

Markus Taskila

# Developing a Social Media Marketing Plan for a Construction Company in Japan



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**Abstract****Author(s):** Taskila Markus**Title of the Publication:** Developing a Social Media Marketing Plan for a Construction Company in Japan**Degree Title:** Bachelor of Business Administration, International Business**Keywords:** Social Media, Marketing, Construction, Japan

The purpose of this thesis is to create a cost effective, and thorough social media marketing plan for Japanese construction company, Phoenix Home. Social media marketing is increasingly becoming the focus of businesses marketing efforts. While most of today's companies participate in social media, they often lack any solid plan for coordinating their effort and resources to effectively develop their brand and increase their sales sustainably. Instead of direct advertisement, the plan created for Phoenix Home tries to give the company the tools for developing an active community around the company brand "FEEL", which in theory should generate increased traffic and sales through the visibility and positive reviews that the community provides.

The social media marketing plan follows the 4-stage SMM process, while the content strategy emphasizes the importance of fostering community spirit through promoting transparency, authenticity, and mobilization of users. The plan also presents concrete examples and action plans for different marketing problems, like how to use marketing funnels, how to develop social media marketing by analyzing key performance indicators (KPI), and what kind of content should be posted.

The result of the project is a comprehensive plan for cost effective and sustainable marketing in the Japanese social media platforms. The key findings include the need for cross promotion between the company media channels to increase the number of loyal customers in the platforms, benefits of delivering audience specific content through marketing funnels, and most importantly, that the marketing plan needs to be tracked by analyzing KPI's and constantly developed according to the KPI results.

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## Abbreviations

SMM= Social Media Marketing

KPI= Key Performance Indicator

UGC= User Generated Content

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background and the Case Company

The purpose of this thesis is to develop a social media marketing plan for a construction company Phoenix Home. As the author of this paper interned at and managed the social media channels of the forenamed company, it came clear that a structured plan for conducting social media marketing is needed for the company to sustainably and effectively use different medias as sources for leads, and subsequently, more sales. After running a test marketing campaign for 2 months on Instagram, the CEO of Phoenix Home was pleased with the results and thereafter commissioned the author of this thesis to conduct research and to develop a social media marketing plan for the company.

Phoenix Home Corporation is a Japanese construction company that specializes in building Finnish made log houses. The company uses cost cutting to achieve a competitive advantage over their competition. While they succeed in keeping the prices down, their weakness of obtaining new leads and potential customers hinders the effectiveness of their strategy. Based on clear indicators, the current competitors in the Japanese log house market utilize the social media channels more effectively than Phoenix Home, thus gaining more customers regardless if Phoenix Home offers cheaper service. Increased effort in social media marketing is recommended for their business strategy to perform in its full potential.

The Japanese log house market is currently very crowded and while it is still growing, it remains a niche market. The case company currently has around 20 direct competitors and the top 5 of these construction companies all effectively use social media as a big part of their marketing efforts. This can be found out when inspecting the quality and frequency of their Instagram posts.

The target group for the case company are new families and recently retired couples. When starting a new family, often the family will increase in size and consequently more space is required. For the retired people, the desire to buy a log house comes from the increased free time and the house maintenance and hobby activity possibilities that the log house offers. When targeting these two different groups of people on social media, one must remember that they have widely different consumer habits, for example which channel they use and what kind of content they prefer. (Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2016)

## 1.2 Project Objective

Since Phoenix Home does not have an existing Social Media Strategy, and only a little experience in the field, the company requires guidelines for navigating and succeeding in the social media marketing world. The main goals of this thesis are:

- 1) Create clear instructions for successful implementation of social media marketing strategies
- 2) Create an effective plan for developing an active social media community
- 3) Increased engagement in every social media channel the company decides to use

Through achieving these goals, the company can hopefully enjoy increased leads and customers, and have a positive online presence that boosts company image.

This thesis firstly covers the theoretical base of effectively using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Line for a marketing purpose. Secondly the basic social media marketing concepts will be enforced with research that has been conducted specifically in the Japanese market, for Japanese audience. The fusion of western marketing philosophies combined with research on Japanese audience is crucial, since the Asian social media scenes, especially the Japanese scene, differ from Western one noticeably. The western marketing principles stay the same, but for example, the social media channels, content and marketing objectives might be different.

## 1.3 Project Scope

This thesis does not cover the broader concept of digital marketing, which includes SEO, email marketing, and digital display marketing. The focus of this thesis is strictly on social media channels and how to use them to boost company image, attract new and retain old customers, how to create a positive customer community, and to optimize them for the best result.

The author of this thesis will not implement the social media marketing plan. The case company will be responsible for proceeding with the implementation and finally analyzing the effectiveness of the plan.

The finished social media plan is intended to be used by Phoenix Home corporation and it is not meant to be a general social media plan for Japanese, or other markets.

#### 1.4 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework was created to give this thesis a structure, and to provide the author with clear work objectives and direction. The framework includes the objectives and milestones from the start of the project of researching the knowledge base to finally analyzing the work in the last phase.

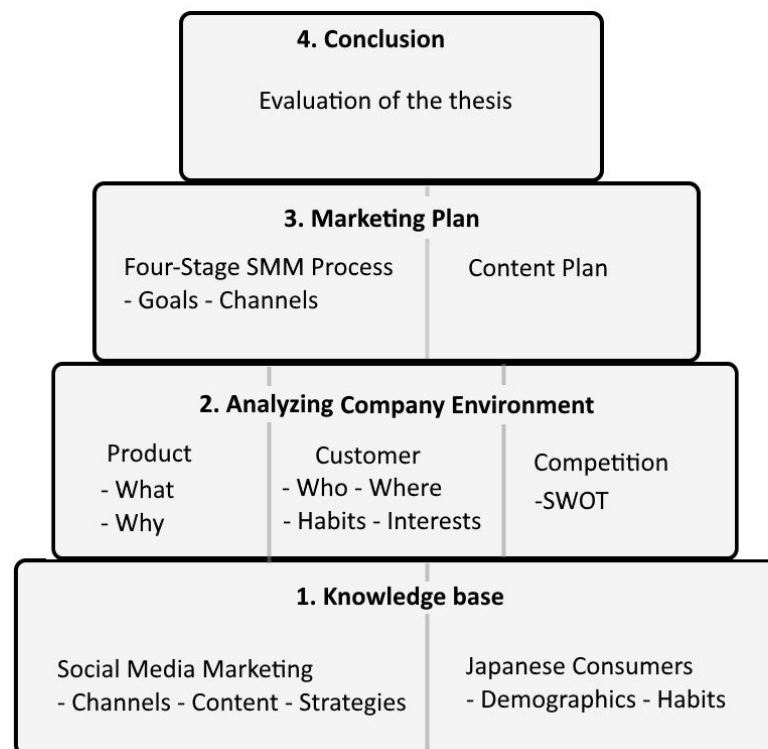


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

The Thesis will be structured according to the above figure (Figure 1 Theoretical Framework), starting from gaining the knowledge needed for creating a credible and sound social media marketing plan. From there on, in phases 2 and 3 the knowledge and guidelines learned from gathering the knowledge will be used to first inspect the company's internal and external environment (phase 2), and second to create a social media marketing plan (Phase 3) that fits into the findings of phase 2. The final step is to analyze the main findings and then identifying the most important factors affecting the social media plan.



## 2 Customer Based Marketing on Social Media

This chapter covers statistics, method, and information on which the social media marketing plan will be based on. In addition, supporting facts for why social media should be included in a company's marketing scheme are presented.

The main topics are social media, social media channels and their demographics, content marketing, Japanese consumer behavior, and utilizing community in marketing.

### 2.1 Social Media Marketing

Social media is defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, 61).

Social media for marketers serves three main purposes: diffusing information, providing a sense of community, and mobilizing users into action (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 12). Today the consumers have the power to control what advertisement and content they see, and more importantly they can create their own content and interact with creations of other users. The nature of social media is so unique compared to traditional media that the marketing content creators have had to change towards marketing methods that are more appealing for the new, pickier audience; content marketing as a good example of this (Michael Brenner, 2015, 4-7).

However, social media does not only bring sensor and constraint for the marketers, as it also allows the marketer to study the audience insights that previously were inaccessible. According to Mahoney & Tang, marketers have never had such opportunity to study the behavior of audiences as a group, and as individuals, as well as to connect with the audience. Furthermore, traditional mass communication models used to form around "one-to-many" concept, where one message was created to appeal to as many people as it could which was then broadcasted to a large audience in a mass medium, where the communication is one-way from sender to receiver, while social media allows the dissemination of one message much more efficiently and enables interactive connection between the sender and receiver (Dominick, 2010, 9-12).

