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How to Gain Reviews in Amazon FBA for a New Private Label Product in 2018

Business Administration 2018

TIIVISTELMÄ

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Halusin tehdä tutkimusta tästä aiheesta, koska saatavilla ei ollut paljon ajankohtaista tietoa. Tavoitteenani on alkaa myymään omia tuotteitani Fulfillment (FBA) by Amazon palvelun kautta ensi kesänä ja tästä syystä minun on löydettävä päivitettyä tietoa arvostelujen hankkimisesta.

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on löytää parhaat mahdolliset strategiat joilla voidaan hankkia varmistettuja positiivisia arvosteluja uudelle oman merkin tuotteelle Amazon FBA:ssa. Teoriassa käsitellään arvostelujen saamiseen liittyviä eri osa-alueita, jotta saadaan muodostettua syvä ymmärrys aiheesta. Käytin paljon eri lähteitä, sillä kohtasin ongelman, että monen lähteen tiedot olivat vanhoja eivätkä enää vastaa uusia säännöksiä.

Opinnäytetyön teorian pohjalta loin käsikirjan: Miten saada arvosteluja uudelle oman merkin tuotteelle Amazon FBA:ssa, joka vastaa Amazonin uusiin sääntöihin jotka ovat päivitetty vuonna 2018.

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ABSTRACT

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The aim was to study this subject because there was not a lot of information available that is updated and accurate. My aim is to start selling my own private label products on Amazon FBA so I needed to find out updated information.

The goal of this thesis was to find the best strategies to gain positive verified reviews for a new private label product. On the theory part, I'm looking from different points of views at all of the components that affect getting reviews to truly understand how the system works. I used a variety of different sources because of the challenge that a lot of information is old and not accurate anymore.

As a result of the theories, I created a Handbook called How to Gain Reviews in Amazon FBA for a New Private Label Product that is updated to respond to Amazon's new regulations in 2018.

Keywords Product reviews, private label, Flulfillment by Amazon

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1 INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is How to Gain Reviews in Amazon FBA for a private label product in 2018. Personally this subject interests me a lot because I want to start selling on Amazon this summer. I choose this subject because there was not a lot of updated information available.

Earlier before getting reviews for new private label products was easier as sellers could pay for reviews or use review exchange groups. When Amazon changed their review policies and caught up sellers acting against the policies many sellers lost all of their reviews and that lead to them losing their product listing. Some sellers were banned and some even sued because of violating the rules. Now Amazon has set new guidelines according to their review policy in 2018.

This thesis, we will be looking for solutions that are following the new regulations of Amazon for gaining reviews. The research problem also covers other questions: Is it possible to get the first product reviews without having any previous ones? What are the prohibited activities that a seller should avoid?

This is an important topic for sellers because when selling on Amazon marketplace reviews are a very important factor when trying to sell private label products. There has been a lot of confusion and speculation on different Amazon FBA seller communities online and I want to make the rules clear for myself so that I don't make any mistakes when starting my business.

The theory, will be introducing to the basics of marketing communication and selling on Amazon. Then looking closer how Amazon's algorithm works and what is the importance of Reviews on it and what the new Review Policies are. Finally explaining theories behind different strategies that help a seller to gain Reviews.

I used different sources for the theory part. However, I found it really challenging to use the sources as I needed to be really critical of the information because most of it had old information that is not updated to meet the new policies of Amazon. I picked theories from different sources that follows the new regulations and put them

all together.

As I'm not doing this thesis for any organization I can use the Handbook made for Amazon FBA sellers: How to gain reviews for a new private label product in 2018 when starting my own business. Anybody who is looking for solutions for gaining reviews in Amazon can benefit from this Handbook.

2 MARKETING COMMUNICATION

According to Åber (1993, 14) communication is a transmission of messages between the sender and the receiver. It is a process of exchanging verbal and non-verbal messages. The word communication comes from Latin *communicare*, to do together.

A communication process is a continuous process involving a two-way flow of information (P.R.Smith & Ze Zook 2011,124.) Communication happens through processes which have a start and an end point. The process consists of events that include the sender, receiver, message, information, channel, interference, feedback, interaction and contexts (Åberg 1993, 26-33).

