LAB University of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Business Administration, Lappeenranta
Degree Programme in International Business
Specialisation in Marketing

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Brand building on Instagram in Russia

Thesis 2020

Abstract

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The purpose of the thesis is creating a marketing strategy on Instagram for the case company Drop Tattoo Studio in order to build a unique, strong and profitable brand. The main objective of the research is to analyze the current situation and trends of Instagram marketing in Russia and to understand which strategies are better to use with the help of the most popular social networks, such as Instagram around the world. The thesis includes an outlook on how important is Instagram in brand building. Some theoretical information about becoming a strong brand and how to create a successful marketing strategy will be given, as the goal of the thesis is to develop an Instagram marketing strategy that creates brand-awareness, user involvement and recognition for the case company.

The theoretical part of the thesis consists of information about social media for business followed by more detailed findings about Instagram marketing for the case company. The section also covers building a brand, creating a promotional campaign and marketing internationally as a part of a social media marketing strategy. The theoretical part utilizes articles, frameworks and academic literature to present the findings in order to understand how a brand is being developed on Instagram, creating content for social networks and developing SMM strategy, promoting a brand through targeted advertising, opinion leaders and competitive mechanics.

The empirical part is the part where the practical research is presented and combines data gathered by testing different tools on the Instagram account of Russian tattoo company. It consists of implementing a marketing strategy and various marketing functions to the company's account and analyzing how everything works in order to promote and increase brand awareness and user involvement.

The final part of the research is a comprehensive summary, conclusions with answers to all questions and outcomes of the research with all limitations, future ideas and suggestions for the company's development. The final result of this thesis is to identify a successful Instagram marketing strategy for Drop tattoo company that will perfectly work in the future.

Keywords: brand building, Instagram, social media marketing, social media, marketing strategy

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1   Introduction

There is no deny that the role of social media marketing and brand building in various companies is too important in today's world. Nowadays, it is impossible to imagine a successful and profitable company which is not trying to capture the expanding opportunities that marketing provides for developing the business. We live in digital world where people spend more and more hours online, using their phones and computers for searching information and communicating with each other in social networks. With the help of Social Media Marketing, companies can attract new customers, maintain their products and services, profitable relationships with their existing clients and engage them as well as create a positive image of the company in society.

Instagram is one just of the many social media platforms that exist. Boasting over 500 million daily active users, Instagram has huge potential for marketers and for the company prosperity, but the potential in Instagram lies more in the user behavior than the numbers. It can be said that Instagrammers like to connect with brands. First of all, people come to Instagram to be inspired and discover things they interested about, and that includes content from brands and businesses because they want to be in touch with the real world and know about new trends and ideas from social media. (Getto & Labriola & Ruszkiewicz 2019.)

To build the company's brand on Instagram, it is necessary to have a certain strategy that will help to attract a new audience and further profit. A marketing strategy refers to a business's overall game plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of the products or services the business provides. A marketing strategy contains the company's value proposition, key brand messaging, data on target customer demographics, and other high-level elements. Therefore, it is the foundation that the company internally and externally will use to stay on brand. (Investopedia 2019.)

Having a strong strategy will allow to clearly see what the company's brand stands for and how to present it to the world. Once the company has a better understanding of the brand messaging, positioning, objectives, target audience, and goals, they distill the information garnered into a key insight. In other words,

having a consistent Instagram presence builds brand awareness and creates lasting relationships, which result in long-term organic growth. (Greyser & Urde 2019.)

1.1 Objective and delimitations

The main objective of the thesis is to create a marketing strategy on Instagram for the case company Drop Tattoo Studio in order to build a unique, strong and profitable brand. The research includes a clear understanding of different marketing tools used on Instagram in order to apply them to the company's Instagram account and find out which are the most suitable ones.

The most effective marketing tools are defined from analyzing the actions of the main competitors that promote themselves on Instagram successfully and consistently. Moreover, the current situation of doing business online, trends of Instagram marketing in Russia and analysis of strategies which are better to use for promotion on Instagram are taken into consideration. Therefore, applying the knowledge gained from different theoretical sources helps to increase brand-awareness on Instagram for a Russian tattoo company when applying the new marketing strategy.

Social Media Marketing and brand building on Instagram are essential parts in doing business in today's world. Moreover, companies must understand how to work with various marketing tools and features that are available on Instagram for their successful promotion and recognition between others. It can be said that there are not so many professional scientific books dedicated to digital marketing and brand building in social media as it appeared not so many years ago. Therefore, companies do not have enough information about the usage of these marketing tools in the most effective and profitable way. In addition, it is extremely hard to find one exact theory or strategy that will work in the certain business or cases to promote their products or services because every company works from their own perspective.

1.2 Research questions

The major question of the research is how to build a marketing strategy for the case company on Instagram and how to use it in the future. The goal is to understand how a company can stand out among millions of photos posted each day and why a company must use Instagram for their business. Those questions will be answered by combining the theoretical part with the empirical part of the thesis.

However, this research cannot be complete without answering the following sub-questions:

- What approach to Instagram marketing and business promotion do the companies have?
- How to use Instagram effectively as a part of the social media marketing strategy?

The questions were developed with the main idea that their answers will bring some valuable solutions into the use of social media marketing and Instagram marketing for case company in Russia and better understanding of how to market itself on Instagram and allow it to increase its brand awareness.

1.3 Theoretical aspects

The key theories that covered in this thesis are:

- **Brand building** - *generating awareness, establishing and promoting company using strategies and tactics. In other words, brand building is enhancing brand equity using advertising campaigns and promotional strategies.* (Investopedia 2019.)
- **Social media** – *is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideologies and technological foundations. These applications allow the users to create and exchange content.* (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).
- **Social media marketing** – *is the use of social media by marketers to increase brand awareness and build relationships with customers* (Kaplan 2010).
- **Instagram** – *the name of a social networking service for taking, changing, and sharing photographs and video.* (Cambridge Dictionary 2019).