Figure 2 illustrates the differences between traditional media marketing, offline marketing, and social media marketing. The biggest differences compared to the traditional media marketing is the both ways communication, and the fact that the customer can create content in addition to the advertiser, which is one of the key characteristics of Web 2.0. One of the big advantages of social media marketing is the possibility to listen and to connect with the audiences. The both ways communication, tracking/analytics devices, and the flexibility of quick, easy, and cost-effective advertising allows the advertisers to create content which is specifically created and tested to get positive reaction from the target groups, or even individuals, as stated by Dominick.

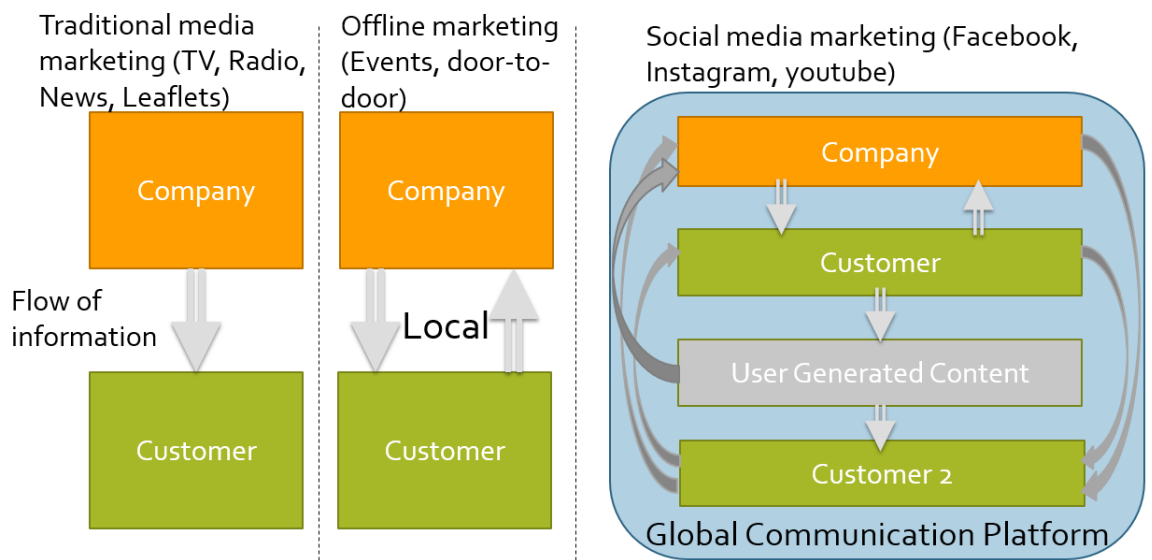


Figure 2 Marketing methods (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, 61; Michael Brenner, 2015, 4; Dominick, 2010, 9-12)

As of January 2019, there are roughly 2.271 billion active users on Facebook alone and there are currently 5 other social media channels that also have an active user base of over 1 billion Table 1 Active social media users in the World (Statista, 2017a). To put these numbers in perspective, globally there were estimated to be 1.63 BN households with televisions, which makes Facebook alone more popular than television (Statista, 2017b). Social media has become on par or even superior to the “traditional media” such as television, magazines, and radio. Furthermore, the amount spent on social media is rising as well, in 2012 the average person spent 90 minutes on social media which rose to 135 minutes by 2017 (Statista, 2017a).

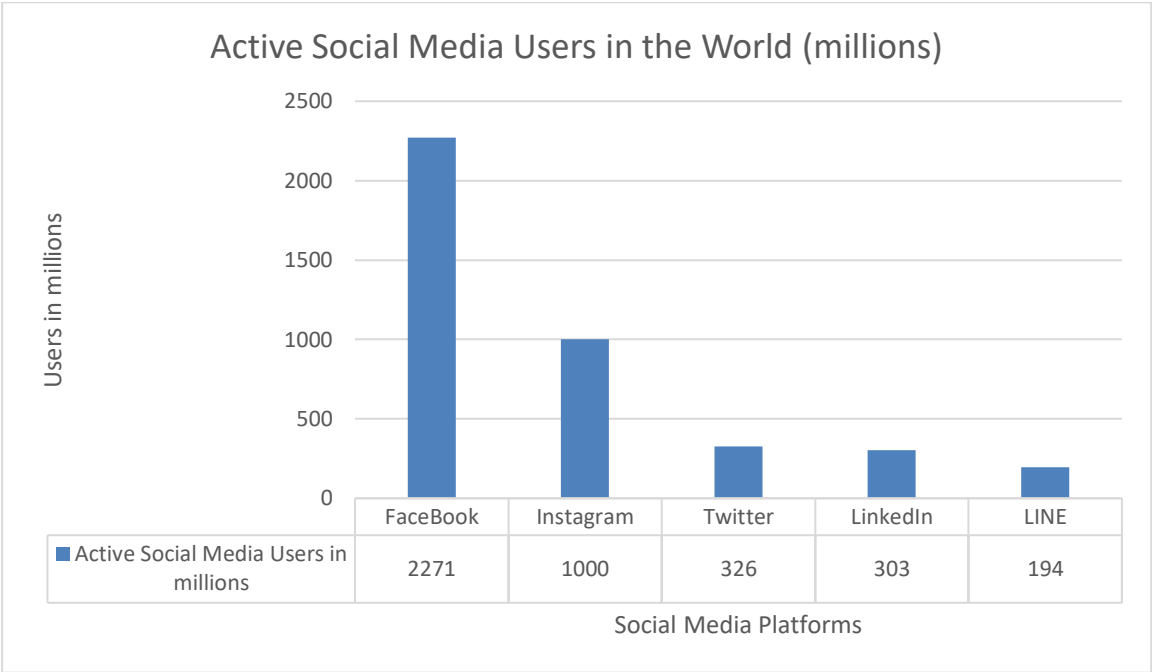


Table 1 Active social media users in the World (Statista, 2017a)

In 1980’s there were 8 communication channels which companies could use to connect with the audience; television, radio, print magazine, newsletter, billboard, event, fax, and direct mail, while today the possibilities are nearly endless when there are hundreds of social media channels to be used (Michael Brenner, 2015, 4). Strategic communication vision and adaptation to the ever-changing digital landscape are always important to succeed and to stay relevant as a business (Sarah Howard, 2012).

This marketing plan will focus on the successful implementation of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Line, due to the popularity of these platforms globally and nationally in Japan. (Error! Reference source not found.)

## 2.2 Four-Stage SMM Process



Figure 3 Four-Stage SMM Process (Dodson, 2016, 154)

The social media marketing plan will be structured around the four-stage SMM process published first on Ian Dodson's the art of Digital Marketing (Figure 3 Four-Stage SMM Process (Dodson, 2016, 154)).

The process is divided into 4 phases: 1. Goals 2. Channels, 3. Implement, 4. Analyze.

### 2.2.1 Goals

The Goals phase of the process focuses on identifying the company environment by analyzing the internal and external factors of the company like product, customers, or competition. With the information gained from analyzing the environment, the marketer can then proceed to set the goals for the marketing effort. Setting the goals is important because it creates the purpose for the campaign, and it allows a more efficient and effective style of marketing. (Dodson, 2016, 153-158)

The goals should be SMART as in Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. (Doran, 1981, 35-36) Dodson added to this that marketers should also think if their marketing goals serve branding, awareness, engagement, response rate, lead generation, or conversion purpose for the company as well, for the goal to have a positive influence on the business. An example goal that fits the previously mentioned recommendations would be for a small mobile game company to reach 5 conversions/100 reached people in 1 month from starting the campaign. The previous case provides all the requirements to be a “SMART” goal.

By specifying the goals, marketer can then proceed to choosing the right channels and methods which will help achieve the set objectives.

### 2.2.2 Channels

In phase 2 the marketer decides which marketing channel gives is the most optimal for the previously identified audience and goals. New social media channels are released constantly, but currently Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and LINE are the more popular social media channels out there. (Dodson, 2016, 158-183)

As seen in the social media infographics, Facebook is the leading Social Media channel in the World with 2271 million active users. (Statista, 2019) Facebook is used for connecting with friends and companies by sending private or public messages, pictures, videos, or by liking, sharing, commenting on a post or profile.

Facebook includes 2 user interfaces called personal profile and business page. Facebook personal profile is mainly used by the basic users for connecting with friends and is the user interface that most are familiar with. Personal profile is not very effective for businesses since the profiles cannot be found on search engines which decreases visibility and because personal profiles don't have the option to create ads or boost posts. (Dodson, 2016, 158-183; Facebook, 2019c)

Dodson emphasized that instead of personal profile, businesses should convert to a business page which allows audiences to find the page on search engines and to make connections easier. Business Facebook also offers analytics on the marketing campaign performance as well as audience information and habits which are useful information for optimizing marketing efforts.

