should always be available and should be created by professionals as it will add on to the businesses credibility. The help content is for example delivered as video content or an Internet Forum (Google, 2015) or can also be delivered by a community (F-Secure, 2014) where both, in-house experts and brand ambassadors answer to user questions. If also ambassadors start to help in the community by answering to questions, it will further increase the credibility. If the help content is good, there is good chance that users start returning to a business help content when searching for information and likely also returning to see other content of the business, like the hub content.

When looking at the hub content it is important to have a regular schedule to publish new content on the hub. The hub content is supposed to make users come back regularly and is usually centred around one main and big topic. The hub content can further allow to combine several channels in one place so when using traffic generation tools, the traffic will be sent to one place only instead of splitting it to everywhere.

A good tool for a content hub is provided through WordPress. In 2015, F-Secure started a privacy hub that contained regular blogging about privacy, integrated tweets about privacy by F-Secure as well as it hosted videos that were centred around privacy. The privacy hub was created before the hero content was added and served as a support to the hero content which consisted of a manifesto that was open for everyone to sign. The privacy was a huge success as it combined all information in one place and was updated several times a day with new content to support the hero content and bridge to the help

content in case users had questions. The unique visitor number went up to thirty thousand within a couple of weeks (F-Secure, 2016).

The hero content is identified to serve for example product launches, the announcement of big events or changes or is often also viral content. Further, it can be used when a business announces a reorganization or a strategy change, for example going from a B2C model to a B2B model. Hero content often requires a fairly large investment (Google, 2015) as it also serves on large scale.

Hero content usually is the last part of the content strategy and all other content should support the main message of the hero content. Hero content should be inspiring and should make a user remember the business and leave an impression (Google, 2015). Only when the hero content worked out well on a large scale the users will try to find more information of the business. This is the chance to convert unique visitors to returning visitors in the hub content. There are several ways to push the hero content to the desired audience. Targeted Marketing, Video or TV advertisements and similar.

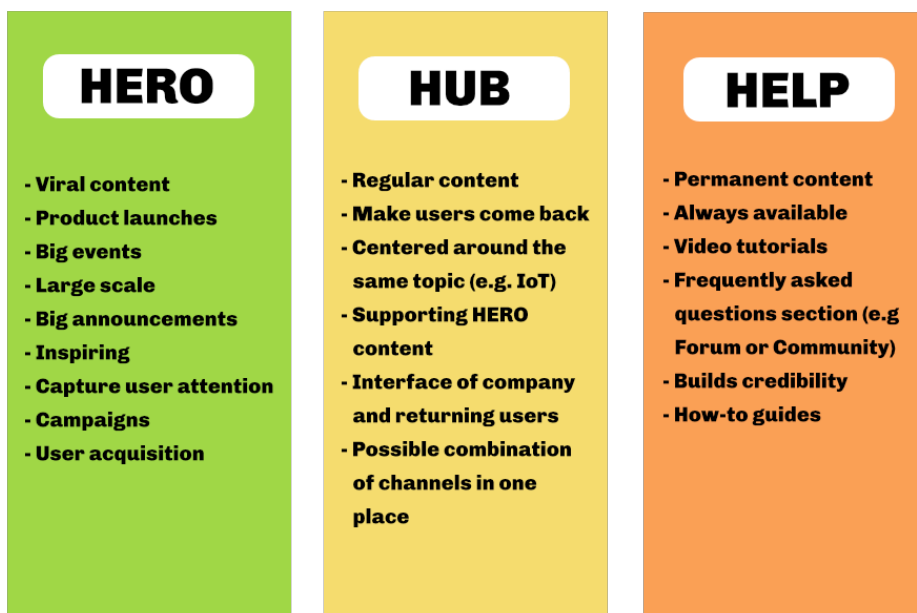


Figure 6. Summary of different conceptual content marketing strategies (created by the author)

### **3.2.2.2 Content Management systems - WordPress**

The development of WordPress was started already in 2001 but was published only in 2003 as an open source project (WordPress, 2018). WordPress serves as a platform for blogging. It allows for quick deployment and for an easy set up. It can be modified to fulfil the users need. When looking at WordPress from the business point of view, it is easy to have the WordPress page appear in the corporate colour scheme and as a corporate website. Further, it allows multi-user and multi-blogging, a feature that was introduced with WordPress version three (WordPress, 2018).

This allows to host more than one blog within one installation. WordPress has thorough statistics included so it is easy to analyse where the web traffic on the blog came from. It shows the referrer and it also analyses the amount of unique daily visitors and their referrer traffic (WordPress, 2018). Naturally, it also identifies the amount of returning users and how much time people spend on the blog. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is important to give valuable content to the users as they may otherwise dismiss a company's content.

WordPress is a content management system where a company can easily distribute content via their platform. Further, WordPress is optimized for SEO. One of Google's engineers said that WordPress solves a lot of SEO problems by itself (Cutts, 2009). Further, there are a lot of different plugins to make work on WordPress more efficient. WordPress is also optimized for mobile use, even when working in the dashboards and it is easy to use.

### **3.2.2.2 Traffic generation**

Once a marketer has started to publish valuable content, there are many different ways to generate traffic. First of all, the company should start cross-promoting the content on all Social Media channels that they have available as well as – if available – email marketing (Harvard Business Review, Arthur Middleton Hughes, 2012). There are also specific tools that can be used if the company is looking for long-term success or establishment to serve the target audience as a credible source of information. Further, there are also traffic generation tools that mainly serve to get the message out to as many

people as possible. As there are countless of these tools the author will only introduce two tool that are considerable for the commissioner's needs.

- **Outbrain:** Outbrain is a traffic generating tool that can be used if the content should be distributed widely and if the content creator aims for high awareness and high reach (Outbrain about pages, 2018). Outbrain allows to drive results fast and see a direct ROI. When using Outbrain, the marketer creates a campaign in the Outbrain dashboard linking the content he or she wants to distribute (Outbrain help pages, 2018). When creating a campaign, Outbrain allows you to use different titles and slogans as well as different graphics. You can run i.e. three campaigns all linking back to the same content but with different visuals and slogans to test which of your creations gets the most clicks. This is also a good way to test if click baiting is working for your target audience. When creating the campaign and having all visuals and other supporting material in place, the marketer can define very detailed who will see the content (Outbrain help pages, 2018). It can be defined by geographical region, gender, age, language and many other features. The marketer can also define whether the content is shown on desktop or mobile online and whether he wants to exclude people with an active ad blocker. Further, the marketer can set a total campaign budget as well as a daily budget to deliver the content in a more controlled way (Outbrain help pages, 2018). As the marketer can also decide the amount of money he wants to spend per click the costs can be quite controlled and the marketer is enabled to decide to go either for quantity or for quality. If it is just an awareness campaign, the marketer can go for the lower cost per click to reach as many people as possible. If the marketer wants to create additional value he/she can set the amount spend per click higher to reach top notch audience and likely to also reach returning visitors.
- **Triberr:** Triberr is platform where mainly bloggers gather. Depending on the interest or area of expertise, the bloggers can be grouped into different so called tribe. Meaning that food bloggers are one tribe, travel bloggers form another one and so do technical bloggers (Triberr about page, 2018).

Triberr is a good tool for bloggers that have just started out. The blogger can send a request to the tribe and be there as someone to watch but not yet as an active member. Once the new blogger has shared and liked and followed the tribe long enough, they will at some point become a member of that tribe and hence get valuable connections within the influencer scene (Triberr knowledge base pages, 2018).

When looking at Triberr from the business perspective, it is a very interesting content distribution tool. Within Triberr a business can open an account and recruit bloggers to write about their product or service and they can agree on the compensation for their work. This usually goes hand in hand with Social Media promotions and sweepstakes. Each blogger must disclose his or her reach, both in blogging and Social Media (Triberr knowledge base pages, 2018). They usually disclose the number of monthly visitors to the blog in unique and returning visitors and share some information on the demographics. Further, the companies can approach different bloggers that already serve their target audience and ask for a cooperation. As these influencers usually have a solid reader base it is fairly costly to get involved with the best ones, but on the other hand it serves as a great tool for awareness as they often have millions of readers reaching from private persons to business men.

When speaking about a cooperation, it is up to the business and the blogger to agree on the terms and conditions. It is possible to have them writing a blog on the blog of the business, or the blogger of the business can write a guest blog on the influencers blog. As a business can partner with several bloggers it guarantees a constant traffic source to the content that was created by the business and naturally also website traffic (Triberr knowledge base pages, 2018).

### **3.2.3 Search Engine Optimization**

Search Engine Optimization, hereafter referred to as SEO, means that there are several measures that can be taken to improve the search engine results of a webpage. All major

search engine like Google, Bing and Yahoo operate in a similar way. If one enters a term to the search, the search engine will return all results found based on what might be the most relevant for the user (Coombe, 2017). The search engines define the importance for a user through gathering meta data when searches are conducted. Search engines collect information about every page that is on the web to put out the best results for the person who is conducting the search. The search results differ when different search engines are used because each search engine has its own algorithm how it collects data and defines them into search results. In example Google uses so called web crawlers that crawl each page for new and relevant information, key words, backlinks and similar. The higher a business webpage is ranked in the search results, the more likely it is that people find it when they conduct online searches. To make a page higher, a business should start doing SEO (Schneider, 2016)

There are some known strategies for SEO. It is known that key words are important and the title of the web page. This is not referring to the official display title but rather to the title that is embedded in the webpage's code. Another way to improve the ranking in the search engine is backlinks to the webpage. If other pages link back to the business page, the ranking is increasing as it adds more credibility (Schneider, 2016). However, there are also some rather shady businesses that sell backlinks. This is not a recommended practice to buy shallow backlinks as search engines' crawler can identify those paid backlinks through their search algorithms and with the result that the page loses credibility and ranking. The penalty for this can also be much worse, meaning that the search engine will not display the business' page at all anymore within the search results (Google support pages, 2018).

Further, also the text in the backlinks matter. If several pages have a backlink to a page with the same words in the links, the ranking will also be increased. It is also important to have Social Media channels that are updated regularly to help build a reputation. In particular, when other Social Media users start to link to the business page. It does not only increase the visibility but also the SEO (Coombe, 2017). It is important to build a whole online network that can help to improve a business' reputation and credibility. As Google is the most commonly used search engine in the world, it is naturally of importance to have a Google Plus account where the business can share content and build a network with valuable backlinks (Google support pages, 2018). Most importantly

when looking at SEO is that the page has frequent updates and offers regularly valuable and relevant user content. Unfortunately, the search algorithms are changing frequently so there is no set guideline on how to improve SEO, the marketer just has to stay on top of new information and trends for SEO.

### **3.2.4 Website optimization**

Website optimization is similar to search engine optimization as it naturally serves as a tool to optimize the website visitor numbers and performance. However, there are some major differences between website optimization and search engine optimization. Once a business has taken all SEO measures into account and optimized the website for SEO it is time to look at the website itself. With the help of analytic tools such as Google Analytics and similar, the marketer is able to inspect where the website may have flaws. In example if there is a particular subpage where the bounce rate is very high (Google support pages, 2018).

This is the time when the marketer should start A/B testing to optimize the visitor flow. A/B testing is a good tool for doing controlled tests in marketing and UX (UX is referred to as User Experience and describes the perception of a user of i.e. a product, service or advertisement. Gathering feedback from users is a powerful tool to get insights to the target audience. User experience further allows for adjustment and improvement of a product, service and similar). It is also fairly simple as you have a variable A and a variable B. The only thing that needs to be done from the marketer is to carefully examine the results. Naturally, as this is an experiment, the hypothesis is that either variable A or variable B gets the better results that must be pre-defined by the marketer.