1.4   Structure of the study

Building a brand on social networks, especially on Instagram because it considered as the main platform for promoting commercial accounts for this research, begins with creating a unique marketing strategy. Therefore, the thesis includes the role of Instagram in brand building and how they are connected to each other. Moreover, some theoretical information about becoming a strong brand and how to create a marketing strategy will be given as the goal of the thesis is to develop an Instagram marketing strategy that creates brand-awareness, user involvement and recognition for the case company Drop Tattoo Studio in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

The first part introduces the background of this study and outlines such general issues, such as the key topic, the research problem along with the research questions, followed by the structure of this research. The introduction describes brand building, the current situation of social media marketing and Instagram marketing in general.

The second part explains theoretical aspects related to the topics of Social Media Marketing, Brand building and Instagram Marketing. The theoretical background will describe this subject deeper and provide different ways to both promote and communicate on Instagram. The theoretical part of the thesis consists of general information about social media for business followed by more detailed findings about Instagram marketing. The section also covers building a brand, creating a promotional campaign and marketing internationally as a part of a social media marketing strategy. The theoretical part utilizes articles, frameworks and academic literature to present the findings in order to understand how a brand is being developed on Instagram, creating content for social networks and developing SMM strategy, promoting a brand through targeted advertising, opinion leaders and competitive mechanics. Therefore, throughout the thesis different concepts and theories are explained in order to understand how an Instagram marketing strategy works and what strategies are better to use for successful growth of the company's account.

The empirical part is the part where the practical research is presented and combines data gathered by testing different tools on the Instagram account of a Russian tattoo company. It consists of implementing a marketing strategy and various marketing functions to the company's account and analyzing how everything works in order to promote and increase brand awareness and user involvement.

The final part of the research is a comprehensive summary about conclusions with answers to all questions and outcomes of the research with all limitations, future ideas and suggestions for the company's development. The final result of this thesis is to identify a successful Instagram marketing strategy for Drop tattoo company that will perfectly work in the future.

2   Social media marketing and branding

In this chapter a closer look on Social media marketing and branding is taken in order to understand the connection between these two concepts. The goal is to identify how companies could use them to promote their businesses and become successful and profitable in the future. In addition, knowing and operating with basic information, key terms and definitions related to marketing will help to create a workable strategy for promotion on Instagram.

The idea is to start with background information about social media marketing and branding. Then, all these marketing concepts are examined together with other terms, definitions and theories.

2.1   Social Media Marketing

Social Media Marketing (SMM) *is the use of social media websites and social networks to market a company's products and services. Social media marketing provides companies with a way to reach new customers, engage with existing customers, and promote their desired culture, mission, or tone. Also known as "digital marketing" and "e-marketing," social media marketing has purpose-built data analytics tools that allow marketers to track how successful their efforts are.* (Investopedia 2018.)

In other words, social media marketing not only helps companies connect with

their customers in a more engaging and sincere way, it also allows companies to provide their audience with a call-to-action and reinforces deep connections. Moreover, it can be said that Instagram is essential for companies to build their brand, increase brand visibility, reach more potential customers and make meaningful connections with their audience online. Therefore, having a strong social media presence allows a brand to develop business partnerships, reduce marketing costs, improve sales and make more profit.

The marketing function is also tasked with branding of the organization, participation in publicity activities, advertising and customer interaction through feedback collection. Every product launch starts with marketing and an end with marketing where by the department establishes the needs of the consumers and after introducing the product, the department seeks to identify whether the customer's needs were met. The role of social media marketing is absolutely necessary for business growth in today's life. We all know that the world is rapidly moving from customary to an advanced method of working. Without marketing, all companies' brands will not be illuminated and all organizations would be lifeless. Organization's success is not only determined by the prudent application of funds to the various portfolios of investment but also by the relationship established with the customers, which is a function of marketing. (Barden 2013.)

In addition, the company must to understand how to operate and run their business with the help of Social Media Marketing. The idea is to define steps which must be taken for successful performance on Instagram. This social network offers great opportunities to promote companies and their businesses online. It is a place where people really enjoy following brands and maintaining conversations with them. The company's goal is to increase brand awareness and visibility by establishing the right strategy, identifying their target group and producing new content.

2.2 Branding

Branding, by definition, is a marketing practice in which a company creates a name, symbol or design that is easily identifiable as belonging to the company.

This helps to identify a product and distinguish it from other products and services. Branding is important because, not only it makes a memorable impression on consumers, but it also allows customers and clients to know what to expect from the particular company. It is a way of distinguishing the company from the competitors and clarifying what the company offers and what makes them the better choice for others. In other words, their brand is built to be a true representation of who the company is as a business, and how they wish to be perceived. Branding is absolutely critical to a business because of the overall impact it makes on the company. Branding can change how people perceive a brand, it can drive new business and increase brand awareness. The most important reason branding is important to a business is because it is how a company gets recognition and becomes known to the consumers. Branding is important when trying to generate future business, and a strongly established brand can increase a business' value by giving the company more leverage in the industry. Once a brand has been well-established, word of mouth will be the company's best and most effective advertising technique. A professional appearance and well-strategized branding will help the company build trust with consumers, potential clients and customers. People are more likely to do business with a company that has a polished and professional portrayal. Being properly branded gives the impression of being industry experts and makes the public feel as though they can trust your company, the products and services it offers and the way it handles its business. (Smithson 2015.)

Advertising is another component to branding, and advertising strategies will directly reflect the brand and its desired portrayal. Advertising techniques such as the use of promotional products from trusted companies such as Outstanding Branding make it easy to create a cohesive and appealing advertising strategy that plays well into your branding goals. (Smithson 2015.)

3 Instagram

This chapter describes the importance of Instagram itself and tools that must be used for increasing brand awareness, involvement, visibility and recognition between other users. First of all, the role of Instagram will be identified and the

meaning of brand building on this platform will be explained more deeply. The tools that are discussed in the theoretical part are also essential for analysis in the empirical part for the case company analysis.