Communication is separated to either planned or unplanned communication, controlled and uncontrolled communication. Planned communication messages are different Advertising, Public Relations (PR), Personal Sales, Visual Merchandising and Direct Marketing (Varey 2001, 118). The group of unplanned communication messages includes word of mouth communication (WOM), Unplanned publicity, Rumors that are starting from inside the company, for example, from the employees and Crisis management (Figure.1).

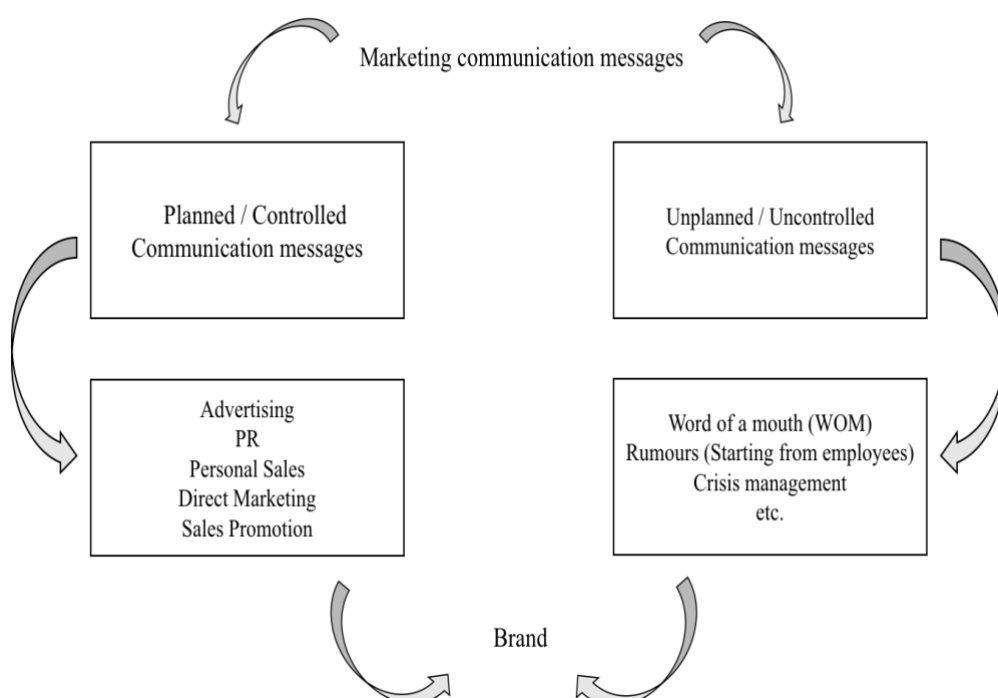


Figure.1 Marketing Communication

Varey (2001, 121) explains that both ways of communication - planned and unplanned- are important. However, because of the character of this thesis, I will be concentrate on word of mouth (WOM) communication as reviews are that type of communication messages. WOM is a form of unplanned communication. Arndt (1967, 2) defines WOM as "oral or written person to person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial concerning a brand, a product, or a service". In the perspective of marketing communication, this means that satisfied or unsatisfied customers tells other people their opinions on a company, product or service.

WOM is one of the best forms of advertising because it's credibility. (Frobes, 2014). People put their own reputation and relationships in line every time they are making a recommendation which gives a lot of value to the reviews and recommendations. (Frobes, 2014). WOMM is important, and according to a Nielsen's research, 92% of consumers believe that recommendations from friends and family are the best form of advertising. Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) and the American Marketing Association (AMA) made more research and found out in a recent study that 64% of marketing executives believe that WOM is the most effective way of marketing. (Frobes, 2014).

3 SELLING IN AMAZON IN GENERAL

E-commerce and selling online can be challenging. Ze Zook (2011, 444-445) describes different key factors for successful websites. The four main factors for satisfying customers on a webpage and keeping on getting traffic to it are high-quality content, easy navigation, quick downloading and updated information. He explains that issues with webpages like broken links, awful registration, confusing order forms and other errors on websites can affect brands strongly and kill the brand image.