Facebook allows the use of several ad formats for advertising which includes (Facebook, 2019b):

- Photo; photos of different aspect ratios (square, landscape, vertical) with copy and call to action button.
- Video; videos of different lengths with optional audio and differing screen ratios.
- Stories; short to medium length videos that are optimized for vertical full-size viewing on mobile phones. Includes call to actions and short copy.
- Messenger; advertising on the messenger platform by engaging the customer to converse with the company. Advertising is automatic but responding can be either automatic or manual. Can include any of the other ad formats in the messenger.
- Carousel; up to 10 advertising cards that each includes a picture or a video, a small copy, and a call to action that can be modified to bring the customer to different landing pages. The cards rotate in carousel fashion from left to right.
- Slideshow; slideshow option meshes multiple pictures together to form video-like ads that incorporate motion, audio, and text.
- Collection; similar to carousel, but ads are put in a tight grid which allows viewing multiple products simultaneously.
- Playables; preview of mobile phone app.

Instagram is a mobile phone app that specializes in visual communication instead of text and it currently has around one billion monthly users. (Instagram Press, 2019) Instagram was previously an independent company but was acquired by Facebook in April of 2012, which allowed the use of existing Facebook advertising tools also on Instagram. (Instagram Press, 2012) Due to the unification, if marketer knows how to advertise using the Facebook advertising tools, they can also use the same knowledge to effectively advertise on Instagram as well, which makes Instagram a considerable choice for adding to a business's advertising channels arsenal.

Instagram should be converted into a business account, similarly to Facebook, which then grants access to multiple useful tools that benefit marketing efforts such as boosting posts, advertising, analytics and setting up company information on the profile page, as well as call to action buttons to posts and to the profile. (Instagram, 2019)

The ad formats found in Instagram are images, videos, carousel, and Instagram stories, which can all also be found on Facebook advertising tools. (Facebook, 2019a)

Twitter is the biggest direct competition to Facebook in social media World with 326 million active users. Unlike Facebook, Twitter has a 280-character limit for posts which effectively changes how the platform is used for communication and which kind of messages are sent. Usually twitter posts fare better in engaging audience to conversation due to the slightly less formal atmosphere that Twitter has compared to Facebook. (Dodson, 2015, 158-183)

Companies can advertise in Twitter using pictures, videos, texts and links as promoted tweets or twitter cards. The ads usually also include a headline and call to action button.(Dodson, 2016, 158-183)

LinkedIn is a social media platform, that uses many of the same functions as Facebook and Twitter, but it is more geared towards connecting professionals. One of LinkedIn's unique features is that it specializes in recruiting and vetting employees for companies using the platform and essentially allowing the workforce to discover new work opportunities by connecting with other users. (Dodson, 2016, 158-183) The platform allows private messages, looking for jobs and recruits, posting updates on a wall like Facebook, and it also includes courses for developing proficiencies needed for jobs.

What makes LinkedIn promising for the marketers is the demographic that uses the platform. LinkedIn is very promising for marketers, one reason being that the average user on LinkedIn earns over \$100 000 per year and that most users are employed professionals. (Dodson, 2016, 158-183)

The most popular social media channel in Japan is LINE with 67% of total Japanese population using it. (Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2016) LINE is predominantly a mobile phone app that allows communication to friends with messages, internet calls, video calls, and it also has features Facebook-like status updates. Unique to LINE is the huge archive of stickers, themes, and special features that the user can purchase using LINE points that can be acquired by using real money, or by completing tasks like watching commercials, downloading apps, or completing surveys. (LINE, 2019) LINE corporation is constantly looking for more options where the users can use the points, and recently the company published update that allows using them on daily purchases, or even spend them on investments or insurance by using the mobile app.

According to Dodson's SMM process, after evaluating and deciding upon which channel is the most suitable for reaching the earlier defined goals, the marketer then needs to implement the findings into action.

### 2.2.3 Implement

In phase 3 the marketers should already know their goals and the channels which are suitable for achieving the previously set objectives. In the implementation phase, answers are looked for questions such as: where the audience can be found, what they like, need, or want, how they can be reached, who is responsible for communicating with the audience and in which manner and voice. (Dodson, 2016, 188-228)

When strategy crafting, one should keep in mind the resource limitations caused by lack of personnel, skills, or finance to keep the plans achievable and smart. Furthermore, it is advisable to map out who is responsible for each of the tasks of implementing a social media marketing campaign and to set aside a reasonable budget that covers the costs for reaching the set goals. Having the personnel and budget figured out will give security that the project can be successfully executed. (Dodson, 2016, 188-228)

The implementation process is continuous, and it is not going to be perfect from the start, which is why listening to the customers and observing competition is very important in order to know how, where, and to whom to market to. Listening in this context means to thoroughly research customer habits such as: which channels they use, what they do in the social media network, how they interact with other people, who they follow, and when they see the marketers post, how do they interact with it. By finding answers to these questions the marketer can present the right content for that specific group or individual. Observing competitor's actions is also beneficial, since by doing so marketers can study which marketing methods work and which doesn't, which will save valuable time. (Dodson, 2016, 188-228)

After understanding the audience, the marketer can proceed to creating a four-step content plan.

1. Schedule: Plan out a schedule that will be strictly followed. Posts shouldn't be uploaded too often, but neither not too sparsely, and it should be remembered that consistency is the key to success.



2. Integrate: Social media marketing and traditional marketing campaigns should complement each other because they both strive for the same overall goals.
  3. Manage: Make sure to keep up with the schedule by using tools such as Hootsuite, or by assigning someone to post consistently on time.
  4. Adapt: When the unexpected happens, be ready to step out of the planned and react to the situation by assessing what is happening, and then coming up with a plan B. Social media is full of changing variables and by being reactive a company can maximize the opportunities.
- To evaluate the content plan the marketer can try to answer the following questions: what purpose does the social media activity serve? Towards who is the content aimed at? What kind of content is valuable for the audience? What kind of content will push engagement from the audience?

(Dodson, 2016, 188-228)

When creating an action plan for social media, one should stay realistic and take into consideration the timeframe, resources required, and the actions that need to be done for the plan to be a success. Furthermore, the plan should work towards achieving the goals set in the beginning of the process. Also, content should be modified according to the social media channel being used, because there is no marketing strategy that produces effective content regardless of the platform being used. (Dodson, 2016, 188-228)

#### 2.2.4 Analyze

Social media marketing plan requires constant honing, since the same strategies will not work forever and to make the plan profitable, the parts that are not performing well should be fixed or cut and the strong parts enhanced. Without trial and error, the plan can never reach the maximum potential. (Dodson, 2016, 228-246)

The purpose of analyzing is to find out how the marketing methods and channels could be modified in order to reach the goals that were set in the first phase. The data gathered from analysis can be compared to the goals, which provides an evaluation on how effective the marketing methods are. (Dodson, 2016, 228-246)

The most popular social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, LINE) usually come packed with analytics tools that lets the user track common social media indicators. External trackers like Hootsuite can be used as well. The metrics that the analytics programs track is called key performance indicators (KPI) and usually a company's goals are tied to KPIs, because they allow objective analysis of performance. In social media marketing the most usual KPIs are: likes, follows, reach, page views, clicks, shares, comments, leads, and number of customers achieved. Depending on the goal of the campaign, different KPIs are tracked.

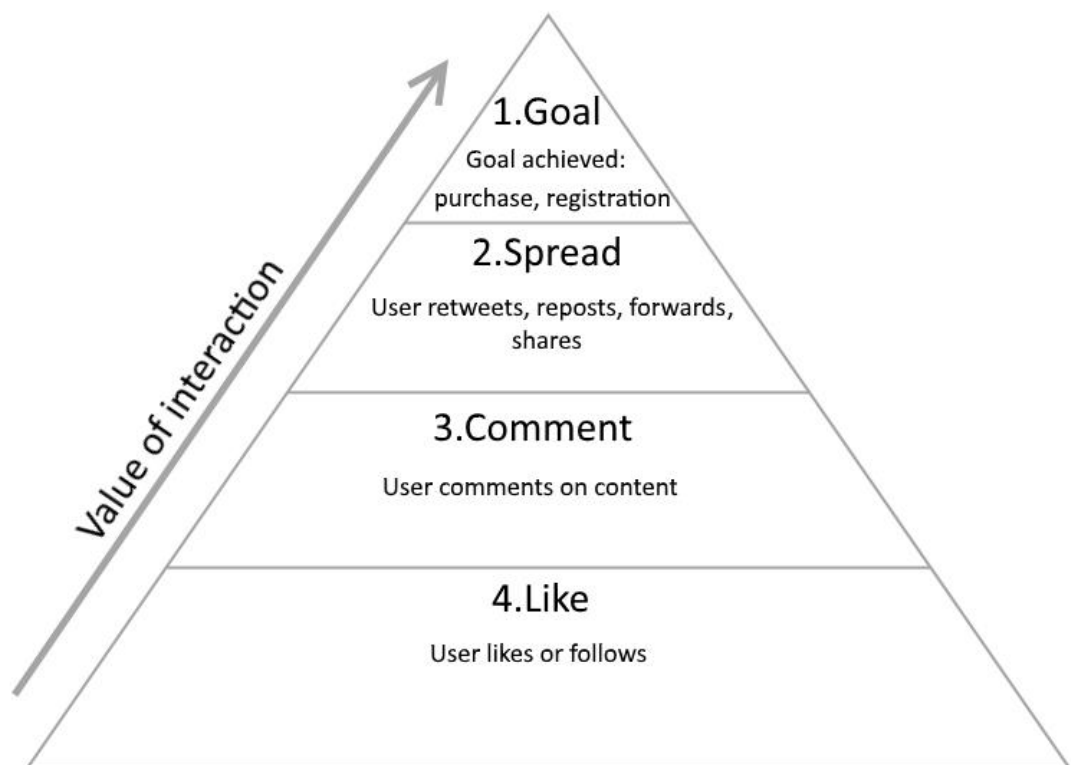


Figure 4 Quality Scale of Social Media Interactions (Dodson, 2016, 197)