3.1 Importance of Instagram

Images in social media are playing an essential role in people's reactions. Images and visual content are increasingly what people want online. The phrase a picture is worth a thousand words relates to the fact that people's brains can consume, process and understand more information way faster through images than text. In terms of marketing this means that the consumers' attention is easier to get by using images or videos as opposed to using other types of content. Furthermore, it is visual content that is most consumed, viewed and clicked on by social consumers today.

Instagram is a mobile application that allows users to take and share photos, discover new places, products, and experiences from their mobile devices. With its potential, Instagram is an online platform of various opportunities for both B2C brands aimed at the end consumer and business-oriented companies with a well-built business strategy. (Instagram 2019.)

Every year, indicators are growing and the number of users on Instagram is increasing at an incredible rate. Living in the age of modern technology and innovations, it should be noted that the role of social networks and online presence of companies is very important. The ability to use social networks helps a person know about a company, get to know it better and analyze it. It would be reckless not to use such a "live" platform in the interests of business, despite the fact that the largest social networks have successfully been used to promote brands. Developed strategies and techniques are created in a huge industry of SMM services. Instagram features make it the largest marketing channel for companies and brands.

In fact, 80% of Instagram users voluntarily connect with a brand on Instagram. People engage with brands on Instagram 10x more than Facebook, 54x more than Pinterest, and 84x more than Twitter. On the flip side, 71% of brands have accounts on Instagram, because when people follow a brand 75% are more likely

to take action. Therefore, these numbers make Instagram such an effective marketing tool for companies. (Adweek, BrandWatch, Instagram).

Research shows that brands enjoy a number of distinct benefits and advantages on the network:

- **25 Million+** business profiles worldwide (Instagram Internal data 2018).
- **Million+** advertisers worldwide use Instagram to share their stories and drive business results (Instagram Internal data 2018).
- **60%** of people say they discover new products on Instagram (Instagram Internal data 2018.)
- **200 Million+** Instagrammers visit at least one Business Profile daily (Instagram Internal data 2018).
- **80%** Increase in time spent watching video on Instagram (Instagram Internal data 2018).
- **1/3** of the most viewed stories are from businesses (Instagram Internal data 2018).
- 70% of Instagram users report having looked up a brand on the platform (Iconosquare 2015).
- 62% of users follow a brand on Instagram (Iconosquare 2015).
- Only 36 percent of marketers use Instagram, compared to 93% of marketers who use Facebook (Selfstartr 2019).

3.2 Branding on Instagram

There is no deny that *Instagram is not a great tool for direct sales at the moment but it should be looked better as a tool to gain awareness and build a strong brand.* (Delaney 2018). A brand is the way in which a company, organization, or individual is perceived by those who experience it. The answer to the question "What is a brand?" starts with the identifying where the brand lives. It can be said that brands live in people's minds and the potential customers always recognize the most essential ones. Brand lives in the minds of everyone who experiences

them: employees, investors, social media, and, perhaps most importantly, cus-
tomers. In today's world, brands are more personalized and they are the products
of the people's affections and reactions. The brand does not need to have an
enforced message because the best message is made by potential customers in
social media. (Lischer 2017.)

Moreover, the brands have their own value and, because of it, the most important
one is to create an emotional bond with the customers. Nowadays, brands have
a huge impact on people but they need to be creative, innovative and open-
minded to provide a unique experience and interest the customer to buy or to try
a certain products and services. The market leadership and profitability of a cer-
tain product or business is realized through the brand value. Identifying the com-
pany's brand values can enhance the business in a number of ways by creating
new products and services, increasing sales and brand loyalty, guiding employee
actions and attract top talent. Brand values essentially improve the way in which
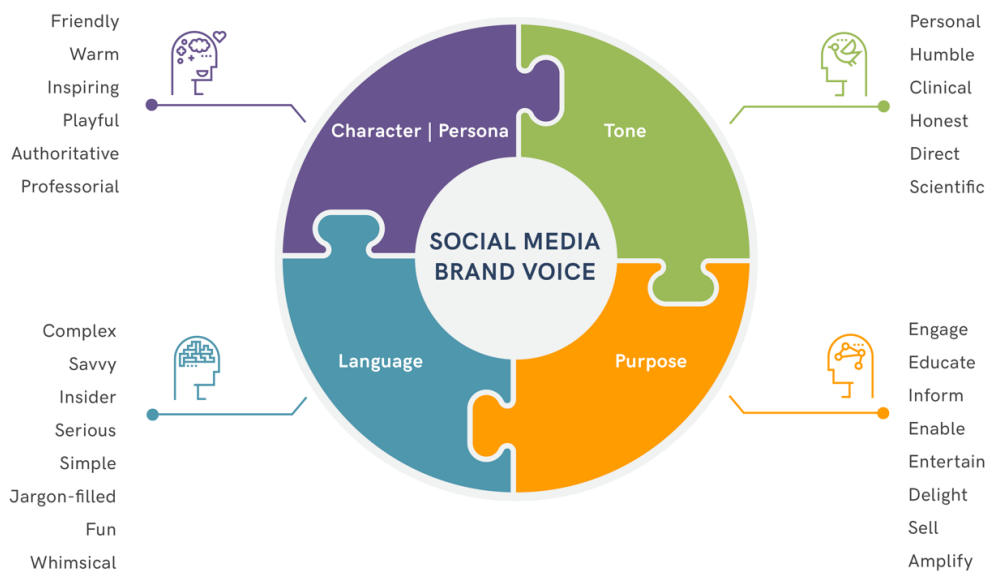the company does business, its reputation and future prospects. (Juneja 2019.)

The visual brand is much more important for a company because all consumers
are easily remembering all components of a particular brand. It means that all
components of a company's social media appearance need to form one unit: with
one color palette, constant filters and one logo that must be similar in all social
networks. All these aspects are necessary to remember in order to create a con-
sistent and unified picture of the brand that people can recognize between many
others. Together with the visual brand, the company should display and promote
a culture and specific message of the business and they must be sure towards
the product or services that they provide. (Jantsch 2019.)