These problems can partly be solved when selling on a platform where the traffic already exists like Amazon as it is the third biggest retailer in the world and the biggest internet retailer of all according to Amazon's webpage Amazon.com. Technical issues like errors and complicated actions on a webpage are minimized with Amazon as it is a trusted platform for consumers. "Trough Amazon, sellers can reach hundreds of millions of customers in the U.S alone" is said on Amazon.com. Amazon was founded by the owner, Jeff Bezos, in 1994. In 2018, Amazon.com serves 20 million consumers every single day and their annual income is over 34 billion dollars.

3.1 Fulfillment by Amazon

There are different ways of selling on Amazon. In this thesis, I will be concentrating on selling private label products by Fulfillment by Amazon (FBA). Fulfillment by Amazon is a very good way to start selling for new entrepreneurs with a minimized effort (Dune 2015. 125). FBA means that the entrepreneur can choose a product to sell, order it from the supplier and do marketing for their products and Amazon will take care of the rest. FBA service includes hosting product listings on their platform, filling all the orders for the seller, logistics like storing all the products in their warehouse and shipping them. Amazon FBA will also provide customer service and handle all the returns. Amazon FBA will do all of this by in return taking a small percentage from every product (Dune 2015. 138).

3.2 Private Labeling

50% of all the sellers on Amazon are selling private label items (Melamed 2016. 2.) There are different ways to sell through Amazon's platform, which have got their own advantages and disadvantages. Amazon.com defines private label products as products that are manufactured by a third-party manufacturer and after that, they are sold under a brand's name of choice. The private label brand owner will decide of everything that comes to the brand like the product, how it is produced, the packaging of the product, design and any additional features that the owner decides to use to make the product unique.

Sellers should be concentrating on building long-lasting businesses (Melamed 2016. 20). The private label sales model allows sellers to develop a long-lasting quality brand with excellent products. On one hand private labeling on Amazon has got a lot of potentials but, on the other hand there are different challenges to it. The challenges can be separated into three different topic groups which are sourcing, marketing, and pricing (Melamed 2016. 20). Next the work will look at the marketing of it and specifically at gaining reviews for marketing reasons.

4 OPTIMIZING

According to Melamed (2016. 3), product discoverability is important for an Amazon seller. It is a top priority because it means how easily shoppers will find the product. It works the same way as Google search: a product that is listed on the top shows up high on the search results and is easily discovered, which likely lead to more sales and sales are the ultimate goal for any seller.

4.1 Amazon Algorithm

Amazon search uses an algorithm that is built to serve the customers in the best possible ways. The goal is to give the shopper the right product that fits in the search terms and the keywords they use. Melamed (2016. 3-6) introduces factors that affect the Amazon search: Listing Optimization, Sales and Product Reviews which are all factors of the relevancy of a product. The product listing tells the customers what the product is by specifically describing it. Sales of a product are telling that people are buying it and there is an existing demand for it. Lastly, product reviews give the customers social proof that a product is what it claims to be with the recommendations of other people.

4.2 Listing optimization

Listing optimization includes optimizing keyword rankings with targeting relevant keywords and making sure that the listing is describing the product well (Melamed 2016. 6). In addition to keywords and product description Amazon provides a space with five bullet points for characterizing the main nature of the product. These five bullet points are viewed more than the product description itself. Therefore, it is a good place to describe the product's unique features which differentiate it from the competitors' products. The product description itself should have all the technical information that a consumer would need about the product, what it is made of and how the customers can use it. (Melamed 2016. 6)

4.2.1 Sales

The following factor that affects the searches on Amazon is sales. Amazon's sales data is used to help the customers to determine which products are the most relevant to the keywords they used. When determining that, looking at past sales is an effective way of measuring which product other customers have purchased with the same keywords, Melamed (2016, 6). Products in more competitive niches need more sales to rank as there are many other sellers with similar products. The Amazon algorithm will reward the sales looking at how recent they are, so for better ranking recent sales are effective as they have more weight on them than older sales in the history.