The value of the social KPIs differs drastically, as seen on the Figure 4. While all user engagement is desired, the goal of social media post is to make the audience see the content (reach), engage with it (like, comments), and then spread it (retweets, reposts, forwards, shares). (Dodson, 2016, 197) Each KPI can give valuable but differing information regarding the post. For example, likes will roughly indicate the perceived quality of the post, but gaining as much likes as possible is hardly a beneficial goal for posting on social media, since likes alone rarely translate to conversion or to loyal followers. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 62)

### 2.3 Transparency

Through increased company and product transparency, for example pricing breakdowns, origin of material, or production methods, the organization can build trust with the customer. When customer finds negative information about company or their product online that negative experience cannot be controlled, but when they find the same information explained on, for example, company's website, they can trust the company and their values. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 41-51)

### 2.4 Community

Audiences are more likely to enjoy media messages, such as advertising, from people they have a relationship with rather than from companies that are trying to sell their product for profit. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 58-70) In marketing, the messages that the audience relates with is usually the most effective one (Bryant & Oliver, 2009). When the audience shifted into the WEB 2.0 era where users are creating the content as well as professional, the audience shared a stronger connection with the content created by their relatives and peers rather than the messages by professional. For example, product review done by a Facebook friend, or a relative's excitement over newly opened restaurant which they write about online. This type of word-of-mouth marketing has previously been mostly effective when targeting local customers, but with the emergence of social media, the word is spreading globally. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 58-70)



Figure 5 Four dimensions of establishing sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, 6-23)

In the figure 5 the sense of community is established through 4 dimensions; membership, shared emotional connection, membership influence, and needs fulfillment. The membership dimension presumes that for individual to feel part of a community the individual must take action that justifies that the individual is part of the community, for example buying a product from a certain brand could justify the individual to join this brands community. (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, 6-23)

The second phase implies that for a community to give value to an individual, the members of the community need to share emotional connection. On social media it is easy to join communities that the member might not even relate to, resulting in the member having no incentive to interact or be a part of that community, but if the member is emotionally vested in the group, they have interest to interact with other members of the group and this harmony between the members is what community in the core is. In short, having many people that do not relate with the organization do not form a community, but even a few members of a group form a community when they interact with each other related to some shared connection. One way to create a feeling of community is through self-disclosure, which is when one party of communication reveals private personal information in order to tighten the relationship between the two parties. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 58-70)

The third step of the process, membership influence, focuses on making the members feel like they can contribute to the community. One way this can be achieved in combination with the previously mentioned self-disclosure method, is to for example promote the members of the community by sharing their pictures, feedback, or experiences in the social media. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 58-70)

The final step of creating a sense of community is to fulfill members needs and expectations. What it means, is to validate the members of the reasons why they joined the community in the first place. It must be remembered that communities are of people, not of product, no matter how great the product is, which is why companies need to listen to the member's needs. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 58-70)

## 2.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is the personality of a company which makes them unique from their competition and the main proponent to achieving authenticity is staying true to the company's culture and values. It is very unlikely to come up with a new product that has not been already invented,

which is why companies are forced to differentiate their products and services, and the same goes for social media marketing. Consumers will choose that company's product in which they relate to and in which they trust, and marketing is the platform where the marketer can build the trust with the consumer. Authenticity is assurance that branding is not just marketing scheme, and that the brand has real values behind it. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 67-70). By establishing authenticity within the company culture customers are more likely to have shared emotional connection with the company and other members, which was the second requirement for establishing a community.

Social media are optimal for building authenticity since they allow communication between a company and their audience creating a forum where opinions and values are discussed, absorbed and shared. As this kind of communication is hard to replicate in other media, it is advisable that the social media would be dedicated to building authenticity and company culture, while other medium, like company webpage, would transmit product information to interested customers. Authenticity isn't built by promoting a product, but by enforcing and sharing values, which is why product advertising and authenticity creation should be separated. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 67-70)

## 2.6 Mobilization

Mobilization is the act of inducing other people to participate in the same cause (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Traditionally marketers have tried to mobilize their audience to go offline and to buy their product, as in, they tried to control the audience to take the action that is favorable for the marketer. In social media this kind of attempts at behavioral change are becoming progressively more challenging since the audience is saturated with similar kinds of advertisements that they quickly forget even if they initially managed to spark a reaction. (Mahoney & Tang, 2017, 77-85)

One solution for creating long lasting behavioral change using social media is to encourage audience participation, where the readers are given the opportunity to define themselves, their needs and how they will achieve these needs, through communication (Byrne Ailish, Grey-Felder Denise, Hunt Jim, & Parks Will, 2005, 1). An example of participation communication is when a travel organization asks their followers on social media which vacation destination they would want to visit, in which the followers answer their desires in the comment section. The effectiveness of

persuading audiences to participate is seldom enough to increase sales drastically. In addition, marketers should aim to get their product in the hands of the audiences in real life. Instead of trying to convince online, the customers can convince themselves offline. Having experienced the product in real life increases the likelihood of purchase. (Citrin, Stem, Spangenberg, & Clark, 2003, 915-922) Another benefit of having trials and free hand outs is the possibility of UGC that the customer might create if correctly prompted.

The next step of participation is to give the users the power to affect the actual product, or in the case of social media, let the user create the content. User generated content (UGC) combines the previously mentioned transparency, community, and authenticity traits that are benefactors for an optimized and effective social media channel. When a customer creates content and shares it to the public it creates a trust factor that is hard to achieve with corporate advertising, and the UGC can be further reposted by the company which creates community spirit, increases transparency, and provides authenticity for the company.



Picture 1 User generated content by @erynkrouse reposted by GoPro (GoPro, 2019)

One example of a company that implements user generated content in their social media channels is GoPro. In the example picture above, GoPro reposted and gave a shout out to a customer that shared her experiences of using a GoPro which was then seen by millions of GoPro followers.

GoPro is effectively driving their social media channel operations in the hands of the users, which create community spirit and authentic content.

## 2.7 Japanese Consumer Habits

This chapter focuses on providing insight into Japanese consumer habits in social media environment. In terms of marketing, consumer behavior data is required for making strategic decisions concerning where, how, when, and what is marketed for the customer.

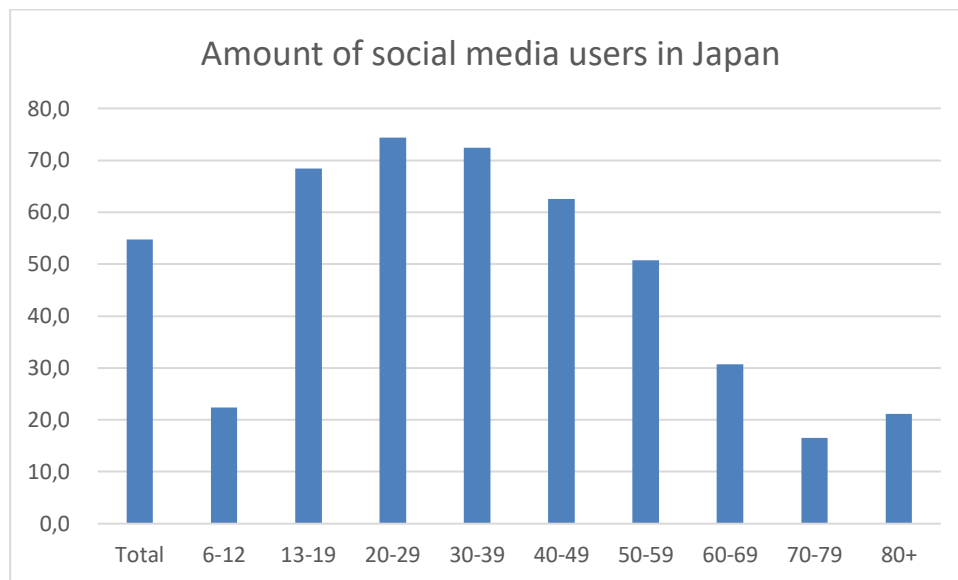


Table 2 Amount of social media users in Japan (Japanese ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2018)

54.7% of Japanese population use social media according to the Japanese ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. From the above graph, one can notice that different age groups use different social media. For example, from the age group 40-49 and forward a 10-15% drop in the usage rate can be noticed, the biggest drop being 20% from 50s to 60s. Even though there is a lack of social media usage in the older age groups, the same research found out that 80.2% of total population use email and even +80-year olds have a usage rate of 68%. The older generation uses computer/smartphone technology, but they have not made the leap to social media.