3.3 Brand voice

The first step of brand building on Instagram is to start sharing content that gives
people a reason to become attached to the company and spread the word among
others. In other words, the social media content that the company posts can say
a huge amount about their brand itself and its values. (Smith 2019.)

After looking on the particular business account, the customers can easily under-
stand the company's brand voice, which they establish within a certain period of

time on different social networks. Brand voice is the language that the company use when posting something on social media. Nevertheless, it directly effects on how their business is perceived, shaping customer opinion and interaction with them. When it is used via social media, a strong and consistently applied brand voice built enduring relationships with existing followers along with attracting the new audience. People feel comfortable when they know what to expect and they can relate to the content that is consistent in its delivery. A well-developed brand voice has lots of advantages. First of all, it helps to make the business recognizable and identifiable. Secondly, it allows the target audience to relate more easily to the brand, therefore it builds community around the brand. (Lee 2014) Therefore, the model of "Social Media Brand Voice" can be used for further understanding of the brand voice's importance. This model describes the impression of a brand within four different categories: character/persona, tone, language and purpose. (Schwab 2011.)

Friendly
Warm
Inspiring
Playful
Authoritative
Professorial

Character | Persona

Tone

Personal
Humble
Clinical
Honest
Direct
Scientific

SOCIAL MEDIA
BRAND VOICE

Complex
Savvy
Insider
Serious
Simple
Jargon-filled
Fun
Whimsical

Language

Purpose

Engage
Educate
Inform
Enable
Entertain
Delight
Sell
Amplify

Figure 1. Social Media Brand Voice

A persona/character describes a person who is the typical customer of the company and his character must be identified. The tone describes the way of communication where the company decide how to interact with their potential cus-

tomers and what techniques are better to use. The next step is the type of language that can be used for business. In other words, not every language type is suitable for a company and it is necessary to use the most appropriate one. The last but not least is the purpose of the particular brand, their main values and beliefs. The most important question is about understanding of why company need to be on social media. It also must be discussed and identified in order to successfully run the business and be in touch with customers. All these components play the essential role in building the company's brand and voice on social media, especially on Instagram. (Cimmino 2019.)

3.4 Brand Equity

With the evolution of marketing, the focus of companies switched to the customer and his satisfaction about particular products or services. It can be said that happy customers mean profit for the customer and long-lasting relationships. In order to build a strong brand, the company must shape how potential customers think and feel about products or services that they provide. The goal is to build the right type of positive experience around the company's brand and help customers to achieve good feelings, emotions, beliefs and opinions about the company's products and services. Therefore, the company are less likely to lose them to competitors. (Schwager & Meyer 2007.)

Keller's Brand Equity Model is also known as the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model is a great theoretical framework that companies can follow in order to build strong brand equity. (Keller 1993.)

- **Brand identity (who are you?).** – It means how customers look at the company's brand and distinguish it from others. Brand identity is built when customers start off unaware of the products and services that the company provides. The main goal for the company is to attract them with ad campaigns, collaboration with bloggers or opinion leaders and targeted marketing that increase awareness and recognition. (Keller 1993.)
- **Brand meaning (what are you?)**. – It means that now customers become aware of the company's brand and they are ready to know more about the

company in general. Brand meaning is divided into two: brand performance; when a brand 'does what it says' and performs well over time, it will be loved and trusted, and brand imagery; what does the brand appear to be to customers. (Keller 1993.)

- **Brand response (what are the feelings for the brand?):** Once a customer has bought the brand, does it live up to the hype and expectation for them? If they love the product, they have feelings for it, and they will tell friends, family and social media to buy one. (Keller 1993.)

- **Brand resonance (that strong relationship):** When a customer loves a brand so much, they would not consider buying another one and start to have a strong relationship with the company and their products or services. (Keller 1993.)
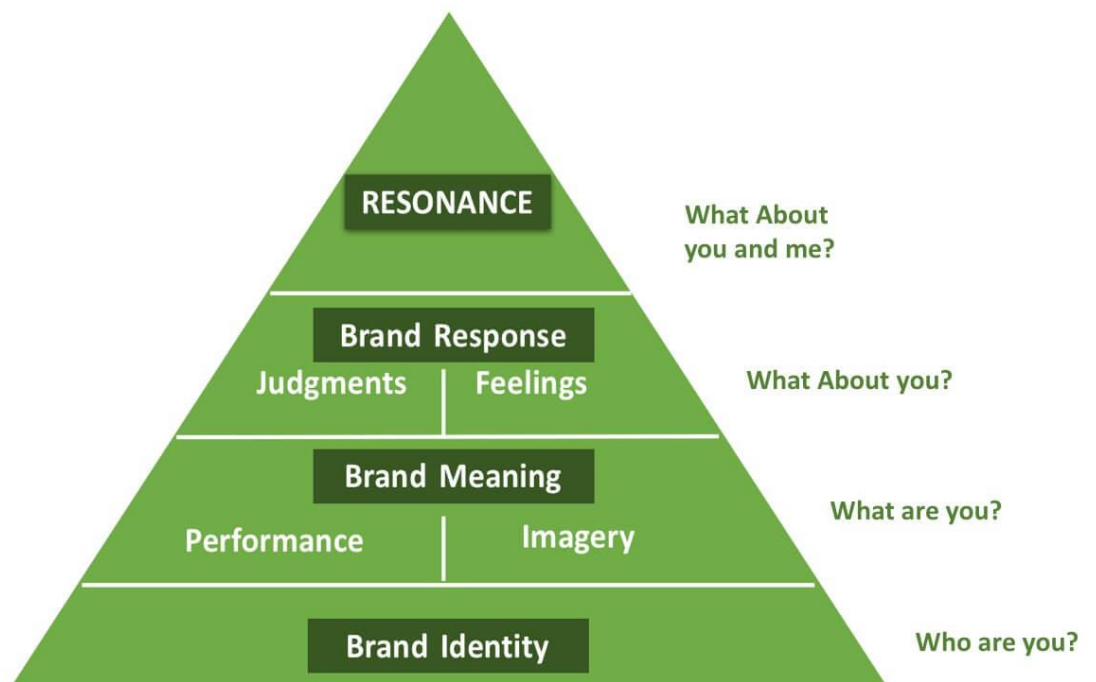
Figure 2. Keller's Brand Equity Model – CBBE Model

In other words, in order to build a strong brand, it is necessary to interest a potential buyer and prove him that certain products or services are what he ex-

tremely needs to buy or try. Thus, the important aspects of creating an ideal atmosphere between a company and a client are trust, product quality and good experience of using them in daily life. (Keller 1993.)