4.2.2 Product Reviews

The third factor for Amazon algorithm is Product Reviews. "Reviews are vital in driving sales to your product", Melamed (2016, 6) He introduces different factors that a seller should consider according to reviews.

The goal of gaining reviews is to gain positive reviews and minimize all the risks that the customer will become unhappy during their whole customer journey. High-quality product including great packaging and other factors. Excellent customer service and communication are keys to happier customers.

These theories, according to Melamed, are opening a point of view that when optimizing a private label product on Amazon it is crucial to understand how the Amazon algorithm works. When a seller understands how to maximize relevancy, maximize conversion and maximizing customer satisfaction they can take actions to benefit from the better listing of their product and get more sales. (Melamed, 2016, 6)

5 REVIEWS IN AMAZON

In the previous chapter, according to Melamed, it was understood that maximizing customer satisfaction is important for gaining product reviews and to get a higher ranking on Amazon's listing according to how their algorithm works. Now the work will look more deep at how reviews work for private label products on Amazon FBA.

Pain (2017, 29) tells that a review is a reward for an Amazon seller in itself. He continues by explaining that a sacrifice to earn this reward comes in a form of quality assurance, excellent service, warrants, and guarantees. Sellers need endorsements as reviews from old existing and new customers of their brand to win over other customers and to gain confidence in other consumers' eyes. It is crucial to earn these endorsements in a genuine way following the selling policies of Amazon. It is not a beneficial way to use tricks and frauds to gain reviews as there are many legal ways to earn them and make your brand sustainable in long-term. (Pain 2017, 28-29).

5.1 Importance of reviews

In the last chapter, Melamed's theories showed that reviews affect product listings because of Amazon's algorithm. Pain (2017, 32-33) introduces different reasons why reviews are important for an Amazon FBA private label seller's brand. The first reason is, as mentioned before that a review is an endorsement to potential new customers because reviews creates an image of social approval and confidence towards the product.

Another reason to look at is a psychological way of thinking of buyers. On one hand positive reviews attract more customers, on the other hand, negative product reviews will scare potential buyers away. Many buyers on Amazon's platform have a tendency to buy different products by looking at its positive or negative reviews before making the decision to purchase an item.

Reviews can affect pricing in a positive way. Pain (2017, 32) explains how sellers with a lot of positive quality reviews can ask for a higher premium price for their product as the product is high quality according to many other consumers.

Lastly, high-quality reviews are increasing the ROI of time of a seller. Reviews help sellers to put their product prices higher and this helps them to earn the same or better revenue with fewer items. When selling fewer items, the cost and time used for orders goes down. This means less work for the seller and more time to be creative or do other things to grow the business. Or, if they sell the same number of units than before, they will gain more profit per unit as mentioned before. (Pain 2017, 35)

5.2 Review types on Amazon

Now the work will look at different types of reviews a product can have on Amazon.

5.2.1 Verified Purchase Reviews

"Reviews enable buyers to have confidence in the seller's products - genuine reviews are "votes of approval" of the product's fitness for purpose. This is an endorsement of the product to potential buyers", Pain (2017, 31)

According to Amazon.com Amazon's verified reviews mean that a person who leaves the review has purchased the product. They also verify that the product was not received with a big discount from the seller. Verified reviews are a way of Amazon to make sure that buyers are not fooled to buy products that they would not have purchased otherwise because of misleading fake reviews. This way sellers that are illegally creating non-genuine reviews are taken out of the game. (Pain 2017, 36). If a seller is offering more than 49% discount on their product, they won't get a verified review. (Yoderian, 2018.)

5.2.2 Unverified Purchase Reviews

Amazon.com explains that unverified reviews mean that Amazon has not verified and confirmed that after all the product where the review is left was purchased by

the writer or that the it were bought with a deep discount is not normally available to the rest of Amazon's customers.

Unverified reviews are not as effective as verified ones. Verified reviews have more influence on Amazon's algorithm and they help a seller to have a better listing (Beres, 2015).