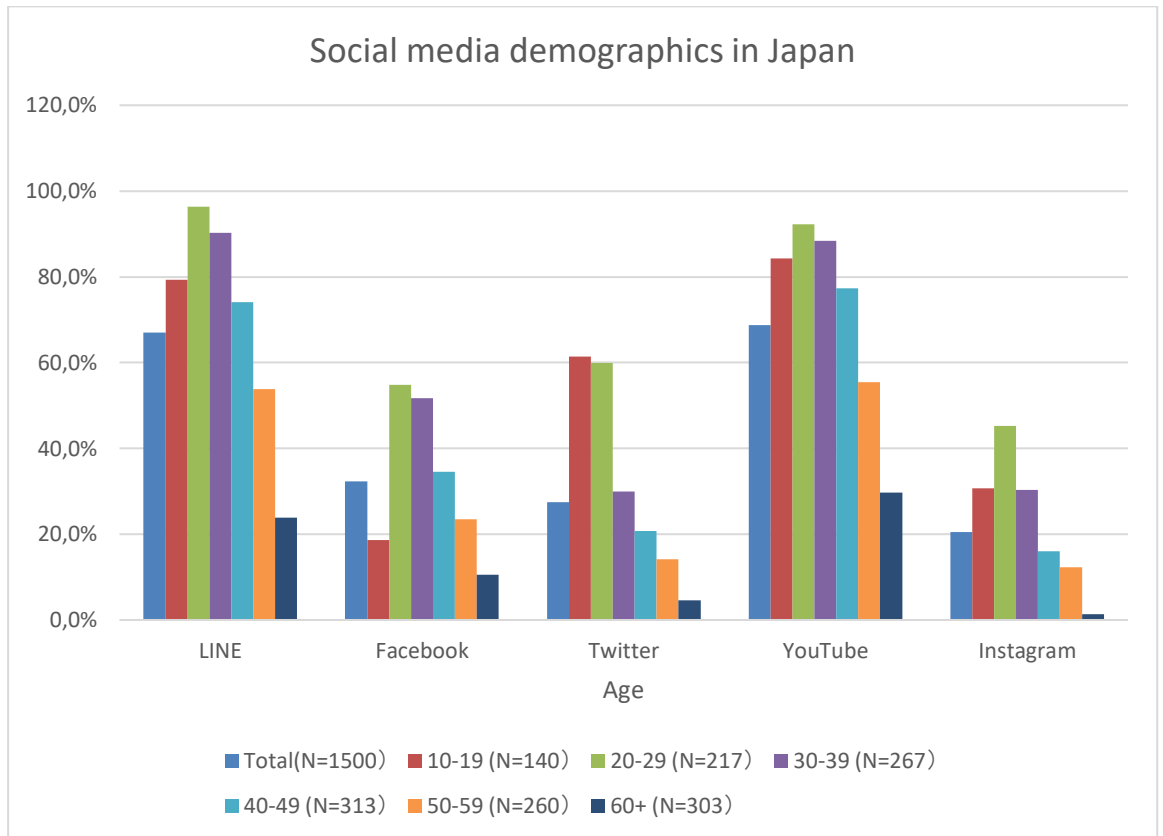


Table 3 Social Media Demographics in Japan (Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2016)

The leading social media platform in Japan is YouTube with 68.7% of total population using it, followed by the Japanese communication app LINE with 67% using it. (Table 3) The usage of social media channels has big differences across the age groups, one of the biggest differences can be seen in the use of Facebook compared to Twitter, where Facebook is preferred by the older generation +30 while Twitter has popularity among the younger 10-30 age groups. Instagram is being used mainly in the 10-40 age group.



### 3 Development Task

The purpose of this thesis is to predominantly create solutions for problems that a real company has rather than explaining general phenomena, which makes this paper a development task rather than scientific research (Ojasalo, Moilanen, & Ritalahti, 2014, 17-22). Some parts of the development plan are based on common sense of the writer and the commissioner since information regarding, for example, company environment is not available. While some common sense is used, the focus of the paper is to produce a development task, based on relative credible work and reasoning.

Creating a successful development plan requires more than correct and broad theoretical background and precise analytic research. Effective development competency begins from being able to identify the right research problem and narrowing it based on previous knowledge on the subject. The developer should also be able to recognize the relevant information from the irrelevant, all while keeping the development task compact and applicable. (Ojasalo et al., 2014, 11-12)

According to Ojasalo et al. (2014, 11-12), development projects are also time bound, and usually the process is planned and tracked from start to finish. The following figure represents the process of this paper.

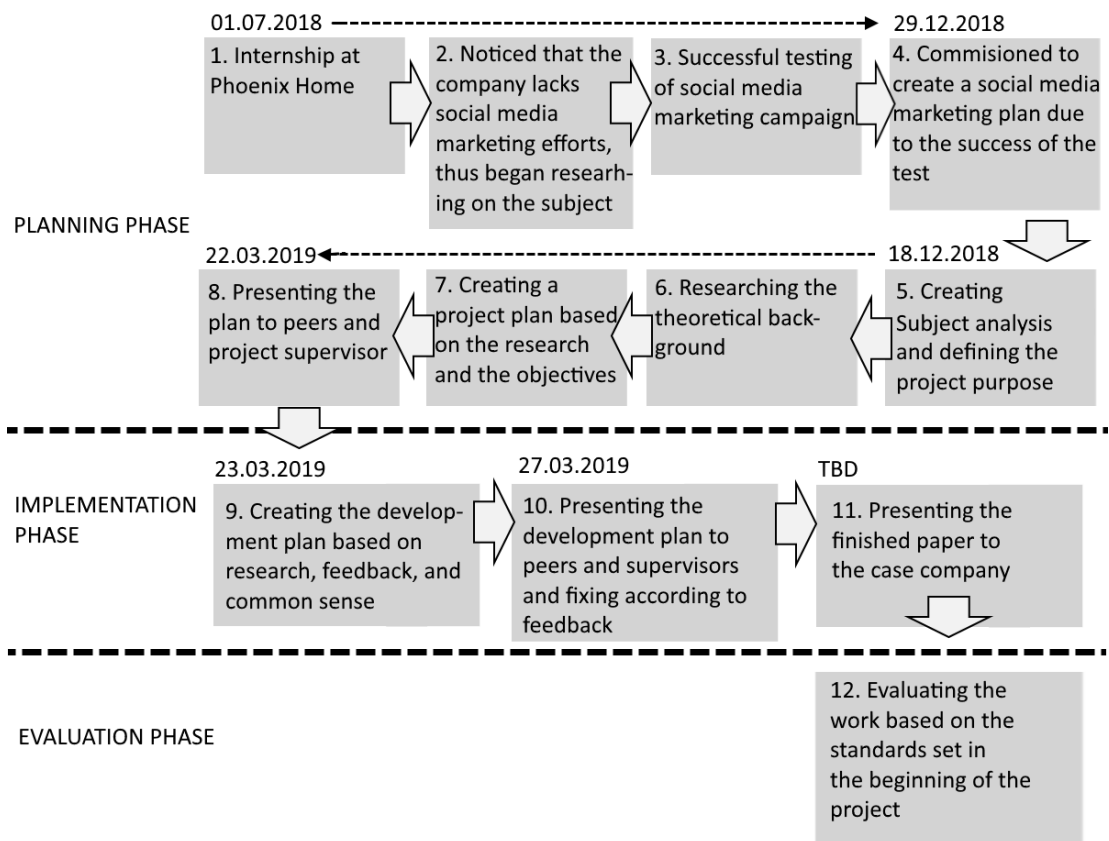


Figure 6 Project process

The process is divided into 3 phases: planning-, implementation-, and evaluation -phase. The planning phase spans from conceiving the idea, identifying the problems, to presenting the project plan to peers and supervisors. In this phase the developer creates a structure for the project which includes the goals, schedule, theoretical background, and a plan that describes how the desired results will be reached.

As can be seen on the above figure, this paper began from the realization that the case company does not possess the necessary strategies or effort to effectively market in their chosen social media platforms. The author of this paper got commissioned to create this social media marketing plan after successful testing of one of the social media platforms. From there on, the author proceeded to creating a structure for the plan, which included goals, schedule, and methods for achieving a compact and applicable development task.

The implementation phase is where the acquired knowledge and the correct methods are used to create the actual development plan. The author of this thesis followed the previously mentioned action plan by implementing what he had studied to fit the case company.