An easy way to do this is to set up a duplicate of the website with headline changes or also with an entirely new user flow with different visuals and messaging, and use traffic generating tools such as Outbrain. Half of the traffic from the target audience will be sent to page A and the second half to page B. The results allow the marketer to see which version is perceived to be better by the audience, reflecting in smaller bounce rates than the other page. It can also be determined by the time people spend on different pages and how this reflects on the click through rate. As this is a rather scientific



approach it is important that the marketer decides beforehand what goal he or she is trying to pursue – i.e. whether the marketer is looking for awareness or lead generation as this would require working out the entire sales funnel as well for both pages (Optimizely, undisclosed author, 2018). Further, it needs to be decided in advance whether the marketer is looking for qualitative (like lead generation) or quantitative (like awareness and better public relations) results.

The marketer should follow five important steps that are listed in the below graphic. First, the marketer needs to identify where the improvement is needed, followed by a hypothesis on what will lead the improvement. After this is done, it is time for setting up the different verticals and run the A/B testing. The last step should naturally be to analyse the results and compare them to the problem that needed improvement and was determined in the first step (Optimizely, undisclosed author 2018).

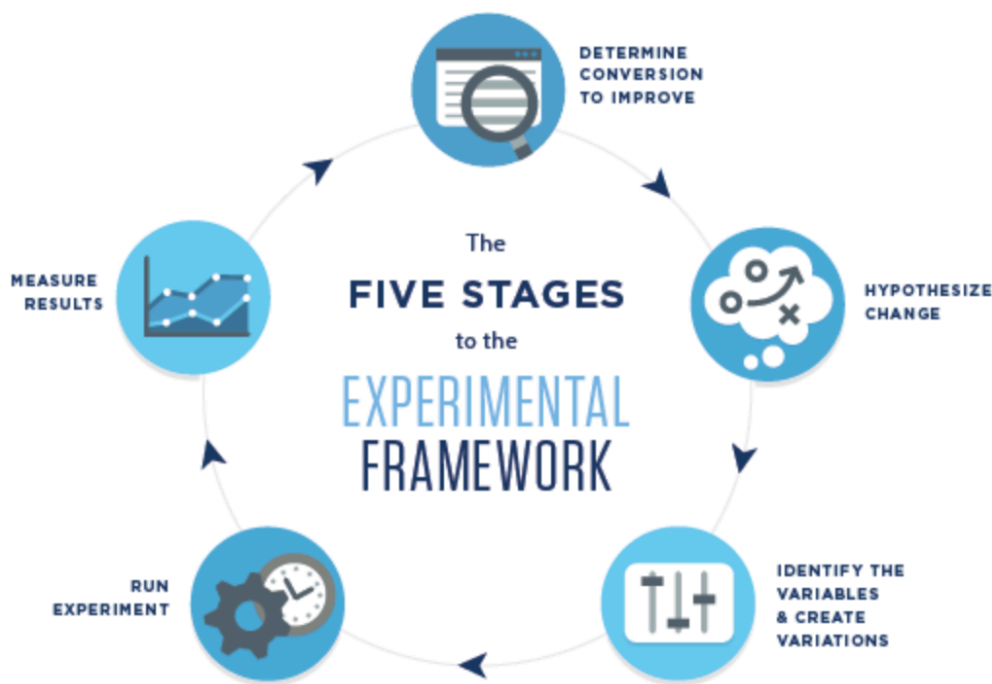


Figure 7. The five stages to website optimization (optimizly.com, 2018)

Once this is done, it is also important to stand out of the tremendous amount of websites so a good marketer should also look for differentiators. In the recent years, the trend has changed from rather static webpages to webpages that host all information on one site and the website visitor only scrolls downwards.

### **3.2.5 Influencer Marketing**

Influencer Marketing is a relatively new marketing concept that started to arise alongside Social Media such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Most influencers are found either on YouTube or Instagram. On YouTube, there are different video bloggers who share content they care about (Brown, Duncan, Hayes 2008). Video bloggers are commonly referred to V-Logger. On the Social Media network YouTube, it has become very popular to publish a video blog instead of a written blog. People discuss topics they are interested in in front of a camera and publish it later to their followers. V-Loggers have become an important instrument of marketing since they belong to the category “influencer”. For example, there are several beauty V-loggers that test different products and show to their audience how to use them best or what is special about them. Then there are video bloggers who play games and broadcast them live on the internet through channels like Twitch and YouTube and travel bloggers who travel to several different locations and report about their holidays, like where they stayed, what airline they used and so on. Depending on the reach of the influencer and the topic, the businesses which approach influencers are quite varying (Wulf, 2017).

Influencers typically have several hundred thousand unique followers who watch their videos. Further, there are influencers to be found in about any area a business could be interested about. In case of the commissioner, the influencer would likely be a video blogger that cares a lot about the Internet of Things and innovation in technology. Influencers educate and entertain the audience. Further, as many fans follow them for several years, they are perceived to be very trustworthy and their recommendations as credible.

There are several ways how to work with influencers. Either the relation between a business and the influencers stays strictly monetary, meaning the influencer gets paid and receives product samples to test a product and review it on his or her channels, or the influencer and the business engage in a kind of partnership, turning the influencer into a brand advocate (Adweek, undisclosed guest author, 2018)

As previously mentioned, any business first needs to identify possible influencers. Once the marketer has identified the influencers based on the field of business, the influencer needs to be observed. Some of the very strong influencer may also not accept being approached by a business. Further, some influencers insist on notifying his or her follow-

ers that the post is a sponsored post. Another important thing to know is that a business can usually not pay an influencer to say something positive about a product or service which they do not like.

Most influencers insist on staying real and not telling something they disagree with to their followers. Once the observation is done and the influencer seems suitable, a business can freely contact the influencer with the business idea and discuss details, aiming to set up a contract.

Sometimes it may seem out of place when a business that mainly operates in a business to business environment would approach influencers as their target audience is usually the end customer. Experts such as Gillin and Moore (2009) and Brown and Hayes (2008) still argue about the benefits for B2B businesses. However, even if a company mainly focuses on B2B, influencers can still be used as a tool of awareness for this business. It all depends on the goals that were set by the marketer prior to starting an Influencer marketing campaign. Further, in particular when looking at innovation and technology influencers, it turns out that they often recommend a product or service that is mainly B2B focused. In example when looking for computer servers or services that are above average in their excellence.

### **3.2.6 Public Relations**

Public Relations describe the relation between a business or person and the public. A Public Relations Manager for example represents a business or individual to the outside, the public, by delivering and improving the image of the business or individual. Public Relations Managers usually have a very broad network including newspaper and influencer representatives (Oppel, 2014). When looking at Public Relations from a business's point of view, the Public Relations Manager is responsible for creating a good image of the business with clear messaging and valuable content. Further, he or she will manage all external communications with PR agencies or direct media contacts. This is in particular interesting for creating awareness. If a business has a new product or service, the Public Relations Manager will pitch it to the media which likely results in newspaper coverage, both for print and online media. Further, the newspapers will also

spread the news via Social Media, enlarging the reach. Research found that it is more efficient to pitch stories to the media instead of only a new product or services (Steinke, 2015) as the media is more reactive to a story than a product.

A good example for this is the Wi-Fi experiment executed by F-Secure Corporation in the fall 2014. F-Secure set up a rogue Wi-Fi network in the United Kingdom that people could connect to after agreeing to the terms and conditions. Within the terms and conditions the company placed a paragraph stating that by agreeing to the terms and conditions you are rendering your first-born child to F-Secure. The company was trying to find an engaging story to pitch to the media to raise awareness for their security and privacy protection service, their VPN client, F-Secure Freedom. By conducting and documenting their experience, F-Secure reached a media breakthrough. Media networks in different countries published the story and all of them held it under embargo so the news was published simultaneously in different countries. Even the Deutsche Presse Agentur published the news to all main media channels in the country which has not happened for a product ever before. Naturally, the focus was mainly on the story and how carelessly people connect to public Wi-Fi put naturally the product, F-Secure Freedom was mentioned in the articles and F-Secure gained a tremendous share of voice, reach and brand awareness (F-Secure, 2016).

There are several options how to work with Public Relations. If a business for example does not have a dedicated employee, the communications department should look for a Public Relations Agency. Agencies basically do the same thing that a Public Relations Manager does, but in general agencies have a broader range of contacts as they are in business for many years and worked with many Publication Houses and companies for years. Further, agencies are fairly expensive as they are also serving a multinational customer base and have giant clients such as Samsung, Apple and the like so an agency always bares the risk to focus on their bigger accounts predominantly as the ROI is much higher.

Further, there are several Public Relations communications strategies. The one discussed above solely focuses on increasing awareness and getting good coverage for the business as well as nurturing media relations (Oppel, 2014). Part of the Public Relations is also to maintain and nurture Analyst and Investor Relation. Though this is part of the

communications strategy of an organization, the messaging for the different audiences naturally differs a lot. Typically, there is another dedicated employee to communicate and manage Analyst and Investor Relations as this area of Public Relations is not depending on good story telling but rather on hard facts and forecasts.

Another trend for businesses in the Public Relations domain is to offer something exclusive to the media representative (Proske, F-Secure, 2018). This can be a in form of inviting media to special events and launches or by offering something exclusive. For example, if a manufacturer of phones just launches the next version of a phone, it has become common practice to have a media event before the official launch date and have an exclusive product or service demonstration for the journalists. Further, it is also fairly common to give a product or service to the media representatives before the launch date to try it.

Additionally, when looking for more media exposure, it is possible to work with selected media and create advertorials. Advertorials are very similar to regular newspaper articles with the difference that they are paid and usually the media will also mark this as an advertorial.

To summarize, Public Relations should always support the messaging of the business or individual and help shaping the publics opinion about the business or the individual to the most positive outcome (Steinke, 2015). Further, good storytelling is essential to succeed in creating additional awareness and a good public image and credibility. This is also particularly important in crisis situations as a good Public Relations Manager usually has the capability to turn the crisis into something positive or less negative by creating a different image.

### **3.2.7. Meetup**

Meetup is based on the Software as a Service (SaaS) model and was founded in 2002 (Meetup, 2018). Meetup is a virtual tool to help scheduling personal meetings for groups that share the same interest. The idea behind the online service was to use the

digital world to make people meet up personally more often and to build in inclusive network.

Meetup is basically free unless you want to actively schedule meetups as a business. It is a very good tool to communicate with like-minded people and to build up a professional as well as a private network as people that join the same Meetup naturally share the same interest. The person or business who sets up the respective Meetup states time, date and place of the Meetup and posts it in the Meetup group (Meetup Help centre, 2018). Meetups are usually defined by interest and they are free of charge most of the time. The host of the Meetup defines the amount of seats and the agenda. Through the Meetup page it is possible for attendees and hosts to ask and answer to questions and to share updates as well as invite others to join. Once people meet there can be presentations and other showcases. Many businesses also use Meetups for recruiting by setting up a hackathon as a Meetup for example. Further, it can also include educational components as there are often speakers from the respective industry and one can openly discuss the topic (Meetup Help centre, 2018).

Further, Meetups can also be used to raise awareness. If there is a new topic or innovation within a particular area of interest, scheduling a Meetup and introduce the new findings or innovation can be very rewarding. This is also a good way for start-ups to connect with industry leaders and talents.

### **3.3 Digital Marketing Planning**

#### **3.3.1 PESO MODEL**

In the recent years, the industry has seen a big change in how we consume online content. There was a big leap for video content (Forbes, Matt Bowman, 2017) in the recent years. The PESO model (Gini Dietrich, 2014) is a widely-adopted concept of a combination of several digital marketing and communication tools and their impact. The PESO model describes the differences between paid, earned, shared and owned media and highlights the benefits and downsides.