5.2.3 Amazon Vine Program Reviews

Amazon Vine program is a program where buyers can join with Amazon's invitation only. Amazons consumers who have got a history of leaving genuine honest reviews based on their consumer behavior and interest on specific product categories.

6 REVIEW POLICY

Amazon changed its review policies to ban any reviews that are incentivized. Amazon had problems with non-genuine reviews and it affected the company's image and customer's trust on the platform (Pain 2017, 37).

6.1 Amazon's reputation on the line

Amazon wants to offer an excellent customer experience and their potential customers to be able to make informed decisions when purchasing a product. With their new regulations, they also want to offer all the sellers a fair game against each other. Because reviews affect sellers' sales, in the past sellers were able to pay for positive reviews that affected the competition. Some sellers also hired people to leave negative reviews on their competitor's product to affect their listing and that way get more sales themselves (Pain 2017, 37-40).

Overall Amazon wants to protect the company's reputation as a trustworthy online shopping center as there have been complaints and insecurity among consumers because of misleading reviews (Pain 2017, 37-40).

6.2 Prohibitive actions

Now in 2018, "Any attempt to manipulate ratings, feedback or reviews is prohibited", Hamrick (2018). New policies point out strongly that it is not allowed to post any inappropriate feedback or neither personal information about a transaction partner. In practice this means that sellers are also not allowed to post feedback or ratings to their own accounts. In addition, requesting feedback or ratings from customers is allowed but any payment or any other incentive exchanging to reviews is strictly not allowed.

The same rules work for reviews. To make sure that all the reviews remain genuine and helpful to customers, sellers can not offer any compensation for a review, they can not write a review on their own products or the products of their competitors. Any compensations for reviews is not allowed and this rule includes also free products or products with discounts that have a lower price as a way of getting more

reviews. Asking for a review is allowed but it is prohibited to ask only for positive reviews or only from customers that had a good experience, or ask a reviewer to take their review away or to modify it later. (Hemrick, 2018)

According to Pain (2017, 41), fraudulent actions for gaining reviews will get an Amazon account banned. This means losing the whole business. As this business model is based on Amazon's platform it all lays in their hands and with non-genuine seller activities they can close down the avenue of doing business. Pain points out that understanding the policies and truly appreciating the benefits of the review policy when growing your business in a long-term will save the seller from mistakes. Amazon sellers should think about their business in a long haul rather than looking for quick results that are not sustainable in a long term.

Pain (2017, 39) tells about different seller manners that are not allowed with the purpose of gaining reviews. Insisting and nagging customers for reviews is prohibited and fraudulent. Also not presenting facts in an honest way of exaggerating the quality of a product is also not allowed as it puts Amazon's and the sellers' credibility on the line.

In contrast to the prohibited seller activities Amazon is encouraging sellers for good genuine actions when gaining reviews. They put a value on reviews that are not written in a favorable way for the seller but in an honest genuine way that can help other customers. Amazon also appreciates genuine efforts from sellers. This includes the seller working hard to make sure that the overall customer experience is excellent and their product is top quality (Pain, 2017, 40)

7 DIFFERENTIATION

Before launching a new private label product on Amazon FBA, it must be made sure sure that the features of the product differentiate the product from the competition. The goal is to stand out by adding value to the competition. This will make customers more likely to leave reviews and create more sales for the long haul (Fbaallstars, 2015)

7.1 How to differentiate a private label product

There are multiple ways to differentiate a private label product. The first is branding your products by positioning yourself better or differentiating yourself in a different way than others by highlighting your audience. Another option is bundling, which means making a product in combo packs or including some gifts or other products in the same package.

The next possible way is making a better product than everyone else by making small changes to the product compared to the competition, or by choosing a different audience than your competition and targeting to them. Outstanding customer experience in every possible way will also position you better on the market than your competition (Fbaallstars, 2015).

You can also differentiate yourself by doing better packaging with premium high-quality packaging or by doing excellent copywriting by creating a valuable and desired product page and by using quality photos that are showing your product better than the competitors.