The last phase focuses on evaluating the project results and examining possible future development tasks based on the results. Due to time restrictions, the author will not implement the marketing plan which is why this paper doesn't include the results of the implementation. Instead, the project will be evaluated based on credibility, practicality, clearness, and the comprehensiveness of the plan.

During the subject analysis, the author gave the project a deadline of 01.05.2019. The project was finished earlier than originally planned.

The goals of the original structure were to create an effective social media marketing plan which would help the company gain access to increased number of potential customers, and to deepen the relationship between the company and their existing customers. The goals were modified slightly during the process due to new insight into the project matter. In the finished plan the goals are as stated in the first chapter. After honest evaluation of the results, the author concluded that the project was successful and that the desired goals were met.

## 4 Company Environment

Before a marketing plan can be conceived, a thorough analysis of the company environment must be conducted. Company values, strengths and weaknesses of the product, competition, audience interests, location, size, and other external and internal factors must be analyzed and understood to create an effective marketing plan. This information is required on every step of the Four-Stage SMM process by Dodson, as well as to implement the social media marketing methods presented by Mahoney and Tang on their Strategic social media book.

Some of the information presented in this chapter is based on client's word of mouth and on subjective observations, due to the subjective nature of some of the questions asked, and because of lack of information on the company environment of Phoenix Home.

### 4.1 Company and product

Phoenix Home is a Japanese construction company that specializes in Finnish made log houses. As their biggest selling points, the company values their Finnish wood as building material, small company-like customer service, cheap housing, transparent pricing, linear/strict process scheduling. Biggest difference between Phoenix Home and their competition is the Finnish wood which allows building homes with the highest earthquake safety qualification, increases the life cycle of a house by decades compared to the average Japanese house, while allowing modern and flexible house design. The Finnish pine wood has also been studied to promote clean indoor air, to have probiotic surfaces, and living in wooden house has been linked to reduced stress and anxiety. The company's brand is based on Scandinavian design and culture, Finnish wood and nature, and providing affordable and carefree log house solutions. The company slogan "Forest Enjoyment for Every Life", or "FEEL" in short, clearly states the company mission and is aligned with their branding.

The company management has stated that they want to avoid over branding in some specific niche market, for example marketing the company specifically for nature activists. The company wants to stay attractive to as many parties as possible. This can be seen in their product catalogue, which has options for medium-, and high-income customers and products that are suitable for rural, urban, or the mix of the two living types. The company also wants to avoid seeming too

feminine or masculine, which is why they promote feminine Scandinavian design in strong log buildings, creating a mix of the two.

As seen by Japanese public, Log houses are unique, natural, and eco-friendly, but they also have many stereotypes that complicate the marketing and selling of the log houses. Log houses are thought to be expensive, have fire safety risks, high maintenance, and are thought to be weak against natural disasters, pests, and moisture. One of the biggest challenges for marketers will be to prove the stereotypes wrong. Some Japanese organizations are taking the first steps towards changing the public image of wood and log house buildings by demonstrations, for example Sumitomo Forestry's plan to construct a 70-story wooden skyscraper in central Tokyo, Japan. (Flora Carr, 2018)

#### 4.2 Audience

The broadest description of Phoenix Home's target customer includes all the people interested in buying a house in Japan. However, realistically there are two main target audiences that Phoenix Home is especially interested. New families with children aged between 2-6 years old, and couples reaching the retirement age. Other factors that the company is looking for in the target audience are interest in outdoor activities, nature, Scandinavian Design and culture, gardening, camping, sauna, and cabin holidays.

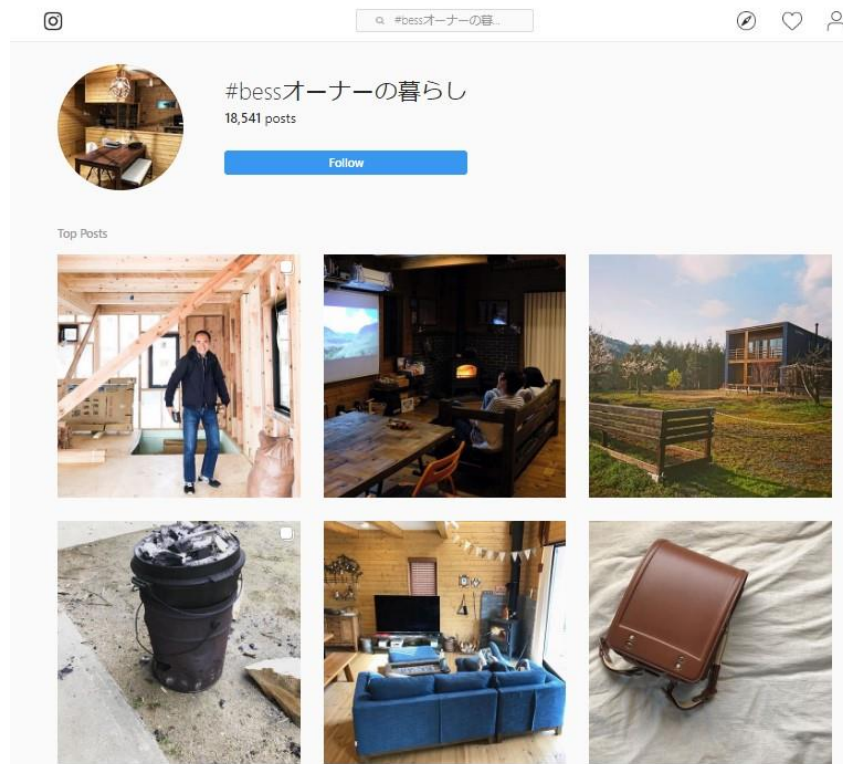
The target groups predominantly belong to the Japanese workforce, which means that on average their work starts at 09:00 and finishes around 18:00. The lunch time in Japan is usually from 12:00 to 13:00. The optimal times for posting content is before the work starts, during lunch hour, or after work. The company has previously experimented with different posting hours and they concluded that after work is the most optimal.

#### 4.3 Competition

The Japanese log house industry is crowded even though the market for log houses is currently not very big. Some of the biggest competitors of Phoenix Home include BESS, Honka, Talo, Bigbox among other wood-based construction companies. All the main competitors are consistently utilizing at least Instagram and Facebook successfully in their marketing scheme, and few of the

competitors also use twitter, but with little to no success. There is limited data on how beneficial social media marketing is for the competition, but when looking at the high quality and quantity that is being posted by the companies, they are presumably seeing positive results from the marketing effort. At the time of creating this Thesis, most of the competitors have higher follower count and receive more like per post than Phoenix Home. Interestingly even the companies that invest more resources on SMM rarely receive comments and their audience doesn't share their posts very often. While likes and comments are valuable for companies, they rank lower than sharing and commenting, which prompts the question if the competition are simply having hard time receiving shares and comments, or they just undervalue that type of engagement all together.

Most of the competition has had some success with UGC, especially BESS has managed to create a community environment where the members feel proud to own BESS homes. The home owners post pictures on Instagram and Facebook with the company hashtags and praise the product for free. Great example of BESS's success can be found when looking up "#bess オーナーの暮らし", which translates to "#bess owners life", where ~18500 community posts can be found created by the BESS owners and fans. (See Picture 2)



Picture 2 BESS Owners Posts on Instagram

It is easy for new customers to become excited about BESS when they see the amount of happy BESS customers the company has on social media. Another great effect of UGC is their effectiveness to spread the company brand to new potential customers when the post is seen by the creator's friends and relatives. The user's audience is usually completely different from the company's existing one which makes spreading the company message through the customers more efficient than through posting with company account. As discussed in previous chapters, UGC can be reposted to strengthen the community spirit and to empower the original poster, all while saving the company's own resources, but BESS has yet to do so.

Phoenix Home has not had the same success as BESS, as only one user on Instagram can be found using the company hashtag in their caption. One reason for this could be that Phoenix Home did not try to engage their customers into posting the pictures and to use the company hashtags. BESS has already established their social media culture in such a way that even the new customers want to post without any visible persuading done by BESS, other than using the same hashtags in their posts. Phoenix Home on the other hand should motivate their customers to act instead of hoping they would, because the company has not established a posting culture yet.

## 5 Social Media Marketing Plan

After establishing theoretical background for the SMM plan and identifying the company environment factors, the next step is to create the actual SMM plan.

### 5.1 Social Media Marketing Goals

As stated in the instruction chapter, one of the main objectives of this plan is to develop an active social media community. Second goal is to increased traffic to the company website, because the goal of marketing should always be to get sales and in social media the way to get sales is through website traffic. The third and final goal is making the Phoenix Home’s FEEL brand “Instagram worthy”, because the goal supports developing the main goal of making active community for the company.

The variables for creating SMART goals will be used in the table below for making sure that the goals are effective.