3.5 From personal to business account on Instagram

The appearance of such an option as a business account on Instagram was due to the need to highlight commercial profiles among the others profiles and help to increase sales and the number of customers. Unlike personal accounts, business profiles have a number of functional advantages that open up new opportunities for promoting posts and communicating with followers. The benefits of a business profile on Instagram cannot be underestimated. (Instagram 2019.)

One of the most notable advantages of business accounts is the appearance of the "Contact" button. After the user clicks on this button, he will be provided with all the necessary contact information added by the owner of the page: phone, e-mail and physical address. New buttons allow potential customers to contact with the company faster and easier. Instead of looking for contact information in the profile description, and then dialing with a phone number, now followers only need to click on the sufficiently noticeable "Call" button in order to get exact information about the company's products or services. (Instagram 2019.)

Another important feature that business profiles on Instagram have is access to the account's statistics. Instagram statistics provides a volume of data to analyze the interests and activity of the audience. In other words, the owners of commercial accounts have the opportunity to know their audience: their age, gender and location. This function is useful to monitor user activity and statistics of both the entire profile and each publication individually.

Built-in analytics gives the following information to business account holders:

- number of profile views
- the number of comments and likes under a particular publication
- the total number of views of all publications
- the number of clicks to the website via the link from the profile

- the best posts – publications that gained the greatest interest among followers)
- the number of calls, emails and address views sent by followers
- the time and days when followers use Instagram the most and visit the company's profile.

Analytics allows not only to track the demographics of the audience (age and gender as a percentage), its geographical characteristics, but also to identify the days and hours when followers are the most active. At the same time, it is possible to apply filters: for each gender separately or by country and city. Statistics displays top posts for a given period (from 7 days to six months). All these data allow to adjust and manage the content plan of the company's account, adapting to the needs and interests of the target audience, choose the time and days for publication in accordance with the activity of followers and add content by analyzing the most popular materials. (Instagram 2019.)

Furthermore, it can be concluded that social media marketing and brand building on Instagram play the significant role in establishing relationships between customers and the organizations offering to the market. Therefore, marketing shapes the image of the organization, how people associate the organizations products or services and indeed give people the confidence about their products or services.

4   Elements of Instagram accounts

Whether the company is new to Instagram or they have already created their business profile, there are so many techniques and strategies that are evolving all the time. If they want their business profile to be successful and bring them the desired results, the company needs to be aware of the trends that work on Instagram today. (Crayon 2019.)

Marne Levine, who is COO of Instagram since 2014, said that Instagram is a place for businesses to build their business and it is absolutely true statement. The competition on Instagram is high and the number of profiles increases at an incredible rate every day. There are many new brands, business companies and

bloggers. Due to this fact, an ordinary user experiences an oversupply and over-saturation of information received on social networks. Therefore, the company itself does not cause any interest just because it exists. People are already accustomed to the abundance of business accounts on Instagram and, entering a new one, for example, by clicking on an advertisement, they quickly scan it and evaluate whether it is interesting for them or not. In these conditions, the companies have only a couple of seconds to catch a new visitor and his attention to the page.

Success for businesses on Instagram relies on more than simply publishing a few nice-looking images. It is the result of hard and patient work with understanding of valuable elements like: a clear vision and strategy; consistent frequency; familiarity with audience and visual style of the business account itself. Setting goals help to define the company's strategy on Instagram and create a special and unique content that will achieve targets, build the community, increase awareness and advertise to potential customers. (Read 2016.)

A brand identity is the most effective way any organization (startups, small businesses, agencies, nonprofits, or others) can gain a competitive edge in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Brand identity is everything visual about a brand, including color, design, and a brand's logo. It is the manner in which a corporation, company, or business presents itself to the public. Simply put: it is what you, customers, and prospective customers can see. Brand identity consists of various elements, including:

- logo or wordmark
- different logo variations
- key brand colors and color palette
- typefaces
- typographic treatments
- a consistent style for images and content
- library of graphical elements
- style guide

Larger, successful companies pay careful attention to their corporate identity or corporate image. (Kimbarovsky 2019.)

In the following chapters the key aspects for successful Marketing strategy are described in order to promote the company's brand in the global market.

4.1 Bio/description

With more than 800 million users who engage with the online platform monthly, Instagram has become a busy place where brands can engage new customers and even sell their services/products. When a potential customer reaches the company's Instagram business profile, the bio section is the first thing that they will come across there. The thing that is peculiar to Instagram is that the company cannot add clickable links in comments or captions. The bio section is the only place in the profile where the company can share a clickable link. Instagram has set the limit for the bio section to 150 characters. (Crayon 2019.)

When thinking about the content that the company want their visitors to find in the bio section, make a clear statement about:

- what kind of business you represent
- the things you offer
- your location
- what makes you special
- active link to your website.

In other words, the description and visual design are the first things that users see when they find the company's account for the first time. Therefore, the task is to make sure that the target audience immediately understands that the company's profile on Instagram is what they urgently need to see in their own feed. In addition, the company's description is very personal to brand, what the company choose to share should be representative of their business and show the followers what they do as a company. (Read 2016.)

To create a unique description/profile header for a company's account on Instagram is essential. The idea is to select a readable name, specify the contacts. It

is necessary to highlight the keywords that will appear in the search and thereby help the user to find out the exact company among many similar ones. It is very important to fix the price list and address with the map in Highlights.