Creating a unique product in the eyes of buyers is important when wanting more reviews. Product differentiation leads to satisfied customers and the buyers will feel that the product needs more endorsement than the competitors homogenous products in the niche market. Customer satisfaction that is coming from great unique products will lead to more reviews (Pain, 33, 2017).

8 INCREASING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

This chapter will look at a few tactics that can affect customers leaving more reviews with a little effort by improving the customer's overall experience when buying a private label product.

8.1 Marketing Inserts

The goal with different types of marketing inserts is to increase customer loyalty, get higher sales with cross-sales and a customer friendly personalized message that motivates customers for positive reviews. Marketing inserts are ads placed inside of a package with the product. They can be gift cards, cross-sells, thank you notes or anything the seller wants to put there. They can increase customer satisfaction and with a little effort give a personal touch to a product that speaks to the customers. (Pain 2017, 47)

8.2 Follow-Up emails

Communicating with customers is very simple through automated follow-up emails. Follow-up emails help to reduce negative reviews. Reminding politely the customer to leave a review on the follow-up email is a good reminder that improves the chances of getting more reviews. In 2018 Amazon only allows one follow-up email after every purchase so the customers won't get annoyed. (Pain 2017, 47)

Sellers can use automatic services like, for example Feedback Genius. Feedback Genius is a service that manages all the emails inside of Amazon and it helps to look more professional in the eyes of the customer. (Dune 2015, 609)

9 DRIVING TRAFFIC TO THE PRODUCT PAGE

If a seller wants to have verified reviews they need to have sales. The more sales a product has, the higher the probability is to receive reviews from the buyers. That being said, it is possible to increase the probability of gaining reviews by driving traffic to your product page. (Pain, 2017, 63)

"Sales promotions are action orientated, particularly as they often tempt the buyer to buy, or at least try, a product or service", Smith (2011, 358) According to Smith (2011, 358) on one hand sales promotions can boost the sales volume effectively, but on the other hand it is a short-term solution for boosting sales.

Driving traffic with the goal of gaining reviews can happen outside of Amazon's marketplace and inside Amazon. First, we will be looking different ways to drive traffic to a product's page inside of Amazon.

9.1 Driving traffic from inside of Amazon's marketplace

When driving traffic to a product page people listing optimization is important as has already been understood earlier in this thesis. People are looking for their desired products with keywords, so Amazon search engine SEO is crucial for customers in finding products. (Pain, 2017, 63)

9.1.1 Amazon PPC

Dune (2015, 539-596) explains on how Amazon's PPC or Pay per Click ads can be used for marketing a product in the marketplace, getting sales and ultimately gaining reviews. PPC can be a great tool for driving consumers that are already in the marketplace. People on Amazon tend to look for products with keywords rather than looking into different categories and trying to find inspiration and ideas for what to buy. PPC positions your product on top of the page in their search when customers are looking for the keywords on your product. A seller will only pay when somebody has clicked their listing.

In addition to that PPC will give the seller data to analyze of which keywords have lead to most clicks, the seller can improve keyword rankings according to this data and eventually get more sales with better keywords. However, running PPC is not recommend by Dune (509) before having at least five reviews. The reason for this is as we have been understood before, that consumers on Amazon give high value to reviews when looking to purchase a product, so running a PPC Campaigns with no or little reviews on your product may not be effective.

9.1.2 Amazon's top-ranked reviewers

Amazon's top-ranked reviewers' reviews are really valuable. They are proven to be genuine and an honest so their reviews are given a lot of weight on a product. Finding top reviewers that are interested in your niche or product and introducing them to a new product can lead to them ordering one and leaving a top-quality review that will help to boost the sales. (Pain 2011, 71)

10 DRIVING TRAFFIC TO THE PRODUCT PAGE – OUTSIDE OF AMAZON’S MARKETPLACE

When directing traffic outside of Amazon, we are looking for people who are potential customers to the specific product that is being sold. Targeting needs to be accurate because then fewer resources are wasted, the better results will be gained. Advertising can be cost-effective if targeting the right customer profile (Smith 2011, 275). In the next chapter, I will introduce different ways to drive traffic to the product page where it is possible to benefit from targeted marketing for a specific product on Amazon.