<b>1. Get 50 of current house owners to follow FEEL social media channels by cross promotion for one week before starting SMM campaign (email, other social media).</b>	<b>Description:</b> In order to enjoy the benefits of active community, first a follower base needs to be established. <b>Specific:</b> Yes <b>Measurable:</b> Amount of house owners as followers <b>Achievable:</b> There are over 300 FEEL house owners who can be contacted <b>Relevant:</b> Will benefit overall SMM efforts <b>Time-Bound:</b> For one week before starting social media Campaign
<b>2. Develop a unique FEEL brand style where posts constantly get over 150 likes, while also increasing authentic user comments to 4 comments/post in the first month operations with new marketing plan.</b>	<b>Description:</b> A unique brand style is needed for increasing engagement and to inspire the user to participate. <b>Specific:</b> Yes <b>Measurable:</b> Amount of likes and comments per post. Positive feedback from audience will determine the quality of the posts <b>Achievable:</b> For a moment the company received around 140



	<p>likes/post. Achieving the comments will be harder</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Increased likes and comment will develop the community and boost the post’s visibility</p> <p><b>Time-Bound:</b> in first month</p>
<p><b>3. Increase amount of UGC’s to 5/month by inspiring house owners to become “FEEL log house ambassadors” after establishing a user base of house owners.</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Through UGC the company can increase their visibility and community spirit. The “FEEL log house ambassadors” will also work as a constant stream of content material</p> <p><b>Specific:</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Amount of posts created by users about Feel log houses</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> From the pool of over 300 Feel log house owners, 5 people need to post content regarding the product.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Through the UGC’s the company can reach new people equal to the amount of friends the user creating content has. The UGC also have a positive effect on convincing new customers to buy a FEEL log house due to positive review done by the existing owners.</p> <p><b>Time-Bound:</b> 5/month after establishing a user base of existing house owners.</p>
<p><b>4. Increase traffic from social media to company page to 50 visit/month and 1/month after second month of operations with new marketing plan</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Traffic to the website is the best indicator for tracking if the social media campaign is generating interest to the product and having one sale is already enough for SMM to be a success</p> <p><b>Specific:</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Amount of click through and asking customers after sales, where they found out about the company.</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> During test SMM campaign, the company managed to get 25 visits in one month. With increased community building effort, 50 should be achievable.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Main goal of marketing is to generate sales for the product</p> <p><b>Time-Bound:</b> From second month onwards</p>

Table 4 Social Media Marketing Goals

## 5.2 Choosing Optimal Marketing Channels

In this chapter the different social media channels, which were discussed in the theoretical background section, will be evaluated according to how well they fit to the target audience behavior and demographics, company goals, and to the current knowledge of the market.

### Facebook

Facebook is globally the number one social media channel according to user count and in Japan Facebook ranks as the third biggest after LINE and YouTube. Compared to Twitter and Instagram, Facebook also has a more favorable demographic for Phoenix Home as their target audience is new families with children and nearly retired. The platform also has detailed, but still user-friendly marketing and analytics tools, which are useful for creating content and tracking how successful the marketing efforts are. Facebook allows pictures, videos, gifs, and the copy can be up to 63206 characters long, which make Facebook very convenient for posting an array of different content types. Considering the previously mentioned benefits, Facebook is a good addition to the Phoenix Home marketing scheme.

### Instagram

Instagram is the smallest platform of the five social media channels being considered for use in this thesis. While small, Instagram's demographics in Japan fits the company objective well as it is comprised of mostly young adult which are prime candidates for starting a new family soon. Instagram is more focused on the visual content than Facebook, and this difference makes it a great platform for establishing a brand specific content style which would showcase the company product as "Instagram worthy", which is when an object is beautiful/popular, and thus creating an urge for the users to post content about that object. Another benefit of Instagram is that the marketing and analytics tools of Facebook and Instagram are connected, and Instagram posts can also be easily reposted to the Company's Facebook account. Due to the ease of use of Instagram and the matching demographic with Phoenix Home's target audience, Instagram is also recommended for SMM use for Phoenix Home.

### Twitter

Twitter competes with Facebook for being the third biggest social media channel in Japan. The platform demographics has a big difference compared to Facebook, as Twitter users base is mostly teens and young adults, while Facebook is mainly young adults and adults. The user base

is too young to be considered Phoenix Home's target audience. Twitter also has limitations on the copy length, which differentiates the platform from, for example Facebook and Instagram. Twitter would need slightly different content than the other platforms, which would increase the amount of effort needed for managing the account. As Twitter has a high user count and it is optimal platform for following trends and to post quick updates, which is why it should be considered to be included in the marketing scheme, if there is enough resources for consistent posting.

#### LinkedIn

LinkedIn in theory is a promising platform for attracting possible customers because of the high average salary of LinkedIn users, but LinkedIn in Japan is primarily used by job hunters and even the amount of Japanese job hunters in the platform is not huge, due to other more established platforms existing in Japan. None of the Japanese log house companies use LinkedIn for any purpose. The platform does not offer enough promise for the effort creating an account and consistently managing it requires.

#### Line

Although LINE is promising platform for marketers since it is the most used social media channel in Japan, it is still not fully developed and it has many restrictions, like which type of commercial content is allowed. Furthermore, marketing strategies would differ drastically from, for example, the one used for Facebook and Instagram, since LINE marketing is based on the unique point system. Further research is required before implementing LINE into the marketing scheme.

Due to current resource limitations of the case company, this thesis will focus from this chapter onwards on Instagram and Facebook as the company's main social media channels to be used for marketing.

### 5.3 Content strategy and Implementation

The first goal of the SMM plan is to increase the amount of existing house owners as social media followers by cross promotion between email, pamphlets, word-of-mouth, Facebook, and Instagram. It is crucial to get enough of loyal customers to participate in the company social media, since one of the overall goals of this project is to foster community development, which requires member who are emotionally connected, i.e. the existing house owners who bought a house from

Phoenix Home and so invested money, time and effort in the cause of the company. Getting the users involved can be done by simply asking them to join, so that the members can see and share their experiences of living in FEEL log house, or by motivating the users with rewards.

Because of limited resources the case company could implement a strategy where the existing house owners are contacted through all possible communication channels with a message that explains that the company intends to connect all the house owners to the used social media channels so that they can share their experiences, tips, and log house stories together. The members also need clear instructions how to join, and how they can participate. To make the process easier, the company should find a trusted person who can show example by posting content, which is then reposted by the official company page.

A safer, but much more expensive and time-consuming way would be to introduce a reward system where the best performing members are rewarded at the end of the year according to how much they contributed to the community. The user generated content would be tracked through company/campaign hashtags that the user included in their post caption, and the rankings of the community could be viewed from the company website. With external motivation, the users should be more inclined to join the company marketing scheme.

After successfully integrating the existing house owners to the social media community, the company can proceed to posting content with the goal of getting engagement. The content strategy of Phoenix Home should be multilayered, where people in different stages of a marketing funnel are presented with content that is made according to the audience's product awareness and interest. The following pyramid figure represents the marketing funnel that is recommended for Phoenix Home based on the company goals and the channels being used.

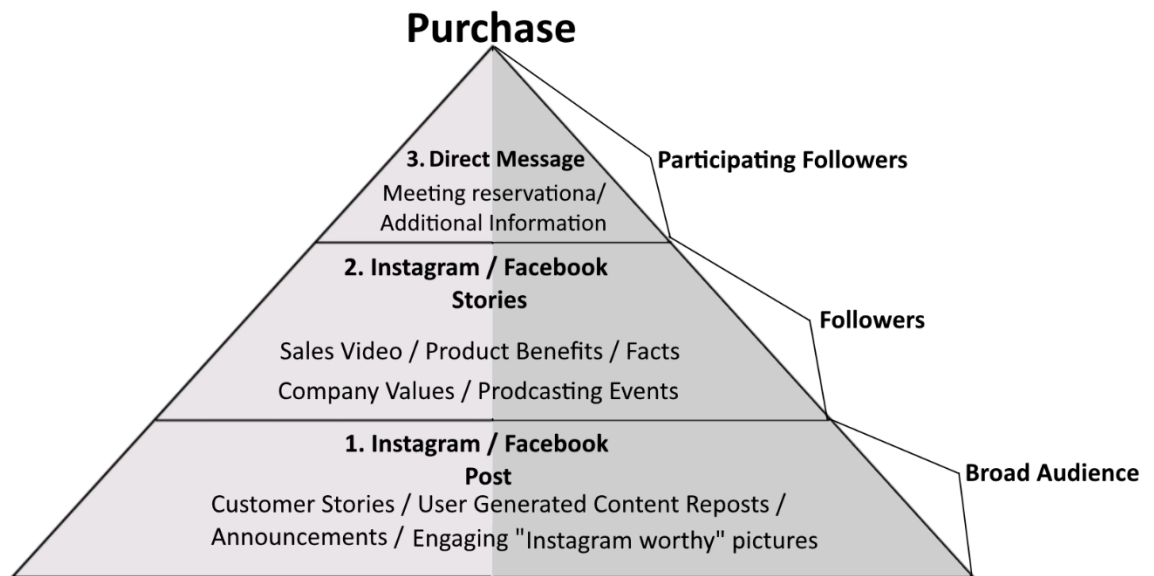


Figure 7 Social Media Marketing Funnel

The above marketing funnel has the same content for Instagram and Facebook, but if the company had more resources for SMM, then the content should be unique for each of the different platforms. Due to the lack of resources, roughly the same content is used for both platforms.