The paid media consists of sponsored content. This can be directly sponsored content by paying to the chosen platform, for example Social Media, content distribution platforms, Public and Media relation, Google AdWords or even TV advertisements, or can occur through affiliates and brand ambassadors. This predominantly serves as a controlled way to distribute the message (Luttrell & Capizzo, 2018)

Earned media is defined as part of public relations like media relations, analyst relation or influencer relations. As seen in the PESO model figure 8 below, these two options overlap as there are several public relations and awareness options that are paid as well, such as advertorials in magazines or sponsored blog posts or sponsored product reviews, often done by influencers (Hilker, 2017).

However, influencer relations are also part of the shared media as they can be part of certain partnerships like co-branding. Further, any kind of material that originates from the business and got wide exposure, for example white papers, case studies, infographics or reports also belong to the shared media. The interest may not primarily be for the business that created the content, but for rather for the interesting story or topic the material was produced about. This enlarges the credibility of the business as a third-party value and spreads the content that is considered valuable and helps to grow the follower and awareness base (Mühlenbeck, 2016).

The owned media is the part that any business, brand or person have the most influence on as owned media is mainly consisting of content created by the owner. This happens in form of press releases, blog posts, customer testimonials, videos, podcasts or even webinars (Ansari, 2017). Further, the own communication channels of a business are used, for example social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google + and others.

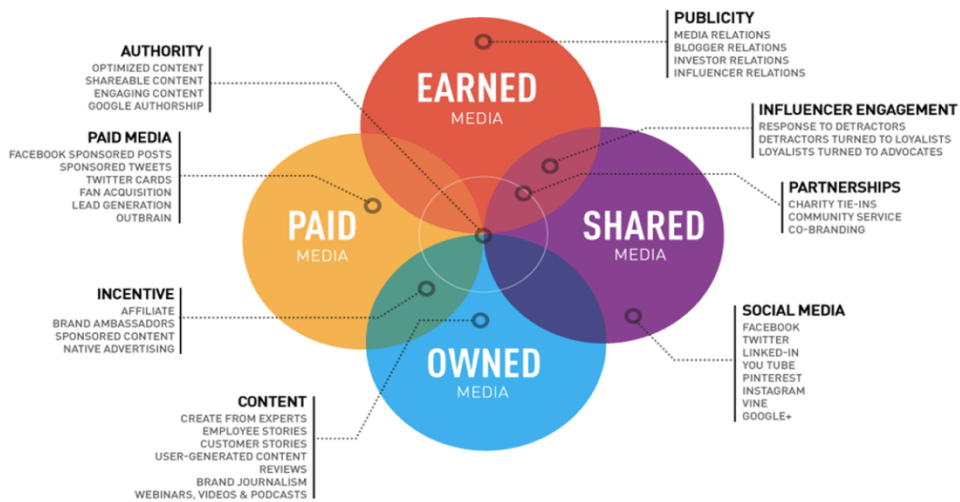


Figure 8. PESO model according to Dietrich, 2014

The PESO model further incorporates marketing and public relations. A combination of marketing and public relations is a powerful tool in the digital marketing space. As the PESO model describes, there are different options in the paid area such as affiliate and partner programs. However, there are also new platforms such as Triberr as described earlier in chapter 3.2.2.2.

These platforms allow companies and influencers to connect (Levin, 2018). Influencers can share their reach and the topics they cover and usually also set a price. They can either apply to different companies and make a guest post about the business, or the companies can approach the bloggers via the same tool if they find them relevant for their target audience (Levin, 2018).

Naturally, it is also possible that a company representative does a guest blog on the bloggers native blog. The PESO model describes a perfect digital marketing and communications mix as it combines all the important strategies while outlining the importance of connecting the different areas to assure precise and concise messaging of a business. Further, it is absolutely important to nurture all these areas to gain visibility, awareness, brand recognition and also a channel for critical communications (Mumby, 2012).



### 3.3.2 SOSTAC ® Model

The SOSTAC model was developed by Paul Russell Smith, PR Smith, in the 1990's (PR Smith, Paul Russell Smith, 2018). The SOSTAC model is a very effective tool when planning a marketing and communication strategy. Though the concept has been around since the 1990's, it still applies today and is often used as a starting point for developing a strategy. Further, the SOSTAC model was rated the third most popular model voted on CIM models (smartinsights.com, Chaffey, 2018). When looking at developing a good marketing and communication strategy, this model builds a solid base to develop the strategy upon.

The SOSTAC model consist of six major parts:

- **Situational analysis:** Where are we now? This part consists of in depth research about the current situation. It includes anything that is considered important regarding the current situation. It can include a competitor analysis, internal resources such as money, people and time frames. Further, it should include current trends in the industry (smartinsights.com, Chaffey, 2018)
- **Objectives:** Where do we want to be? This part of the planning model defines the goals that are to be reached. In example increased sales, decreased costs, increased customer satisfaction and maintaining the dialogue as well as an increase of awareness and credibility. (smartinsights.com, Chaffey, 2018)
- **Strategy:** How do we get there? Developing the strategy is one of the core parts of the SOSTAC model. The marketer should define the segmentation, the target audience, and also the positioning. Further, it is important to define which tools will be used to achieve the goals and how the integration will be done (prsmith.org Paul Russell Smith, 2018). The strategy should give a framework to the marketer to develop the tactical approach.

- **Tactics:** How exactly do we get there? The tactic is seen as a more detailed strategy. Tactics usually include a detailed marketing mix, including online and offline marketing and communication mixes, like content marketing, content placement, Social Media marketing and amplification (prsmith.org, Paul Russell Smith, 2018). This naturally also includes the 8 P's of the Marketing Mix (smartinsight.com, Chaffey, 2018)
- **Actions:** Who does what and when? According to Paul Russell Smith (prsmith.org) it often happens that the action stage is neglected. When planning the action stage the focus should be on who does what. This means internal resource as well as external resources such as agencies (smartinsights.com, Chaffey, 2018) as well as a structured planning on the responsibilities. This stage also defines what systems and processes are already in place and is there a need for redefining them or adding more.
- **Control:** How do we monitor performance? This stage defines how often the Key Performance Indicators are reviewed. In a business, every manager has to set KPI's for his/ her department and employees. The KPI's are usually reviewed once or twice per year and serve as an indicator whether the goals have been achieved or not. It is also used as a good indicator for employees what they already excel in and what still needs improvement. Bigger companies also pay bonuses based on the KPI evaluation. The KPI's can include for example reviewing analytics, optimizing the conversion rate, profiling of users and user experience. Also, A/B testing can be analysed in this step (Prsmith, Paul Russell Smith, 2018). Further, there needs to be a definition of the reporting process and time frame.

### **3.3.2.1 SOSTAC +3M**

SOSTAC and the 3M's represent a short but comprehensive addition that every business should take into consideration when working with the SOSTAC model. It is defined as (PR Smith, Paul Russell Smith,2018)

- Man – human resources to handle the SOSTAC model
- Money – any type of allocated budgets for campaigns, agencies and other resources
- Minutes – any kind of timeline, including deadlines, reporting times, campaign timings and feedback loop.

# The SOSTAC® Planning System

## HOW DO WE MONITOR PERFORMANCE?

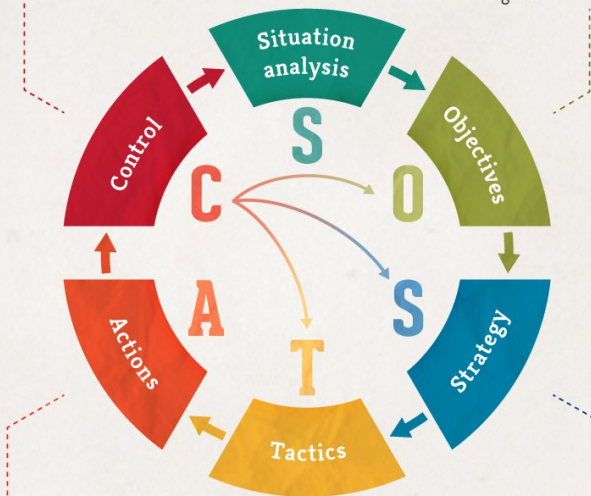
**Optimising through:**  
 5 S's, KPI's and web analytics  
 User experience review  
 Conversion rate optimisation  
 Frequency of reporting  
 Process of reporting and actions

## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

**Marketplace SWOT:**  
 5 S's performance and other KPI's (& trend)  
 Customer insight (who, why, how?)  
 Market Trends  
 Competitor analysis  
 Internal capabilities and resources

## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

**5 S's objectives:**  
**Sell** - customer acquisition and retention targets  
**Serve** - customer satisfaction targets  
**Sizzle** - wow factor (added value)  
**Speak** - engaging customers  
**Save** - quantified efficiency gains



## THE DETAILS OF TACTICS

**Who does what and when:**  
 Responsibilities and structures  
 Processes and systems  
 Internal resources and skills  
 External agencies

## HOW EXACTLY DO WE GET THERE?

**Marketing mix:**  
 8 P's  
 Incl. Communications Mix  
 Content Plan  
 Contact Plan

## HOW DO WE GET THERE?

**STOP & SIT:**  
 Segments  
 Target markets  
 Objectives  
 Positioning (OVP)  
 &  
 Sequence (Trust, Try, Buy...)  
 Integration (CRM & D/Base)  
 Targeting and segmentation

Created by PR Smith, SOSTAC® is a simple yet powerful planning system, which is easily applied to help create the perfect plan. SOSTAC® is a registered trade mark with SOSTAC® eBook, workbook, webinars & workshops by PR Smith: [www.PRSmith.org](http://www.PRSmith.org)

LICENCED BY



DESIGNED BY



PARTNERED BY



Figure 9. SOSTAC planning model infographic, (smarinsights.com, 2018)

### 3.3.3 The 4 Cs of Marketing Communication

The four Cs of marketing communication are widely used when creating a thorough digital marketing communication strategy (Jobber & Fahy, 2009). It is important to position a business after the other strategic planning like SOSTAC planning model and PESO model have been done. The four Cs of marketing communication represent the necessity to clearly define all communication.

The four Cs stand for the following:

- *Clarity*: It is highly important to use a clear messaging throughout all channels. The message should always be short and clear and moreover, easy to understand. A potential customer should never feel uncertainty when looking at a business's messaging. Most people mix clarity with certainty. *"Being able to offer certainty is very rare, but offering clarity just requires hard work"* (Pasi Hurri, 2018)
- *Consistency*: Nowadays, users in the digital landscape are swamped with the amount of information received through various channels. To stay in a consumer's or potential customer's mind a business needs to have concise messaging. It is of utmost importance to assure clear and concise messaging via all channels of the business, regardless whether it is offline or online. This also helps the consumer to identify with a brand and recognise it, leading automatically to the next point.
- *Credibility*: When the communication of a business is clear and concise in all channels, it is easier for the consumers to identify and remember a business (Jobber & Fahy, 2009). Further, repetitive, clear and concise messaging helps a business to build trust and gain credibility. Naturally, consumers that are exposed to a vast amount of digital content will find it easier to remember a business by associating the same messaging and hence build trust faster. Further, the messaging needs to include scientific or otherwise proven facts.

- *Competitiveness*: If all of the above-mentioned factors have been taken into consideration it is important to find the competitive edge in the message. With the first three Cs, the foundation for the messaging is said and brand recognition as well as trust have been considered. However, to really make a difference, it is important to find a competitive edge that should be clarified in all parts of the communication. Many well-known and adopted brands are often missing out in communicating their competitive edge. When developing the messaging, it is of utmost importance to highlight as well what makes the difference. For example, price or service level.