10.1 Social Media

Social media space, including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc. has got almost 4 Billions accounts of people. For that reason, social media is a big platform where masses of traffic can be reached. Social media advertising is a great way for leading traffic to a product's page because it is possible to engage with potential customers by creating a following. This can be done by creating a niche page and engaging interactively with the followers, offering broadcasts/videos/articles/demo videos or other valuable content on a social media page for potential customers while linking the company’s product page and directing traffic to it through social media. It is possible to use multiple different types of paid advertising online so advertising can be targeted really specifically to potential customers (Pain 2017, 65-66).

10.2 Facebook groups

Facebook groups can be used to promote products in specific niches. The groups can be great for creating sales. The community on the group is already passionate and interested in the group's subject. In Facebook groups business's has got an opportunity to raise awareness about themselves by being helpful to the community or if the group's rules allow it they can promote their products with straight links to the webpage (Dune 2015, 419)

10.3 PPC Ads

PPC advertising outside of Amazon can be a very effective way to get more sales. According to Pain (2017, 66), PPC means Pay per Click advertising where the advertiser only pays when somebody has clicked the ad. By creating an ad with text, photos, some kind of animations or videos and uploading it to the social media channel wanted, all the potential customers clicking it will be directed straight to the product listing on Amazon's page.

10.4 SEO

Search engine optimization (SEO) is also possible outside of Amazon. Driving traffic from search engines can be done by content marketing. Content marketing can be, for example creating a blog and adding content to it or creating a niche website and optimizing them for search engine SEO. The visitors coming to the blog or website can then be linked to the product page on Amazon's listing. (Pain 2017, 69)

10.5 Press Releases

Another way of is publishing Press Releases (PR) regularly to lead visitors towards your product page. Pain (2017, 69) tells that there are many PR pages available online where people can launch their press release. PR pages with a good reputation can be hard to get on because of their high standards, however, if you get to list on them it is possible to get a lot of traffic to your site.

10.6 Influencers

Networking with bloggers and other social media influencers asking or paying them to promote a product can be an effective way to get more sales and eventually more reviews. Looking for influencers who are creating similar content to your niche and promoting a product through them can boost your sales. It is a good way because they already have followers are trusting their opinion and interested in the same niche's products. (Dune 2015, 692)

According to <https://affiliate-program.amazon.com/influencers> , Amazon has got an Amazon Influencer Program. The Influencer Program allows influencers to have their own URL page on Amazon to show all the products they are recommending to their followers. While it is made easy for their followers to buy products that the influencer is recommending, the recommender will earn money on every purchase with affiliate links.

10.7 Deal site promotions

Deal sites can be an effective way of creating boost on sales (Jungle Scout, 2017). Deal Site means web pages that have got deep discounts on specific products for a limited time. They are easy to use, have a lot of potential sales, no effort needed and the seller will know exactly how much the costs are going to be as they are offering a specific amount of discount products in advance (Jungle Scout, 2017)

11 FEEDBACK

I got my feedback on my handbook from Leopold Grassin, CEO of LGR Communications and owner of another business that is selling consumer goods on Amazon FBA that is not to be revealed by his request.

He gave me the feedback through Skype on Wednesday 16 of May, 2018. Leopold said that he is very pleased with the outcome of my Handbook. He gave positive feedback especially for introducing and explaining how the Algorithm of Amazon works. In his opinion, it is an important thing to understand for any seller on Amazon and many people have failed launching products because of not understanding how the search engine works. Leo also pointed out that the structure of the Handbook was very good and easy to follow.

He said that it would have been nice to have more information about the strategies of leading traffic into the product's page. Explaining more how the different strategies work and maybe introducing pros and cons of them and for which type of products they could work. It would have been a good addition and I thought about it before myself. I did not do it because I do not feel expert enough to tell the positive and negative sides of the strategies for different products and the themes are very complicated. For this reason I only introduced them as possible solutions that have been introduced successful in my sources and sellers can look deeper into them.