4.2   Profile picture

The company's profile picture is one of the most important parts of Instagram profile and the best way to showcase their branding. When someone views one of the company's posts or clicks on the particular profile, it is great if the brand is instantly recognizable and well-known for customers. (Read 2016.)

For many brands this tends to mean using one of three options:

- Logo, also called logotype, a graphic representation or symbol of a company name, trademark, abbreviation, often uniquely designed for ready recognition (Dictionary 2019).

- Logomark is an identifying mark or symbol that does not contain the business name (Logo Design 2019).

- Mascot is defined as a fictional spokesperson for a company or product (Dictionary 2019).

Therefore, it is very important to choose a quality profile photo that reflects branding. First and foremost, Instagram profile photo must represent who the company is. For a brand, choose a brand logo that is instantly recognizable. Logo is also the easiest solution because it helps the company stay visually consistent across all of their channels. (Rabo 2018.)

It can be said that a logo is the face of the company. It must convey the main idea of the company, its values and contribution. When all potential customers see the profile picture or logo, they must fully understand what the company is doing. They must feel the individuality and personality of the brand. In addition, the company must stand out from the competition with establishing a long-term and promising logo or logomark. Creating a workable logo is a long process and it takes a huge amount of time. In order to avoid the constant changes and amendments, the best option is to use the help of real experts in this field, designers. In process

of creating a unique logo, it is needed to pay attention to the key points of the business. It is very important to think carefully through all details because the logo supports the brand recognition among other people. A potential buyer has only a couple of seconds to remember the logo. In other words, the logo must be as simple as possible and easy to remember by the user. Using more than 4 different colors in the logo will lead to failure. The best option would be a combination of 2-3 colors.

The logo's font is another important design element. It also sends a message to a potential client. The font that the company selects should be easy to read. In any size, small and large, it should be clear, and the distance between the letters must be the same.

The goal is to choose an interesting and memorable option. Standard fonts are very boring. A potential client does not distinguish them from the rest of the mass, they do not catch the customers' attention. Therefore, it is better to immediately abandon this option. In addition, a good suggestion is to highlight individual elements of the company's logo. Colors, font, textures and design will create the necessary playfulness and define the logo against competitors.

4.3 Identifying the target market

Identifying a target market helps the company develop effective marketing communication strategies. A target market is a set of individuals sharing similar needs or characteristics that your company hopes to serve. These individuals are usually the end users most likely to purchase your product. (Hubbard 2019.)

In 2015, Instagram opened up Instagram ads. Using the Facebook advertising system, marketers can reach any specific segment of Instagram's 600+ million users from posts or stories with the most powerful targeting ability. The company can specify their target audience's location, demographics, interests, behaviors, and more. It can be said that there is no limit to the success a business can reach with a dedicated Instagram Marketing strategy. Instagram has evolved over the years, and now there is a greater emphasis on making money through product placement and different ways of advertising and promotion through targeting. (Lua 2017.)

The latest program is called shoppable posts and they allow businesses to add tags to the products in their photos with links that include a product description, price and the ability to "shop now," which will lead the user to the company's online store. It makes purchasing process much easier and more comfortable for customers. Therefore, nowadays it is very useful for businesses to work with various Instagram features which can help them to be well-known. With this new service, it is simple for a business to attract actual sales from the site, and with 72% of Instagram users admitting to purchasing products through the social media platform, the results are hard to ignore. (Salpini 2017.)

4.4 Creating a content strategy for Instagram

When the company understood their content themes and main goals, then it is the best time to bring it all together into a content plan which helps to define the style of company's posts, alongside how frequently they are going to post to Instagram. It stands to the fact that content is the heart of Instagram. The 95 million photos and videos shared daily to the platform are the reason more than 500 million people open the app every day. (Schlosser 2016.)

Therefore, the particular content should be at the core of the company's strategy. The main idea is to create beautiful content that entertains or inspires while delivering the brand message and story. Moreover, consistency play the essential part in doing business, especially in building a successful account. By creating curation rules and being consistent, the brand's account will become recognizable between users. The idea is that the more likes and comments the company gets, the more visible the company becomes. It can be achieved by taking high-quality photos, using local hashtags and partnering with other brands or influencers who can significantly increase their visibility and brand awareness.

4.5 Style guide

The visual style of Instagram profiles makes up the theme, which delivers the look and feel of the company's content. Creating a theme on Instagram, the company makes their brand more recognizable to the online community. Due to the theme delivering a certain style, people will recognize their content even when they reach in different placed on the web. Therefore, the feeling that Instagram

theme delivers to the viewers should resonate and align with the personality of the company's brand. (Crayon 2019.)

One of the most important parts of any social media strategy is the style guide. Style guides contain all the necessary information for a piece of content from beginning to end — from the design and layout of post to the copy and hashtags that accompany it. (Read 2016.)

- **Composition**

Composition refers to the placement or arrangement of visual elements or ingredients in a work of art, as distinct from the subject of a work. Not every marketer is an expert photographer, so it can be great to define a few quick composition rules: solid background color, main focus of the picture set and extra space at top/bottom for text. (Read 2016.)

In other words, the composition is the number of objects that are featured in photos. Tastes differ, so do different brands have different image compositions. Some can include lots of stuff in a single image in a way that it looks perfectly stylized and uncluttered. Others post photos containing a few objects in them. One of the most popular visual compositions is called "flat lay", a photo taken from the birds-eye view. Taking all of the company's photos in one style is the sure-fire way to bring a consistent look to their business profile on Instagram. (Crayon 2019.)

- **Color palette and tone**

Picking out a color palette will help keep the company's feed consistent and focused. Having a palette does not mean that the account can strictly only use these colors, but it will help to have a nice consistent, familiar feeling of the company's posts. (Read 2016.)