Annamarie Hanlon (Smartinsights, 2016) investigated the messaging of some major brands from different areas of business according to the 4 Cs model and found a lack in communication of the competitive advantage of each brand while they all excelled in clarity, credibility and consistency.

Company	Slogan	Clarity	Credibility	Consistency	Competitiveness
<b>Nike</b>	Just do it	Y	Y	Y	?
<b>Apple</b>	Think different	Y	Y	Y	?
<b>Bose</b>	We Believe Better Sound Makes Everything Better	Y	Y	Y	?
<b>Harrods</b>	There is only one Harrods	Y	Y	Y	?

Figure 10. 4Cs model of communication for major brands, Annamarie Hanlon (Smartinsights, 2016)

## **4. DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR SPIME CONFERENCE**

The aim of this chapter is to develop a digital marketing communications strategy for the annual SPIME conference of the commissioner to increase the number of participants and to optimize the lead quality. The author will develop the strategy based on the SOSTAC model but will also take the PESO model into consideration when developing the objectives of the strategy as the commissioner is also interested to improve Public Relations. Further, when planning the messaging, the 4C's model will play a key role. When looking at the tactical approach the author will also look at the SOSTAC+3M model as the three m's are an important factor for the commissioner. Further, the author will also integrate the perspectives that were brought up in the expert interviews which have given valuable insights. The commissioner has a limited amount of resources so the strategical planning and implementation of times frames are crucial to have success with the new strategy. Further, the strategy will be developed in a way that makes it possible for the commissioner to use it as a guidebook within the organization for strategical event planning. The commissioner needs a thorough digital communications strategy to enhance the annual SPIME conference. The chapter is further structured according to the steps in the SOSTAC model.

### **4.1 Situational analysis**

To start off with planning the digital marketing and communication strategy the author starts with the analysis of the current situation. The SPIME conference of the commissioner has taken place for three years in a row. The conference was kicked off in 2015 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands and continued in 2016 in Helsinki, Finland. The third conference took place in Torino, Italy in 2017. The conference is set up to feature industry delegates and experts in the area of the Internet of Things, as well as it includes a technical part for developer and IoT enthusiasts who want to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge. The conference features a different theme every year, but it is always centred around the Internet of Things. The first day of the conference is filled with presentations given by industry experts and BaseN customers. They share their experi-

ence of the Internet of Things from different perspectives. The author has written the following summary of the last conference to the event webpage:

SPIME2017 took place at Casa Jasmina, the smart home of the future, in Turin, Italy. The event brought together thought leaders, IoT enthusiasts and industry experts to discuss and present the fast and agile transformation from products to services in any industry. The keynote was held by Bruce Sterling, who coined the term spime already in 2005, and his partner Jasmina Tesanovic, woman in Tech and TedEx speaker and regular keynote speakers at SPIME conference.

Once again, the commissioner brought in customers and partners from many different industries to demonstrate how the Internet of Things is already implemented within a variety of businesses. Further, the commissioner always has a University Professor as a speaker representing academia (getspimed.com, 2018)

As mentioned in the summary, the conference centred around the different perspectives from any industry regarding the IoT and how it enables the smart home of the future. The speakers were carefully selected like every year. BaseN wants to assure to have speakers that represent different aspects of the IoT that is why there are several focus areas, which has proven to be a good concept according to the attendee feedback.

The second day of the conference is focused on hackathon for developers and programmers. BaseN refers to the hackathon as SPIMEathon. On the second day, the technical team of BaseN introduces BaseN Platform and how it is used for different customers. Further, the team introduces the easy deployment and how the platform allows for a quick service development as the platform can handle an enormous amount of data transactions per second and is built on redundant grid computing (BaseN, 2018). Further, BaseN also looks at recruiting new talents during the SPIMEathon. The topic of the SPIMEathon is also varying each year, but is always based on BaseN Platform's capabilities. The target audience of BaseN are IoT enthusiasts, decision makers as well as developers. Throughout the years, BaseN established a sustainable business and serves a growing amount of different customers. BaseN further serves customers from many different industries and hence wants to highlight in the SPIME event that the IoT is not just an abstract term, but that it is really happening and has been established years ago. Hence, the speakers of the SPIME events are either BaseN customers that share their



own IoT story or professionals that are seeking a platform as a solution to their growing need to sustain their leading positions in the market. The conference started off as an invitation-only event but has been opened in 2015 to the public as BaseN clearly sees the need to discuss real business in IoT. BaseN has an advantage when looking at the speaking opportunities as the company serves global businesses in over 80 countries. BaseN customers are well established and credible businesses such as Fujitsu, Amcor, Trimble and T-Mobile to name only a few, so BaseN serves with top notch speakers to the conference. Another highlight of the yearly SPIME conference is the mixture of different industries. In 2017 BaseN highlighted the shift from digital twin to spime in any business and had speakers from Trimble telling about how BaseN enables full labour control on various construction sites throughout the United States. The speaker highlighted how the digitization of the construction sites increases employee safety by always knowing where the employee is as well as dramatically decreases costs by controlling material flow and tools. When looking at presentations from Amcor, it is also clearly highlighted that the IoT moved into the company years ago and how BaseN controls the production to assure quality and for preventive maintenance.

When looking at the current market situation, IoT conferences are on the rise as the topic becomes more and more public. In the beginning of 2017, Gartner predicted that 8.4 billion “Things” will be connected (table 1 below), which is an increase of 31% from 2016 (Gartner, Rob van der Meulen, 2017). Further, Gartner predicts a steady increase in connected “Things”. By 2020 the estimation is that there will be over 20 billion connected “Things” as shown in table 1 below. As of 2017 the growth came mainly from the consumer segment.

Table 1: Source: Gartner, Rob van der Meulen, 2017

<b>Category</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>
Consumer	3,963.0	5,244.3	7,036.3	12,863.0
Business: Cross-Industry	1,102.1	1,501.0	2,132.6	4,381.4
Business: Vertical-Specific	1,316.6	1,635.4	2,027.7	3,171.0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,381.8</b>	<b>8,380.6</b>	<b>11,196.6</b>	<b>20,415.4</b>

Further, Denise Rueb, research director at Gartner stated that “IoT services are central to the rise in IoT devices. The total IoT services spending (professional, consumer and connectivity services) is on pace to reach \$273 billion in 2017.”

When looking at the Gartner predictions and the current market situation regarding the IoT, BaseN has the clear advantage to be at the right time in the right place. Also, when looking at the competition, BaseN is the leading global IoT Operator

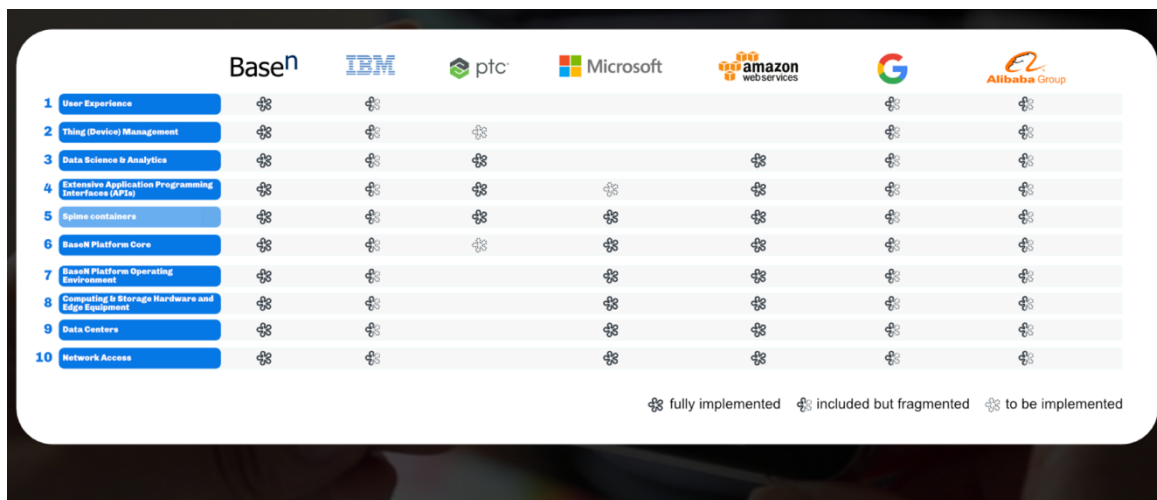


Figure 11. BaseN Corporation, 2018

BaseN has set up all marketing and communication channels that the author considers relevant in conjunction with the expert interviews which are the following:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Google +

BaseN also uses Outbrain for content distribution as well as email marketing to send external newsletter via MailChimp. BaseN also publishes press releases and does media pitches.

One weakness regarding the annual SPIME conference is the limited amount of resources. Currently the conference is organized by the company’s marketing team which consists of one full time employee and one part time employee. The commissioner will need to explore different options on how to cope with the lack of resources, either through hiring internally or partnering with an event management agency. Below SWOT analysis give an overview of the conference and the digital marketing strategy. The SWOT analysis below (table 2) was created by the author in cooperation with the commissioner.

Table 2: SWOT analysis, created by author

<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IoT forerunner event</li> <li>- Famous and credible speakers</li> <li>- Support of the spime concept by famous science fiction author Bruce Sterling</li> <li>- Covering all buzz words</li> <li>- Introducing a new concept, spime, to the market</li> <li>-Unique selling point (spime)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of knowledge in event organization</li> <li>- Lack of resources</li> <li>- Lack of awareness and structured planning</li> <li>- Not enough attendees</li> <li>- Not recognized by media representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Become an iconic event</li> <li>- Increase awareness through digital marketing and communications strategy</li> <li>- Strengthening the sales funnel</li> <li>- Become commercially successful</li> <li>- Event fully sold out</li> <li>- Partner packages sold out</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No commercial success</li> <li>- Not enough resources to manage the event</li> <li>- Unresponsive media</li> </ul>

As a comparison, the author and the commissioner also looked at two other conferences and developed the following SWOT analysis, table 4, together. The focus was on IoT Tech Expo Global and Internet of Things world. The insights to both conference were brought in through one of the expert interviews who has attended the conferences and interacted with people in charge. During the research, it turned out that both conferences are rather equal in their SWOT analysis (Encore Media Group, 2018; Knect365, 2018).

Table 3: SWOT analysis for IoT Tech Expo Global and Internet of Things World

<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Professional event management company</li> <li>-Large contact database</li> <li>-More resources (man, money)</li> <li>-Profitable</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No unique selling point</li> <li>-Does not stand out of the flood of similar events</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The conference could become a massive global event as it already spread to three locations globally</li> <li>-More digital marketing in Social Media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Little media attraction</li> <li>-participation costs overpriced when looking at ROI</li> <li>-No identifiable digital strategy (moderate Social Media reach, lack of content marketing)</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Objectives

It is of paramount importance to clearly define the objectives when working to implement a digital marketing communications strategy. The commissioner wants the annual SPIME conference to become an iconic event to present mission critical and life changing developments made possible through the Internet of Things technology. Further, the event should reach global awareness and ultimately become the most important event to bring together thought leaders, industry experts, developers and IoT enthusiasts.