The First step of the marketing funnel focuses on attracting new audience with engaging pictures of living in FEEL log house, and secondly promoting the community by reposting UGC and customer interviews/stories.

The second step of the funnel is where the marketer tries to convince the people who liked or followed the company profile of the benefits of the product. It is easier to keep the audiences focus on the content when the information is presented through stories, which is why the “sales speech” is not given on the regular posts, where the user can just scroll past it. Furthermore, the audience that is on the second stage of the funnel is more likely to be interested in the product than the broad audience of first step. The customer is presented with easy to absorb scientific research on wooden house safety and benefits, i.e., fire-, earth quake-, tsunami -safety, and health benefits of the house in short clips or slide shows. This phase is also great opportunity to promote the company values and goals.

The third and last step of the funnel is sending direct messages to promising followers, for example, people who visited the offline shop or person who constantly interacts with the company content. The company can ask the user if they would like to make reservation easily through mes-

sage, or if they have additional questions the company could answer by message. For many people, messaging is usually easier than calling on the phone, so if the marketer takes the first step of contacting the audience, there's a possibility of getting more customers to the actual store, and it is a chance to provide proactive customer service.

The company social media content should incorporate the values of authenticity, transparency, and community. There are many ways to endorse these values, but the following can be used as a guideline for building community spirit and trust with the customer.

1. Customer should always be the main priority over product and company – i.e., when posting on social media, the message should bring value to the audience, or facilitate them to participate in the community.
2. Have a mission goal, strive for achieving it, and make it publicly known - e.g., being carbon neutral, being the safest, quickest, cheapest, easiest etc.
3. Provide the customer with honest information about the company, product, and every step of the. Any critical information that could seriously damage the company should not be brought to the public.

One way how Phoenix Home could implement the previously mentioned values to their marketing, is by having a mission goal of being the safest and most family friendly housing option available. Wooden/log houses provide an array of benefits that families should be interested in, like safety against many natural disasters, clean air, and the houses are also studied to have health benefits for people with allergies. By making safety the mission goal, loyal customers can be validated with the information that they are living in a safe, clean, and healthy building. Motivated by this the customers can spread the message of how great their house is.

Finally, the SMM needs a content plan, which helps keep consistency throughout the campaign and to prepare the company for unexpected changes in the marketing environment. As the company has limited amount of time and money for SMM, the content should be simple enough to be produced quickly and effortlessly, and the uploading frequency must be moderate. According to these requirements, the following content plan is presented:

- Schedule: 3 posts/week, at 18:00
- Content: According to the Figure 7 Marketing Funnel
- Copy: Engaging caption that provides value to the reader, call to action, company, campaign, and content hashtags
- Stock: Content should be created for at least two weeks in advance to stay in schedule. Some content like updates from events should be posted in real time.

#### 5.4 Key Performance Indicators for project Analysis

After implementing the plan, the results need to be analyzed and compared to the goals set in the beginning of the SMM plan. The most effective way to find out if a project was successful is to analyze the KPIs. The KPIs of all the goals were listed in the Measurable section of the SMART structure used in the first part of the SMM plan. All the KPI's listed in the SMART structure can be found in Business Facebook analytics section, and on the Business Instagram profile.

It is crucial to analyze the results and to further develop the SMM plan constantly, for the marketing to efforts to be effective. The company can fix the aspect of marketing corresponding to the KPI that is underperforming, for example, if the posts have low reach the problem could be in lack of, or just ineffectiveness of hashtags used in the post, in which case the company needs to identify better hashtags. If the posts get low amounts of likes, the problem could be due to low reach, or low quality of the content. The below figure is a rough guideline to what to do if a specific KPI is underperforming.

Under performing KPI	Example of Corrective Action
<b>Reach</b>	Increase or change hashtags,  change upload timing, e.g., 12am -> 6pm
<b>Likes</b>	Increase reach  Change hashtags  Increase quality of content
<b>Comments and Shares</b>	Create engaging content that the company audience wants to see  Reach the correct audience who are interested in the content  Call to action, e.g., comment what is your favorite *blank*, or share this to your friend who would love this
<b>Follows</b>	Create engaging content that the company audience wants to see  Consistent quality among the posts  Call to action, e.g., Follow our page for more content like this  Interact with the target audience, i.e., like, comment their content, or even follow
<b>Traffic to website</b>	Call to action, e.g., Go through this link to get cheaper prices  Increased reach



	Implementing other content type, e.g., in addition to regular posts, also post Instagram/Facebook stories
<b>User generated content</b>	<p>Increase the number of loyal customers as followers</p> <p>Call to action, e.g., share your favorite moment using our product</p> <p>Rewards, i.e., money, items related to the company product, fame</p> <p>Clearer instructions on how to create content</p>

Table 5 Case Company SMM KPI

## 6 Conclusion

The main goals of this study were to create a clear SMM plan that fosters active community development and increases engagement in any social media channel that the company decides to use. The finished SMM plan gives solution to all of the stated problems with answers backed by reliable sources such as research data gathered from trusted organizations (Statista, Japanese ministry), application information gathered from the official websites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and structures for marketing plan devised from proven and decorated authors like Ian Dodson, Meghan Mahoney, Tang Tang, George Doran and Michael Brenner.

The finished paper presented the researcher with new findings and strengthened the existing premises. One of the findings was that the company should motivate the existing customer base to participate in the company's social media community in all platforms for the company to receive the benefits of UGC's and word-of-mouth marketing.

Also, the use of marketing funnels for delivering audience specific content came as a new discovery. As most of the social media platforms have multiple communication tools, marketers should take use of this opportunity by sending differing messages that fit specifically to each audience group. The marketer targets the existing customer with content that gratifies their decision to purchase the company's product and by giving the content that gives them value. New customer on the other hand would receive content that promises to provide the customer with solution to their needs and wants, while attracting their interest to pursue more knowledge about the company product.

Another key finding was that the KPI's and the progress of the marketing campaign needs to be tracked constantly. Effective development in almost any activity requires the examination of correct indicators which explains the progress of the project. Having set the KPI's, a market can use analytics as their base of knowledge for making marketing decisions, which is more effective than operating on instincts alone.

Through researching the Japanese consumer habit, social media trends, and after taking in to consideration that the case company's lack of resources, the paper suggest the company to use Facebook and Instagram for their marketing purposes. If additional resources become available, other social media platforms that the company should look into are Twitter and LINE.

Social media platforms keep developing and new ones appear constantly, which is why the marketers should not depend on few selected channels and strategies but also prepare for what is to come. This development plan includes tools which helps the marketer to succeed in most of the social media platforms, present and future. Though, it should be remembered that, ultimately, marketing strategies should be created according to the unique environment of each network. As the marketing environment changes, so should the marketing efforts. This social media marketing plan requires constant honing according to the most recent findings, in order to stay effective. The best long-term results come from being a visionary and adapting to the current trends promptly.

As explained in the introduction chapter, the scope of this project included only the optimization of social media from the broad concept of digital marketing. The author recommends to further research digital marketing as many of the marketing concepts work in symbiosis, for example, social media marketing brings traffic to company webpage, which in turn boosts SEO performance. Certainly digital marketing tools bring the greatest result when utilized as a whole, instead of using just parts of it. Social media channel Line is another subject that requires more research to determine if it would be suitable for the marketing scheme of the case company. In terms of active users Line is the leader of Japanese social media market and with the company constantly expanding to new markets, Line is a promising media platform.

Limited by the circumstances, the author could not proceed to implement the SMM plan as explained in the introduction and in the project planning phase. The incompleteness of the project is a slight inconvenience when inspecting the work from strictly scientific perspective, as the suggested plan has not been tested in real business settings. The integrity of the project relies entirely on the premise that the referenced authors and the creator of this paper have precise understanding of the social media marketing world. Japanese social media environment surely functions in different ways than those of the social media experts that were used as the basis of this work, which can result in some slight dysfunctions.

Given the chance to create this paper moreover, the author would also include empirical research on some of the more untested methods that were discussed in this paper. One example where empirical research would be beneficial is finding out how likely it is that the Japanese audience would interact with companies and other community members on a social media platform like Instagram. The addition of empirical research would further increase the credibility and reliability of this project, together with the always appreciated opportunity to gain insight into the behavior of the target audience.

Regardless of the minor concerns that the research methods of this paper present, the author is pleased with the result, and believes that implementing the provided plan will be smooth and greatly beneficial for the case company.

With the help of this paper, I hope that the case company can identify the multitude of different factors that affect social media marketing, and through this knowledge they will be prepared to take on the ever-growing social media marketing world.

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