Another thing that he said I could improve is talking about negative reviews. He would have liked to see some tactics to avoiding them and what to do if a customer or a competitor or another person who wants to harm your business leaves a bad review. I didn't write about this topic because my research question asks how to gain reviews, and I believe I answer this question well. However negative reviews are always a part of reviews so I should definitely have taken them as a part of my work. Negative reviews and how to deal with them are a broad subject in themselves that would be a great theme for future research.

Leopold also said that the chapter about increasing customer satisfaction was very good and that especially Follow-up emails have proven to give great results for him in terms of gaining reviews.

I chose Leopold to be a qualified expert to give me feedback because he is an expert on the field of Amazon and marketing communication and for that reason I believe his knowledge level. He is also my old supervisor so at the beginning I doubted if I would get truthful feedback from him in case he would not want to hurt my feelings when giving negative feedback. It turned out that I had doubts for no reason and he gave me honest feedback that he would have given to anybody else regardless of having a friendship with me.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In the beginning, my goal was to write a Handbook that I can use when starting my own business. I feel like I accomplished the goal well. The theoretical study of my thesis is looked at all the theories that I feel like are necessary for getting a full understanding of the subject. The subject itself, gaining reviews on Amazon is an exact theme. However, it contains a lot of different themes that are broad and can be tricky. I had to define the limits on how deeply would go with these themes.

The handbook I made based on my theoretical framework is a general guide to how an Amazon FBA seller can gain reviews for a new private label product. The most important aspects of the handbook are to understand the bigger picture of the importance of reviews, how to avoid mistakes and get a seller account banned and different strategies to gain reviews.

I didn't go deep to introducing different strategies as they are very complex and how to do them depends a lot on the product. However, I believe it is a helpful handbook for understanding different options and the structure of gaining reviews. When understanding these basic things a seller can look more deeply into the strategies they want to use and make a plan to accomplishing the goals.

There are always improvements to do. For further research in this subject, I believe researching more into how the strategies work in practice would be a relevant topic of study. Analyzing the pros and cons of different strategies on how to drive traffic to the product page, researching which ones are the most effective ones to use for products with different qualities and features or making a plan for gaining reviews for a specific product in 2018 could be some things to do more research on. Now when thinking about this work, I think I would have benefited more from it if I would have made a plan on how to gain reviews for my own personal product that I am going to sell. Then I could have made a clear plan and selected only the strategies that are the best for my own product. However, at this point I do not want to reveal my product yet so it was not a solution even if it would have been more needed topic for me.

The most challenging element of this work was to find reliable sources and limiting the subjects. There is a lot of information especially online in a form of youtube

videos, articles, and ebooks. However, a lot of these sources are self-published and they don't introduce where the information is from.

Also, there was a big problem with finding information that is still accurate in the year 2018. I feel like I was critical to the information as I was been researching and introducing myself to this subject for the past year when planning my future business. I have read a lot of strategies and information about this subject so I believe I had enough knowledge to recognize important information and leave away all theories that are not accurate.

When using sources, I selected different theories from different places and tried to put them together as a whole. I did not find any sources where they would have all of the updated information available about this subject, there was always some old information or the sources did not cover all the aspects of the subject. I tried making a mix of legitimate information as a form of a handbook that covers everything a seller needs to know about gaining reviews for a new private label product in Amazon FBA.

I believe I answered well to the research question on how to gain reviews for a new private label product in 2018. Also I covered well the other two research questions: How is it possible to get the first product reviews without having any previous ones and what are the prohibited activities that a seller should avoid?

Overall I'm really happy with what I accomplished with this work. I'm glad to start my business with having legitimate ways of gaining reviews and knowing what not to do so that I keep my business safe. Another point I learned when as a result of this work is that I will have to keep my eyes open all the time and be aware that Amazon can change their policies anytime and it will affect strongly on managing my business.

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ATTACMENT 1

Hanbook ofr Amazon FBA Sellers: How to gain reviews for a new private label product in 2018