The 5 S's approach from the SOSTAC model builds a good base when looking at the objectives when defining where to be in the future:

- **Sell** – the annual conference should also serve as a solution to the customers. The commissioner introduces the SaaS model and demonstrates how BaseN Platform can remove the headache from the IoT. The idea is to gather and target decision makers of large corporations so the quality of attendees should always be in the focus as well.
- **Serve** – the conference should also serve as a place to talk to actual customers and offer help when needed. This could serve as a good way to improve customer satisfaction and serve as a quality insurance. This way the commissioner will learn more about customer needs. It is important that all attendees from the commissioner's side listen to customers or potential customers and their problems and assure that they are taken care of as soon as possible to increase credibility.
- **Sizzle** – as mentioned in the beginning of the chapter the annual SPIME conference should become an iconic event. There needs to be a wow factor included which could be a special guest speaker that does not necessarily need to be an entrepreneur, but for example a true visionary. The conference should serve as a place for visionaries and a place for surprises to make it iconic.
- **Speak** – the conference already features customers of the commissioner as speakers to share their experience and what they are up to when developing on the commissioner's platform. Further, the commissioner has developed a hashtag for the conference. However, the online presence and digital marketing efforts of the commissioner need to be carefully determined and be drastically increased to raise more awareness.

- Save – though the conference should become an amazing iconic event, the commissioner has a strong focus on sustainability, hence the objective is to not only do the conference cost efficiently but also environmentally sustainable. The entire event strategy should therefore focus on sustainability.

To summarize the objectives, the commissioner wants to create awareness for the conference and increase the participation number. Further, the event should also serve as a lead generation event for the sales team so the ideal target audience is decision makers who are looking for a full stack IoT operator . Another goal is to make the event commercially successful and to attract global media attention and a truly global audience. Additionally, the event should continue to serve as an additional marketing activity to educate the audience about the commissioner’s platform and its capability.

### **4.3 Strategy**

This chapter defines the different strategies that the author has worked out with the help of case studies and expert interviews. The strategy approach defines how the identified objectives will be reached.

The strategy defines the long-term planning, in case of the commissioner, the planning is an ongoing process but the strategy should be implemented right after the event for starting the planning of the next year’s event. Further, the strategy gives an overall outline and the different tactics to achieve this and make the strategy successful will be outlined in the next chapter.

#### **4.3.1 STOP and SIT as part of the SOSTAC planning model**

To build a sustainable marketing and event strategy for the commissioner, the author will start with the STOP and SIT model that are part of the SOSTAC planning model. The STOP model describes the following:

- S – Segments
- T – Target audience

- O – Objectives
- P – Positioning

While the SIT model consists of:

- Sequence
- Integration
- Targeting and Segmentation

The STOP and SIT models as part of the SOSTAC strategic planning are good tools to determine where the strategy should be leading. It defines where the commissioner wants to be and what are the priorities. Below STOP model has been developed by the author, based on the criteria the commissioner has given to the author.



Figure 12. STOP strategy model of SOSTAC created by the author

Once the criteria for the STOP model above have been outlined, it is important to continue the strategic planning with the SIT model consisting of the following based on the

commissioner's needs. The needs as well as the input for the STOP and SIT model have been delivered to the author by the commissioner during a review meeting.

- **Sequence:** Quality before quantity, credibility, sustainability, scalability and visibility, awareness
- **Integration:** Defining how to integrate everything, for example by a consistent value proposition
- **Tools:** are merely defined as tactics, defining how exactly to reach the goals and objectives.

When outlining the desired outcome and combining it with the expert input and the commissioner's needs, the author worked out the marketing and communications strategy presented in chapter 4.4 regarding the content hub. As it is of paramount importance to increase awareness of the event and reach thought leaders and industry experts, it is necessary to target the right audience.

As the commissioner has decided to have the event each year in a different venue it is crucial to create an online strategy that builds up on the past events and the iconic speakers. Further, the venues themselves always have a particular twist that can be used in promotional activities. After conducting the expert interviews and the findings of the literature, the author suggests a strong push via Social Media, as well as an active PR outreach to amplify the annual conference. Naturally the content needs to be first created for distribution on Social Media and through Media Relations.

The idea is to form a content hub about IoT as one strategic approach. A content hub is a digital place where different content is combined and will be available. A content hub can feature Social Media posts, blog posts, news articles, video content and similar. Further, the content hub should feature a sign-up form to a newsletter. It is of paramount importance to deliver good quality content and it is particularly important to update the hub daily. The content hub for the commissioner features the integration of a blog, Social Media posts, video content and news releases.



After the content hub is in place, it will be essential to promote the content and also use traffic generation tools until a reoccurring reader base is established. Sharing should always be encouraged and further, to nourish the sales funnel as well, there needs to be a sign-up form when regularly consuming content. The content on the hub should always feature generic topics that follow the commissioner's targeting (Mühlenbeck, 2016), but there should also be some promotional postings, for example a blogpost from one of the commissioner's customers that embraces BaseN's technology, in connection to this to amplify the event and the SaaS of the commissioner. Ideally, the content builds a story leading to the event. To use a content hub for strategic planning it is of utmost importance to have a clear schedule due to the vast amount of information that is available online, it is crucial to regular update a content hub and always feature the latest and most interesting content for the target audience.

The strategic approach further consists of a detailed schedule with time frames to ensure constant updates as it is essential to constantly feed content to the target audience to stay in their mind and build up credibility and awareness. The planning of the content schedule and the exact time frames will be discussed in the next chapter as part of the different tactical approach (chapter 4.4.1 and planning figure 13).

## **4.4 Tactical approach of the Strategy development**

The tactical approach that will be described in this chapter is a more in-depth version of the author's strategy. This chapter will describe how the strategy will be implemented and what will be used as tactical planning tools. This chapter will further highlight tactical planning including a determined time frame as an example combined with the actions that are needed.

### **4.4.1 Content hub creation**

As already described in the strategic approach, the author introduces two possibilities of a successful marketing and communication strategy which are built on top of each other and support all activities included in the tactical approach.

As required by the commissioner, the content hub will be added to the existing event webpage as a place for general information about the Internet of Things and all topics around it like identified in the STOP model in chapter 4.3.1. The author as well suggested to the commissioner to integrate the content hub on the event page in order not to spread the traffic to too many places as the author received feedback on this from the expert interview.

The idea is to update this content hub on a daily basis to assure regular content posts to increase the number of returning and unique visitors. As previously mentioned, the content hub will feature a Social Media stream and also have the ability to upload video content, blog posts and press releases. In order to maintain and keep clear structuring of the content hub, the content planning and timing is of paramount importance as the Hub should be updated regularly, aiming for daily updates.

Below is an example of planned activities for the first quarter of the year (Q1). The table below is illustrating the overall marketing schedule for January. It shows what should be done and at what date. The marketing team of the commissioner has the task to strictly follow the planning as per figure 13 below. This figure is taken from the internal planning system of the commissioner. The table shows one month of marketing and communication planning. It features a daily execution plan that everyone who works in the marketing and communications department of the commissioner follows. For confidentiality reasons, the author has removed sensitive details such as content for news releases, internal and external newsletters and the currently processed number of transactions per second (referred to as “website t/s figure update” in figure 13). The reason for this is that figure 13 was added to this thesis before the actual publications of the commissioner for January. Further, each resource in the marketing and communications team has a daily list of marketing and communication tasks in the internal planning tool that are not shown in figure 13 due to personal privacy of the employees.

DAY	DATE	WHAT
TUE	02.01.	Tweet about 1 year member of FISC
WED	03.01.	website t/s figure update
THU	04.01.	External newsletter
THU	04.01.	News release
MON	08.01.	Internal newsletter
MON	08.01.	nBlog out
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
TUE	09. - 12.01.	CES
WED	10.01.	SPIME2018 speaker invitation round #1
WED	10.01.	website t/s figure update
WED	10.01.	News release
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
THU	11.01.	External newsletter
MON	15.01.	SPIME2018 venue to book
MON	15.01.	SPIME2018 partner package ready
TUE	16.01.	News release
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
WED	17.01.	website t/s figure update
WED	17.01.	News release
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
THU	18.01.	External newsletter
MON	22.01.	Internal newsletter
WED	24.01.	website t/s figure update
WED	24.01.	nBlog out
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
THU	25.01.	nBlog to LinkedIn
THU	25.01.	News release:
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+
THU	25.01.	External newsletter
WED	31.01.	website t/s figure update
WED	31.01.	News release
		Twitter
		Facebook
		LinkedIn
		Google+

Figure 13. example of tactical planning for the commissioner

The commissioner needs to assure that all previously mentioned criteria in chapter three for digital communications are set up, including SEO, Social Media planning, content marketing, content placement / content distribution and planning, website optimization, influencer marketing, public relations and Meetups.

The author recommends handling this as follows:

- SEO- the content hub should feature search engine friendly terms and hence aim to get backlinks as well to increase search engine ranking. SEO can be easily increased by using key words for the IoT industry and other target segments mentioned in the STOP model such as smart living, smart city, smart grid, IoT operator and similar. Further, also other news in the industry should be shared in the content hub to increase the audience interested the commissioner's credibility.
- Social Media planning- recommended at least one to two posts per day in different channels. The commissioner should engage in industry relevant conversations and the use of hashtags is strongly recommended. Whenever possible, the posts should include a visual as research has shown that social media posts with visuals get more attention (socialmediaexaminer, Patricia Redsicker, 2014). The detailed plan will be presented in the following pages.
- Content marketing- the author identified Social Media, Triberr and Outbrain as primary tools for content marketing, placement and distribution. Further, also influencer marketing tactics are considered and carried out via Triberr. However, the content creation cycle is worked out in more details in the following pages as it is of utmost importance to have daily content.
- Website Optimization- after all other tactics are in place and running, the author will start A/B testing to optimize the content hub / event web page.

- Meetups- the commissioner regularly participates at IoT meetups and also hosts them to help increasing the Word-of-Mouth marketing and to increase traffic to the hub / event page.
- Public Relations- public relations are not directly integrated in the digital marketing communications plan, but will be based on the tactical and strategic approach.

The author worked out the following example plan for the commissioner regarding the content hub. The commissioner has long established channels for active promotion such as Facebook, Twitter, Google +, LinkedIn and a CEO blog. Further, a regular publishing schedule for press releases is also in place. The well-established channels will be all incorporated into the content hub. Figure 14 below gives an overview of what should be done and when. Figure 14 further illustrates how many times per day/week/month content should be published and on what channel.

CHANNEL	Twice or more per day	Daily	3 times per week	weekly	bi-weekly
Facebook			x		
Twitter	x				
Google+			x		
LinkedIn		x			
Blog post			x		
New release				x	
CEO blog					x

Figure 14. schedule for digital Marketing and Communication postings

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter the content hub and the digital marketing Communications Strategy are supposed to support each other. Hence there is the need to promote the content that is created by the commissioner. The content distribution will be handled through Outbrain. Outbrain allows the commissioner to promote all placed content with a monthly budget. Blog posts and news releases can be promoted with different visuals and the traffic will lead straight to the content. This ought to raise awareness and the number of unique and returning visitors. Further, it keeps the commissioner

and the conference in the mind of the target audience at all times – also when the event is over, the planning for the new event has started. As earlier discussed, it is very important to have returning visitors and good quality content to build strong awareness and nourish the sales funnel. It is also of importance to promote the content via the established Social Media channels Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google +. Once the event comes closer, the marketing communication should focus again more on the conference and the topic. The author recommends having speaker guest blogs and backlinks as well as an active speaker endorsement on Social Media. To attract more visitors, the author recommends starting several Social Media campaigns to promote the conference and for example early bird sign up discounts and similar.

Further, as per request of the commissioner, this thesis should also serve as a guide book, so the author also includes the initial planning phase and the detailed marketing plan. The event is held in September each year, but with varying dates. The plan is worked out below on a weekly basis. The daily schedule will be added to the commissioner's internal marketing and communications tool. The author combined the internal intelligence and the input of the experts to create the plan below. Since the author is an employee of the commissioner and the event organizing team the author gathered a lot of information from meetings and improvement discussions with the Chief Marketing Officer of the commissioner. Further, the literature review and the expert input motivated the creation of a digital marketing and communications strategy to make the event a truly global success.