Once the company have established the brand's tone, they are started to define their Instagram look and feel. It means that their look and feel of the account are how the company visually expresses the tone with the help of different visual approaches (photography, illustration, design, crafts, etc.) and/or photographic styles (lifestyle, studio, etc.) that will resonate with your audience and align with

the brand's narrative. The most essential ingredient is to establish curation rules and sticking to them. By creating a consistent visual aesthetic, the particular brand will strike an emotional chord and connection with viewers. (Saad, Rosenberg 2018.)

- **Fonts**

If the company is going to post quotes or text overlays on their Instagram images or stories, it will be much better to keep the fonts consistent with the brand by choosing the same fonts that they use on website or other social networks. (Read 2016.)

- **Filters**

There are 23 active filters and a number of settings provided by Instagram at the moment. This gives the company the freedom of choice of the most optimal solution that will match their own business and create a unique Instagram theme. Choose one that matches the business ideally and stick to it. Applying the same filer to their visual content will make the company's posts look coherent no matter if the images look similar or completely different. (Crayon 2019.)

Moreover, photo editing has a very important role in attracting new followers. Now there is a huge number of free and paid applications for processing photos directly from the mobile phone. With the help of several filters or effects, the company can quickly and efficiently improve their photos, giving them brightness, contrast and saturation. Therefore, many various filters can positively change the look and feel of a photo or video. To make the company's account look attractive, it is needed to combine the photos with each other and make similar editing and effects. The more beautiful and harmonious the profile is designed, the more likely that the account will attract the user and he will want to follow. (Read 2016.)

- **Captions**

Instagram is an incredibly visual platform, based primarily on photos and some video posts. A strong visual component will capture the audience's attention, but it won't drive conversions. That's why a well-crafted caption with a clear message

and possibly a CTA can make a significant impact on Instagram results. The caption allows the company to take the visual message of the photo several steps further. The purpose of an Instagram caption is to tell more of the story or message behind the company's photo or video. It's also important to think about the structure of your caption. (Herman 2019.)

Instagram captions are limited to 2,200 characters, and after three lines of text they become truncated with an ellipsis. It is very important to come up with interesting, and sometimes even provocative headings for the company's posts, thereby intriguing the user and forcing him to read the post to the end. The beautiful and well-crafted photos attract the user, but also the informative part of the account must meet certain criteria. Therefore, captions are a chance to enhance the content further and there are plenty of ways brands use them. (Frank 2017.)

Many companies choose to treat captions as a place for sharing informative posts about different topics and micro-blogging, others use them to add a short headline to a post and others use captions to ask questions and encourage replies. The possibilities are endless, the idea is to know how to operate with captions in order to interest followers and enhance them to stay on the company's account. (Read 2016.)

- **Hashtags**

When the company only start to work on its account on Instagram and try to stand out from a huge number of competitors and other accounts, it is time to think about the simplest methods of promotion – hashtags which are essentially Instagram's sorting process. With around 95 million photos posted on Instagram every day, it's difficult for Instagram to efficiently deliver the right content to the right people. Hashtags help the company's post get discovered by viewers most interested in seeing it. Essentially, hashtags are a better way to categorize posts. They help to reach a target audience, and more importantly, they help the target audience find the company. These users are more likely to engage with the post because the post is exactly what they wanted. (Forsey 2019.)

In other words, hashtags have become the easiest way to categorize content on many social media platforms and increase the visibility. Hashtags allow Instagrammers to discover content and accounts to follow. By marking their posts with the thematic hashtags, companies allow other users to find necessary information using the global search on Instagram. This type of labeling came from Twitter and quickly spread to other social networks, especially to Instagram. If companies know how to use hashtags, they will help to structure information on a specific request and potentially increase the traffic to their Instagram pages. As a new business on the block, the small company may be intimidated by the competition, but with the proper use of hashtags, it can separate the company from the herd or the crowd. When it comes to choosing the right hashtags for content, it is best to do the research and see which hashtags people in the market are using and which are most active. (Read 2016.)

Creating a brand campaign hashtag is also a good idea for further promotion. This is the trickiest item, but if done successfully, it can pay off big time. Some businesses have successfully attracted followers by creating their own campaign hashtag. A campaign hashtag needs to be funny, clever, or at least memorable in order to work. (Forsey 2019.)

5 Effective tools for Instagram marketing strategy

5.1 Instagram ads and promotion

Instagram ads is the next step of brand building once the company converted their account to a business account. No matter how small or big is the audience, the company's posts probably still receive not so many likes and comments — especially if they use relevant hashtags but with 500 million daily active users, it is an enticing marketing channel. (Campbell 2019.)

Since late 2015, the companies have created Instagram ads through Facebook's self-serve advertising platform. Now they have total control over their ads, how they appear, and who sees them and unlike sponsored posts and paid partnerships, their ads get posted directly from the company's account. (Instagram 2019.)

There are various types of promotions on Instagram. A company can promote content through Stories ads, photo ads, video ads, or carousel ads. It can be easily done from the company's Instagram account. Then a company can choose where the ad should lead the people who see the advertisement to its profile, its website, or to the direct messages. Those ads can simply be created within the Instagram app which is called quick creation. (Instagram 2019.)

Targeting options for advertising on Instagram cannot be ignored. Instagram ads have all the same targeting options as Facebook ads. In other words, if the company manage a Facebook page, their ads can appear on Facebook and Instagram. This way of promotion can help the company to raise awareness for the brand, increase traffic to drive visitors to the company's website, improve engagement and involvement of the company's account. (Instagram 2019.)

Creating ad campaigns with Facebook ads manager provides comprehensive tools to promote ads and the company can select Instagram as a placement. These include targeting based on location, demographics, interests, behavior and automated targeting. The company can easily identify and select their main objective which they want to achieve: increasing the engagement, brand awareness or traffic objective. After that, they can define the target audience and target group that they would like to reach. The last steps are placement and budget. (Instagram 2019.)

With understanding of these features, the company starts to promote their posts and Stories which provide different possibilities to reach its objectives and goals. For instance, it is a great opportunity to raise brand awareness for special products or services and engage more potential customers.