As previously mentioned the event takes place each year in September with varying dates. As it turned out during the expert interviews, the planning for after the event should already be included in the plan. The following plan for the event hence starts in November each year.

## **NOVEMBER:**

- The search of the new venue for the next year is finalized
- The timing of the event is set
- The event topic is set

## **DECEMBER:**

- The venue, timing and topic is presented to the Management for approval
- Internal kick-off meeting is set up with all departments that are included
- After Management approval, venue, timing and topic is announced company wide

## **JANUARY:**

- **First week:** venue booking, partner package creation, Logo design
- **Second week:** ticket sale goes live, Logos in all Social Media channels are updated, recap of last year's event and the first press release is written
- **Third week:** event website is updated with new Logo, ticket sale, new venue, recap of the past event and general website updates
- **Fourth week:** Hackathon theme is set and keynote speakers are confirmed

Table 4 lines out the exact content placement and promotional strategy on a weekly basis. In the internal planning systems, the Chief Marketing Officer will decide dates for each action that is described below on a weekly basis. The following plan summarizes the actions February to August of each year.

Social Media and blog posts with focus on the events topic, for example IoT, AI, Smart City

Table 4: Digital marketing and communications strategy

Month	Daily	Bi-weekly (week 1&3)	Bi-weekly (week 2&4)
FEB	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter partner package distribution and invitation process	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts
MAR	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter Announcement of keynote speaker (week 1) Announcement of next speaker	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 PR (week 4)
APR	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 PR (week 4) Pro-active invitations for Universities and developers for the hackathon
	Actively promoting ticket sale on all channels		
MAY	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter paid social media campaigns to promote early bird sign up (week 3)	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 PR (week 4) paid social media campaigns to promote hackathon to students and offer student discount / free participation
	Actively promoting ticket sale on all channels		



Month	Daily	Bi-weekly (week 1&3)	Bi-weekly (week 2&4)
JUN	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter 1 PR about final speaker line up (week 3) with Outbrain distribution	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts
	Actively promoting ticket sale on all channels		
JUL	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 PR (week 4)
	Actively promoting ticket sale on all channels		
AUG	2 tweets	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts paid advertisement on Social Media with call to action for ticket sales	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 PR about final speaker line-up (week 4)  if still tickets available, paid advertisement on Social Media with special discount (week4)
	Actively promoting ticket sale on all channels		
SEP	5 tweets, live tweets from event	4 LinkedIn posts 2 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts 1 external newsletter  Biggest Social Media and traffic generation campaigns to create Media attention (week 1)  1PR, event recap and thank you messages to speakers, external newsletter (week 3)	4 LinkedIn posts 3 blog posts 3 Facebook posts 3 Google plus posts  EVENT (week2)  Thank you emails to all attendees and call to action to subscribe to mailing list for the next event (week4)

## 4.5 Actions

As described in the tactical approach, there is a vital need for more content creation. The responsibility for the content hub the digital marketing and communication strategy and its implementation will be in the marketing team of the commissioner. After discussing with the commissioner, the author, the Communications Officer at BaseN, will be in charge of the overall planning and content creation. The above outlined weekly plan will be kept in the company's internal tool as illustrated in figure 13. The system in figure 13 is based on a daily delivery schedule. For the weekends, the author takes the responsibility to schedule social media or blog posts. All platforms that are considered offer the integrated feature of pre-scheduling content and posts so the constant flow will keep running.

To fulfil the tactics outlined in the previous chapter, the author has identified internal resources for producing additional content. Further, the author herself will be the main contributor. However, with the increasing amount of needed content and promotion, the author identified that there is a need for an additional resource, a content writer, who will focus on content creation and distribution. The author will initiate a weekly meeting to review the past week and plan for the week ahead. Further, there will be a monthly review with the Chief Marketing Officer to present the results discuss the monthly budgeting and new KPI's.

The responsibility will be mainly distributed internally. There are in total three internal resources that will be needed to cope with the amount of blogposts that are requested per week/ month. The author will handle graphic creation and run budgeted marketing and communication campaigns to the target audience. Further, the author will be responsible for writing Press Releases and their distribution to the Media. The new resource will focus on the day-to-day actions on Social Media and also write blog posts and help to schedule everything for the weekends. Further, the new resource will be assigned additional tasks such as graphic creation.

Further, the author will be responsible for all deadlines and goals being met as well as coordinating the internal planning with the different teams, for example the technology team when looking at the design of the hackathon and the sales team to invite custom-

ers, prospects, partners and other business contacts. Also, the partner package will be designed by the author and the Chief Marketing Officer and distributed by the Sales team.

Further, there is the additional need for a trainee who will help to support the author in terms of sending invitations and following up with the Sales team on the sent invitations. The trainee will further handle the registration of the commissioner's personal guest and support the author in other defined areas that are concerning the event planning, reaching from venue scouting to catering options. The author is also responsible for the financial planning of the event and the trainee will offer support as needed.

When looking at external resources, there is currently no plan for this from the commissioner's side. After the next conference, the commissioner and the author will review the outcome and decide upon the need for an external recruitment. However, when solely looking at the media distribution, there is a need for a PR agency that helps with the pitching until the conference is well established and receives media attention by itself.

## **4.6 Control**

Naturally, it is of paramount importance to control the new strategy and measure the outcome to define the success. The KPI's are defined by the Chief Marketing Officer and the author will report the campaign outcomes on a monthly basis.

The measurements will be taken from each platforms own analytical services as well as from google analytics. The traffic will be carefully monitored to identify the number of unique and returning visitors. Further, an increase in follower counts will also be taken into consideration. The author will also take the PESO model when presenting the KPI's as this model helps identifying which part of the PESO model has been increased. The author will measure predominantly the shared and earned media as the owned and paid media serves to increase the first two. The KPI's will be set by the Chief Marketing Officer of the commissioner and will help in improving the overall digital marketing and communication strategy.

Further, as previously discussed, the strategy will be carried out mainly using Social Media tools. After the initial meeting with the Chief Marketing Officer, the exact target KPI's will be discussed and decided upon, however, the author will present on a monthly basis the campaign results, both for paid and for unpaid media. Each channel should see constant growth as an evaluation of the strategy. The author will use the analytic tools of the different channels to measure direct engagement and reach of the posts, but will also focus on google analytics to see which channel creates the best possible outcome. Once this is examined, the commissioner may decide on allocating more budget to the best performing channels.

Another key point when looking at the control part of the SOSTAC model is that this is an ongoing process and should be constantly optimized. The optimization will be identified in the monthly review meetings with the Chief Marketing Officer and carried out by adjusting the strategy.

As this is the first time that the annual conference has a solid marketing and communications plan, the evaluation will be carried out by the following structure:

- Current situational analysis
- Daily data collection
- Weekly / monthly report creation
- Monthly review meetings with the Chief Marketing Officer
- Monthly evaluation of goals and achievements with the Chief Marketing Officer
- Optimization based on data collection

Based on the expert feedback discussed in chapter 6, the user experience should also be focused on. Therefore, as previously mentioned, the commissioner will integrate the possibility to sign up for a newsletter and once per month there will be a pop-up feedback form to hear from the actual users how they like the content and ultimately how they liked the event. Further, there will be a gathering of attendee feedback during the conference that can be left anonymously by filling out papers.

## 5. EXPERT INTERVIEWS

The expert interviews have been carried out as part of the empirical part of the study. The expert input was delivered by Ms. Sandra Proske, Director of Communications and Brand at F-Secure and Mr. Anders Viden, Vice President of Product at BaseN North America Inc.. Mr Viden has previously overseen global events at Cisco for more than 15 years. The input of Ms. Proske and Mr. Viden has been very valuable and has guided the strategic and tactical planning of the author while developing the marketing and communication strategy for the commissioner. The experts gave professional insights of developing a thorough marketing a communication strategy and helped in understanding the different approaches. The experts have over 15 years of experience in event management and marketing and communication to successfully initiate and sustain an iconic event.

Ms. Proske was aware of the SOSTAC planning model and confirmed that this is the basic framework used when planning an annual event. Further she agreed to the PESO model as part of the measurement and the highlighted the importance of the 4 C's model when looking solely at the development of the overall communication. She illuminated the importance of concise and clear messaging at any point. Further, she had valuable feedback on the evaluation process of a successful strategy by highlighting that when looking at event planning and the development of the strategy there are three main things to take into consideration:

- Generation of brand awareness
- Generation of visibility (measured impact with PESO model)
- Strengthening the lead funnel as secondary goal

Further, she also confirmed the importance of the SOSTAC model in particular when evaluating the strategic approach and measuring the outcome. She further confirmed the author's A/B testing idea in order to provide the best quality results to the audience (user experience). Ms. Proske brought in also a different approach from the author's original thinking by suggesting to also look at the competition and the conduct a word cloud

analysis. She suggested several measurement and integration tools such as Salesforce's Pardot or Meltwater's Social Share measurement tool.

Another very interesting idea was to carry out internal and external questionnaires to ensure quality. She also mentioned that if both, attendees and internal personnel have been satisfied with the event, it is usually a good sign to be on the right track in building a global iconic event. Further, she confirmed a lot of the authors findings in advertising the event. Ms. Proske informed that she primarily looks for online advertisement opportunities and named Social Media and online media (PR) as the dominant channels to create awareness and visibility. In her opinion, it is of importance to heavily advertise the keynote speaker.

As a conclusion, she emphasized the importance of a thorough planning in accordance to the SOSTAC model, while using the PESO model merely as an option to measure the impact. Further, she strongly highlighted that it is of utmost importance to also plan the activities that must be carried out after the event well in advance, as per her experience, without a proper planning for after the event there will be a great loss of media attention and share of voice as it will take too long for the actions to happen if they have not been pre-planned and incorporated when the overall marketing and communications strategy is developed.

Another key point that was outlined by both experts is the fact that timing and location are as well of utmost importance. Both experts recommended to carefully screen the event scene and make sure that the event is not taking place at the same time as many other events take place. Regarding the location, both experts agreed that when the event planning starts, the event manager must assure that it is a place that is easily reachable from all over the world. Both interviews mentioned that they would not attend an event that is not easily reachable and would require additional traveling apart of the main journey, for example one stopover on the way is still acceptable but for example taking the plane and then continue the journey for two more hours via public transport is not an option. Though this information is not directly linked to developing a marketing and communication strategy, it was certainly interesting to the author when planning the coming events of the commissioner.

It was very interesting to see that the approach of Mr. Viden differed in a couple of scenarios from Ms. Proske's approach. While Ms. Proske predominantly focused on online advertisement via Social Media and online media (online magazines) Mr. Viden highlighted that based on his experience, email marketing was the key to a successful event strategy. He mentioned that email marketing tools such as mailchimp offer integrated analytic tools that allow the marketer to see immediately whether the emails have been of interest to the target audience or not. However, the author sees the value in both directions, and decided to integrate email marketing when developing the marketing and communication strategy for the commissioner.

However, he agrees with Ms. Proske that the marketing and communication strategy is of utmost importance when initiating a new event. He emphasized like Ms. Proske that the use of buzzwords is a good idea and also the investigation of the competition is helpful when looking at the own event. Further, both experts also agree on setting up the follow-up strategy and incorporating this in the overall marketing and communication strategy of the event. Both experts also agree on the importance of defining an audience and targeted messaging. Due to their experience, attendees have been rating the event value a lot higher when they met like-minded people or other people who have the same problems as themselves.

Another important point that Mr. Viden brought in was the statement that when deciding upon hosting an event and developing a marketing and communication strategy around it, it should always be connected to the hosting company. Further, he highlighted that to reach iconic status with an event, it is of utmost importance to have good quality in everything, not only the messaging strategy. He emphasized that all material that is produced for the event should be top notch, in particular when communicating the event online it is important to give a very professional image right from the beginning. Further, he stated that the same applies to the event on site, having high quality speakers, marketing materials and anything else that makes the event experience a good one. He urges, that there is no point in starting an event otherwise.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to develop a digital marketing and communication strategy for the commissioner's annual SPIME event. The study was carried out by researching different marketing and communication channels and strategies as well as by conducting expert interviews to get in-depth insights. Further, the author's findings will serve as guidebook for the commissioner for all future events. The author carried out a thorough literature review and an in-depth study of different marketing and communication tools that can be used to develop the right strategy to establish a global iconic event.

The author's theoretical framework consisted mainly of the SOSTAC model to develop a digital marketing and communications strategy for the commissioner. Further, the present study was also guided by the PESO model to measure the results and the 4C's model to assure that the digital messaging is concise and clear, which was also highlighted many times in the expert interviews. The study started out with an examination of the current situation. A thorough analysis came to the result that there has not yet been a clear digital marketing and communication plan for the annual SPIME conference. Regarding these findings, the study serves as well as a future guide book for the digital marketing and communication plan for the annual conference.

Next, the author defined, together with the commissioner, where the commissioner wants to be in the future. The author and the commissioner emphasize that the goal is to usher the annual SPIME conference to an iconic event.

The author investigated what digital strategies were used this far and how the tactical and strategic approach could be improved. During the investigation, the author found that the commissioner has a good and established online presence and fulfils all needs for implementing a digital marketing and communication strategy. The Social Media accounts have been established long time ago and all channels are continuously updated. As shown in figure 13, there is already an internal planning tool for the marketing team that follows a timeline and defines actions. However, the author found that the planning for the SPIME conference needs a more defined structure guided by the SOSTAC model which was also highlighted in the expert interviews. After developing the STOP model in figure 12 and conducting a SWOT analysis for the commissioner's



event in table 2 and competing events in table 3 the author was able to identify the pain points as well as the unique selling point which guided the strategic development of the digital marketing and communication strategy further.

After the strategic approach with the three different models was identified, the author worked out a thorough one year plan for the commissioner's conference. As found out in the expert interviews, the planning phase of the next event starts about one month after the event was held. With this input and the SOSTAC model as a strategy guide, the author defined the different stages and actions that should be taken in these stages, outlined in chapter 4.4. The commissioner and the author agreed on the implementation of a content hub that will at the same time serve as the event's webpage. The author further defined the different planning stages per month and identified what should happen at a specific point of time. The author additionally saw the need for setting precise KPI's to measure the performance of the strategy and take corrective actions if necessary. To measure the KPI's, the author suggests regular review meetings with the Chief Marketing Officer to look at the ROI. When reviewing the results, the author refers to the PE-SO model as a start as it was defined important by the experts and the commissioner to increase the shared, earned and owned media reach.

The author further concluded that the commissioner has a competitive advantage that should be used more in the future. BaseN Corporation introduced the term SPIME to the world years ago (and also owns the trademark) which gives the competitive edge to the commissioner. The term spime serves as the unique selling point, another factor that the experts considered as very important for a digital marketing and communications strategy. BaseN highlights that spime is just the next step in technology to follow the current hype about digital twins. BaseN stands out as an innovative and visionary company who is always at the forefront of emerging technology. With this competitive advantage, the annual SPIME conference has the best chances to be the leading iconic event of the future.

## 6.1. Future research implications and recommendations

After the thorough analysis of the current situation and the future planning, the author strongly recommends to the commissioner to hire another employee to cope with the workload that was defined in the digital marketing and communications plan. To implement the strategy that was developed in this study, the author sees a clear need for an additional human resource that preferably should have a background in event management and excellent writing skills. This could be a temporary or permanent human resources or the commissioner could use an agency to outsource part of the work if necessary. The author has not considered internal talents that could play an active part in realizing the digital marketing and communications plan.

When looking at the Influencer Marketing in chapter 3.2.5 the author recommends investigating this in the future and for the B2B perspective, but for the time being the author does not consider Influencer Marketing relevant for the conference.

As the Meetup discussed in chapter 3.2.7 serves as kind of an event itself, the author strongly recommends the Meetup page for active promotion of an event. However, Meetups are mainly free of charge and as mentioned in the SWOT analysis in table 2 the commissioner seeks to be commercially successful with the event in the future, so the Meetup should be only considered for an event promotion.

In recent discussions about the development of Social Media in the news, especially with regards to cases of manipulation, the author had a thorough discussion with the commissioner's CEO who is very acquainted in technology. Recent media reports have shown that giant corporations such as Unilever are currently thinking to withdraw all budget for Social Media advertisement, particularly from Facebook and Google (CNBC, Sam Meredith, 2018). Further, there have been severe allegations towards Facebook and their data mining policies (Venturebeat, Paul Sawers, 2018).

The author strongly recommends keeping the developed marketing and communication strategy as agile as possible as there is the chance of a fundamental change in Social Media and online advertising. Also with the rise of the IoT, there will be a lot of new ways to market about everything to the end-users. As the commissioner is on the fore-

front of technology development, the author considers it a necessity to always look at new edge technologies and their value in terms of marketing and communication.

The author recommends therefore to follow the basic frameworks such as the SOSTAC model and the 4C's and implement a thorough schedule and time frame, but also recommends looking at new possibilities that arise together with the new developments in technology. Artificial Intelligence might offer several different tools that will be used in the future (Vaish, 2014). However, the author thinks that planning models such as the SOSTAC model will always serve well for building a solid framework, but with the emergence of new technology and the IoT the commissioner must ensure to leave enough flexibility to the digital marketing and communications plan to adjust when the results show that the market trend goes to a different direction.

## KÄLLOR / REFERENCE

Ansari, Sepita. 2017, *Content Marketing: Das Praxis-Handbuch für Unternehmen (German Edition)* ISBN-10 395845044X

Brown, Duncan, Hayes, Nick. 2008, *Influencer Marketing: Who Really Influences Your Customers?* Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann. ISBN 9780750686006

Coombe, Will. 2017, *3 Months to No.1: The "No-Nonsense" SEO Playbook for Getting Your Website Found on Google, Kindle Edition*, ISBN-10 1522005676

Dietrich, Gini. 2014, *Spin Sucks: Communication and Reputation Management in the Digital Age*, ISBN-10 078974886X

Dodson, Ian. 2016, *The Art of Digital Marketing: The Definitive Guide to Creating Strategic, Targeted, and Measurable Online Campaigns* ISBN-10 1119265703

Eisenberg, B. 2010, *CALL TO ACTION: Secret Formulas to Improve Online Results, Kindle Edition*, ISBN-10 078521965X

Eschbacher, Ines. 2017, *Content Marketing - Das Workbook: Schritt für Schritt zu erfolgreichem Content*, ISBN-10 3958455166

Flick, Uwe, von Kardorff, Ernst, Steinke, Ines. 2005, *Qualitative Forschung: Ein Handbuch* ISBN-10 3499556286

Gillin, Paul, Moore, Geoffrey. 2009, *The New Influencers: A Marketer's Guide to the New Social Media*, ISBN 9781884956942

Gläser, Jochen, Laudel, Grit. 2009, *Experteninterviews und qualitative Inhaltsanalyse: als Instrumente rekonstruierender* ISBN-10 3531156845

Goodson, Scott. 2012, *Uprising: How to Build a Brand--and Change the World--By Sparking Cultural Movements* ISBN-10 0071782826

Hanly, Laura. 2016, *Content That Converts: How to Build a Profitable and Predictable B2B Content Marketing Strategy*, Kindle version ASIN: B01LYPNLWK

Hauser, Tobias, Wenz, Christian. 2012, *Website-Optimierung - Das Handbuch: SEO, Usability, Performance, Social Media Marketing, Google AdWords & Analytics* ISBN-10 3827329965

Hilker, Claudia. 2017, *Content Marketing in der Praxis: Ein Leitfaden - Strategie, Konzepte und Praxisbeispiele für B2B- und B2C-Unternehmen (German Edition)* ISBN-10 3658138823

Hinton, Sam, Hjorth, Larissa. 2013, *Understanding Social Media (Understanding Contemporary Culture series)* ISBN-10 144620121X

Jobber, David, Fahy, John. 2009, *Foundations of Marketing*, ISBN-10 9780077121907

Karge, Aysun. 2013, *Mit Facebook zum Erfolg: Wie können Unternehmen das moderne Kommunikationsinstrument für ihre Marketingziele nutzen?* ISBN-10 3954252600

Kotler, Philip, Kartayaja, Hermawan. 2017, *Marketing 4.0: Der Leitfaden für das Marketing der Zukunft*, Campus Verlag, ISBN-10: 3593507633

Levin, Aron. 2018, *The 2018 Influencer Marketing Handbook: What 4,000+ collaborations on YouTube & Instagram have taught us about the future of digital advertising* ISBN-10 1389052540

Luttrell Regina, Capizzo Luke. 2018, *The PR Agency Handbook* ISBN-10 1506329055

Luttrell, Regina M, Capizzo, Luke W. 2018, *Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach 1st Edition, Kindle Edition*, ISBN-10 150633251X

Meerman Scott, David. 2015, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use Social Media, Online Video, Mobile Applications, Blogs, News Releases, and Viral Marketing to Reach Buyers Directly* ISBN-10 1119070481

Mühlenbeck, Frank. 2016, *content Marketing management - 100 Praxis-Tipps wie Sie mit der richtigen Content-Strategie Ihre Markenbekanntheit steigern, den Web-Traffic erhöhen und Ihre Produkte besser verkaufen* ISBN-10 3741205621

Mumby, Dennis K. 2012, *Organizational Communication: A Critical Approach*, Kindle Edition ISBN-10 141296315X

Oppel, Kai. 2014: *Crashkurs PR: So gewinnen Sie alle Medien für sich*, ISBN-10 3406659780

Pulizzi, Joe. 2013, *Epic Content Marketing: How to Tell a Different Story, Break through the Clutter, and Win More Customers by Marketing Less* ISBN-10 0071819894

Rodriguez, Alex & Rodriguez, Nathan. 2014, *Digital Bacon*, ISBN-10 0990642402

Schneider, Thorsten, Dr. 2016, *SEO Praxisbuch 2017: Top Rankings in Google & Co. durch Suchmaschinenoptimierung* ISBN-10 1541014030

Schröer, Stefanie. 2017, *Quick Guide Online-Marketing für Einzelkämpfer und Kleinunternehmer: Wie Sie Ihre Kunden online finden, begleiten und begeistern*, Kindle version ASIN: B077NDNFQ1

Steinke, Lorenz. 2015, *Die neue Öffentlichkeitsarbeit: Wie gute Kommunikation heute funktioniert: Strategien - Instrumente – Fallbeispiele*, ISBN-10 3658064226

Sterling, Bruce. 2005, *Shaping Things*. ISBN 0-262-69326-7

Szabo, Peter W. 2017, *User Experience Mapping: Enhance UX with User Story Map, Journey Map and Diagrams*, Kindle version

Uys, Ronel. 2010, *Because Your Online Presence Matters*, ISBN-10 1453584005

Wieding, Andreas. 2016, *SEO Crashkurs: 55 Powertipps für gute Suchmaschinenoptimierung und mehr Besucher über Google und Co.*, Kindle Edition, ISBN-10 1533382476

Wright, Travis, Snook, Chris J. 2016, *Digital Sense: The Common Sense Approach to Effectively Blending Social Business Strategy, Marketing Technology, and Customer Experience*, ISBN-10 1119291704

Wulf, Tim. 2017, *Influencer Marketing. Empirische Analyse eines neuen Marketingphänomens*, ISBN-10 3668488487

Young, A. 2014, *Brand Media Strategy: Integrated Communications Planning in the Digital Era* ISBN-10 1137279567

### **Online Sources**

Alexa Internet. 2018 <https://www.alexa.com/about>. retrieved February 10, 2018

Alexa Internet. 2018 <https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/facebook.com> retrieved February 2, 2018

Arnold, Bob, think with Google. 2015 <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/inside-google-marketing-creative-effective-banner-ads/> retrieved February 10, 2018

BaseN Corporation. 2018 <https://www.basen.net>, retrieved throughout 2017-2018

Booth, Robert, Forbes. 2014 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gregorymcneal/2014/06/28/facebook-manipulated-user-news-feeds-to-create-emotional-contagion/#6f9d4cd239dc> retrieved January 5, 2018

Booth, Robert, The Guardian. 2018

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/29/facebook-users-emotions-news-feeds> retrieved February 5, 2018

Bowman, Matt, Forbes. 2017 *Video Marketing: The Future Of Content Marketing*,

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/02/03/video-marketing-the-future-of-content-marketing/#2459e35e6b53> , retrieved January 10, 2018

Carlson, Nicholas, Business Insider. 2010 *"At Last — The Full Story Of How Facebook Was Founded"*. retrieved January 7, 2018

Carter, Meg, Fast Company. 2014 <https://www.fastcompany.com/3031654/how-volvo-trucks-pulled-off-an-epic-split-and-a-game-changing-campaign>, retrieved January 8, 2018

Chaffey, Dave, Smart Insights. 2016 <https://www.smartinsights.com/digital-marketing-strategy/sostac-model/> retrieved January 1, 2018

Clarke, Gavin. 2017

[https://www.theregister.co.uk/2017/04/03/android\\_beats\\_windows\\_on\\_internet/](https://www.theregister.co.uk/2017/04/03/android_beats_windows_on_internet/), retrieved January 16, 2018

Constine, Josh, Techcrunch. 2017 <https://techcrunch.com/2017/06/27/facebook-2-billion-users/>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Cutts, Matt, WordPress.tv. 2009 <https://wordpress.tv/2009/05/30/matt-cutts-google-sf09/>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Facebook Business. 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/282701548912119>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook Business. 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/952192354843755>, retrieved December 10, 2017



Facebook Business. 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/facebook-page-have-conversations>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook Business. 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/set-up-facebook-page>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook. 2017 [https://www.facebook.com/help/1629740080681586/?helpref=hc\\_fnav](https://www.facebook.com/help/1629740080681586/?helpref=hc_fnav), retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook. 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/help/188157731232424?helpref=topq>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook. 2017 [https://www.facebook.com/help/282489752085908/?helpref=hc\\_fnav](https://www.facebook.com/help/282489752085908/?helpref=hc_fnav), retrieved December 10, 2017

Facebook. 2018  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/community/question/?id=982510665149511>,  
retrieved, March 5, 2018

Forsman & Bodenfors. 2013 <https://www.fb.se/work/volvo-trucks/the-epic-split-feat-van-damme-live-test-6>, retrieved, February 5, 2018

Goodson, Scott, Forbes. 2012 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/marketshare/2012/03/05/if-youre-not-paying-for-it-you-become-the-product/#e1e525b5d6ee> retrieved January 5, 2018

Google Search Console Help. 2018  
<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7451184?hl=en>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Google+ help. 2018  
[https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/7001996?visit\\_id%3D1-636185498138178656-](https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/7001996?visit_id%3D1-636185498138178656-)

[828531069%26p%3Dbrand\\_accounts%26hl%3Den%26rd%3D1](https://support.google.com/plus/answer/1710600?hl=en&ref_topic=6320366), retrieved January 1, 2018

Google+ help. 2018

[https://support.google.com/plus/answer/1710600?hl=en&ref\\_topic=6320366](https://support.google.com/plus/answer/1710600?hl=en&ref_topic=6320366), retrieved January 1, 2018

Google+ help. 2018

[https://support.google.com/plus/answer/6320405?hl=en&ref\\_topic=6320366](https://support.google.com/plus/answer/6320405?hl=en&ref_topic=6320366), retrieved January 1, 2018

Google+. 2018 <https://plus.google.com/+googleplus/posts/V5XkYQYYJgy> retrieved February 11, 2018

Hanlon, Annmarie, Smart Insights. 2015 <https://www.smartinsights.com/marketing-planning/marketing-models/4cs-marketing-model/> retrieved, January 1, 2018

Help Center, Twitter. 2018 <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#tweets>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Help Center, Twitter. 2018 <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#adding-content-to-your-tweet>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Help Center, Twitter. 2018 <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#search-and-trends>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Help Center, Twitter. 2018 <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#direct-messages>, retrieved February 2, 2018

<https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/facebook-ads-basics>, retrieved December 10, 2017

Hyppönen, Mikko, re:publica. 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbF0sVdOjRw>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Lliff, Rebekah, Mashable. 2014 <http://mashable.com/2014/12/05/public-relations-industry/#VRMqob98UOqm>, retrieved January 10, 2018

International Telecommunications Union. 2018 <https://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/ict/> retrieved January 21, 2018

Internet of Things World. 2018 <https://tmt.knect365.com/iot-world/> retrieved March 15, 2018

Internet World Stats. 2017 <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm> retrieved, January 21 2018

IoT Tech Expo Global. 2018 <https://www.iottechexpo.com/global/> retrieved, March 15, 2018

LinkedIn Corporation. 2015 [\*"LinkedIn - About"\*](#). Retrieved February 10, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6156/6171/50999>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin?lang=en>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6001/6018>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6001/6018>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6073/6089>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6073/6089>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn Help. 2018 <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6156/6171>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn. 2018 <https://about.linkedin.com>, retrieved January 1, 2018

LinkedIn. 2018 <https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/ad-targeting> retrieved February 10, 2018

Meetup. 2018 <https://www.meetup.com/about/>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Meredith, Sam, CNBC. 2018 <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/13/unilever-tells-facebook-and-google-drain-the-swamp-or-lose-advertising.html>, retrieved February 20, 2018

Middleton Hughes, Arthur, Harvard Business Review. 2012 <https://hbr.org/2012/08/why-email-marketing-is-king>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Optimizely. 2018 <https://www.optimizely.com/optimization-glossary/ab-testing/>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Optimizely.com. 2018 <https://www.optimizely.com/optimization-glossary/website-optimization/> retrieved March 5, 2018

Outbrain Help Center. 2018 <https://www.outbrain.com/help/advertisers/>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Outbrain. 2018 <https://www.outbrain.com/about/company/>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Pew Research Center <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/> retrieved, February 2, 2018

Redsicker, Patricia, Social Media Examiner. 2014

<https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/photos-generate-engagement-research/> retrieved February 3, 2018

Russel, Paul. 1990's <http://prsmith.org/sostac/> retrieved, January 11, 2018

Sawers, Paul, Venturebeat. 2018 <https://venturebeat.com/2018/03/20/facebook-and-mark-zuckerberg-face-investigations-over-cambridge-analytica-data-privacy-allegations/>, retrieved March 22, 2018

Singer, Natasha, New York Times. 2016

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/06/technology/new-item-on-the-college-admission-checklist-linkedin-profile.html> retrieved February 1, 2018

Singer, Natasha, The New York Times. 2016 *"New Item on the College Admission Checklist: LinkedIn Profile"*. Retrieved February 15, 2018

The Turing Test. 1950 <http://www.turing.org.uk/scrapbook/test.html> retrieved, March 9, 2018

Think with Google. 2015 <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/youtube/schedule-your-content/> retrieved March 15

Triberr Knowledge Base. 2018 <http://help.triberr.com/knowledge-base/>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Triberr. 2018 <https://triberr.com>, retrieved January 10, 2018

Twitter Ads, Commissioner account. 2018

[https://ads.twitter.com/ads\\_manager/18ce53wil07/campaigns/?endDate=2018-03-26&ref=en-btc-basics-usingtwitter-footer&startDate=2018-03-20](https://ads.twitter.com/ads_manager/18ce53wil07/campaigns/?endDate=2018-03-26&ref=en-btc-basics-usingtwitter-footer&startDate=2018-03-20) retrieved, March 26, 2018

Twitter Ads, Commissioner account. 2018 <https://ads.twitter.com/en/help>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Twitter for Business, Twitter. 2018 <https://business.twitter.com/en/basics/intro-twitter-for-business.html>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Twitter for Business, Twitter. 2018 <https://business.twitter.com/en.html>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Twitter Inc. 2012 *"Twitter turns six"*. retrieved February 2, 2018

Twitter. 2018 <https://business.twitter.com/en/resources/follower-insights.html> retrieved January 12, 2018

Twitter. 2018 <https://business.twitter.com/en/resources/follower-insights.html> retrieved January 3, 2018

Twitter. 2018 <https://business.twitter.com/en/video-on-twitter.html> retrieved January 3, 2018

Twitter. 2018 [https://files.shareholder.com/downloads/AMDA-2F526X/5978585419x0x970892/F9B4F616-659A-454B-89C6-28480DA53CCA/Q4\\_2017\\_Shareholder\\_Letter.pdf](https://files.shareholder.com/downloads/AMDA-2F526X/5978585419x0x970892/F9B4F616-659A-454B-89C6-28480DA53CCA/Q4_2017_Shareholder_Letter.pdf) retrieved February 20, 2018

Undisclosed author, Best Marketing. 2018 <http://www.best-marketing.eu/case-study-volvo-trucks-live-test-series/>, retrieved March 2, 2018

Undisclosed Guest post, Adweek. 2015 <http://www.adweek.com/digital/10-reasons-why-influencer-marketing-is-the-next-big-thing/>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Vaish, Aakrit, Haptik. 2017 <http://bwdisrupt.businessworld.in/article/-We-Plan-to-Double-Down-on-Localisation-with-in-Artificial-Intelligence-Says-Aakrit-Vaish-Haptik/22-11-2017-132495/>, retrieved March 10, 2018

Vaish, Aakrit, Haptik. 2017 <https://medium.com/haptik-inc/how-chatbots-and-ai-are-changing-the-way-enterprises-communicate-with-their-audience-a8fa15a3417e>, retrieved February 2, 2018

Van der Meulen, Rob. 2017 <https://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3598917> retrieved March 7, 2018

Westervelt, Robert. 2013 ["Popular WordPress E-Commerce Plugins Riddled With Security Flaws - Page: 1"](#). retrieved March 9, 2018

WordPress. 2018 <https://en.support.wordpress.com>, retrieved January 10, 2018

## **BILAGOR / APPENDICES**

### **Appendices 1**

Please state your name, company and position director

How would you rate your experience in digital marketing and communication strategy for global events?

What are the planning models you have used?

How do you define a successful digital marketing and communication event strategy?

Did you ever use SOSTAC, 4C or PESO?

What are the tools and tactics that you find most relevant for developing a digital marketing communication strategy to create event awareness? Are you using them frequently?

What made them successful in your opinion?

What tactics have you used in digital marketing communication strategy for events

Which of those have proven to be the most successful?

What catches your attention when you see event advertisement?

Where would you like to see the event advertisement?

Where do you place them?

How would you develop a strategy for a new event in your company? Which of the models you are likely to use?

Do you use content strategy to raise awareness and create conversions for the event?

Can you tell about your experience in content placement?

What are in your opinion the successors of good content placement?

What kind of content strategy and tools do you recommend for awareness creation for a global event



If you look back, what are the lesson learnt?

Could you share the best practices for a successful communication strategy to create awareness and drive conversions?

What do you think makes an event successful and what are the reasons for failure when looking at a marketing communication strategy?