Moreover, a good solution to tell about the company's services in regional groups with free ads and on Avito to find the first customers.

5.2   AARRR Framework

In 2007, Dave McClure, an investor in the Venture Fund 500 Startups, introduced the world to a 5-step framework for growth. That framework was called AARRR, or also the Pirate Metrics which helps companies track user conversions. AARRR

stands for Acquisition, Activation, Retention, Referral and Revenue. Metrics help to monitor the strategy of promoting startups and new products, and how the business is developing. Using them, the company can determine how success-fully the project attracts customers – from getting to the site or their Instagram account to making a purchase. Moreover, these metrics help to understand their customers, their journey with optimizing the company's funnel as well as setting some valuable and actionable metric goals for startup. (Balke 2017.)
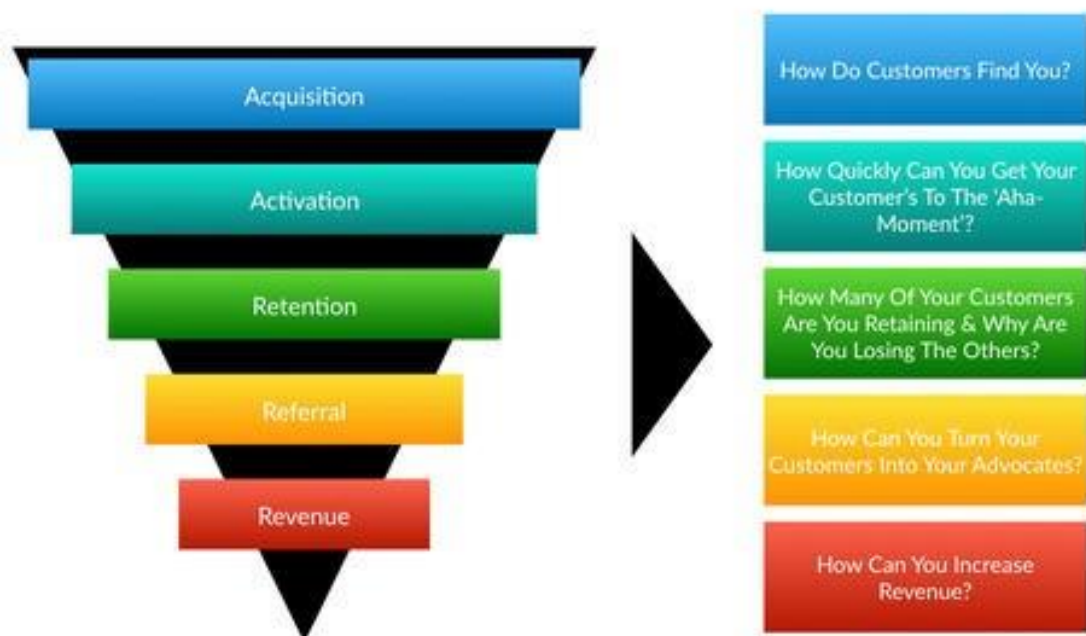

Figure 3. Dave McClure's Pirate Metrics for Startup Growth

5.2.1 Acquisition

Acquisition, the first A in the AARRR framework, describes how people find the company and eventually turn in to customers. That means not just looking at site visitors but also at how many and how those site visitors convert to customers. It is necessary to analyze where users come from and who are they. (Balke 2017.)

Which channels are better to use:

- advertising in social networks

- bloggers ads

- targeted advertising

- contextual advertising

- email Newsletter

- SEO promotion that the company set up themselves or they ordered from an agency or freelancer

- advertising in online publications

- company blog articles

- competitions and giveaways

- search Engine Marketing

- collaboration and partnership

- a blog or article where the company participates as an invited guest

- posts on social networks where others recommend you (on their initiative).

What to do:

- test various methods of advertising

- use multiple channels

- apply ads to different audiences

- search and analyze the best campaigns

5.2.2 Activation

Activation is about the first experience the customer has with the company's products or services. It means that bringing a user to Instagram account is not enough for doing business and making profit. The goal is to do everything possible so that he enjoys his first visit and enjoys a new acquaintance. At this stage, the company need to understand at what point the user leaves, how much time he spends on the site, which pages he visits. The company can already evaluate the quality of the traffic that they received and analyze about why someone left. (Balke 2017.)

Activation can be done from the main page of the company's website or their Instagram account and from product or service benefits. It is important to make several different landing pages with different approaches to the target audience,

design and buttons. Landing page is a standalone web page, created specifically for a marketing or advertising campaign. It is a web page that customers are taken to when they click on a link or online advertisement. (Cambridge Dictionary 2019.)

5.2.3 Retention

Retention means people regularly come back to use the company's product. For an e-commerce business that means someone not only buys from the company once but multiple times. For an app, that means that users keep coming back and opening / using the app. For a SaaS business, that means that people who are subscribed to software keep using it and stay subscribed. The opposite of customer retention would be customer churn. It is so incredibly important to measure the customer churn rate. For one, their churn rate will tell them if the company have achieved a good product/market fit. If a lot of people are dropping off their product after they start using it then clearly something might be wrong with either their product or messaging.

Customer Acquisition Rate > Customer Churn Rate = Growth

Customer Churn Rate > Customer Acquisition Rate = Burning a lot of money

The idea is to analyze of how often does the particular user come back. Performance indicators for different services and sites will be different. According to statistics, the company can see when the user has entered the hold phase and after that start to secure it. This can be done, for example, by mailing, weekly digest, various push notifications and reminders. (Balke 2017.)

5.2.4 Referral

The absolute best way to drive growth is through referral with having a systematic process in place that incentivizes and generates them on a consistent basis. Two metrics the company want to keep a close eye on for referrals are the Net Promoter Score (NPS), an index that ranges from -100 to 100 and measures how willing customers are to recommend the company's products or services. It lets them know how satisfied and loyal your customers are to the brand.
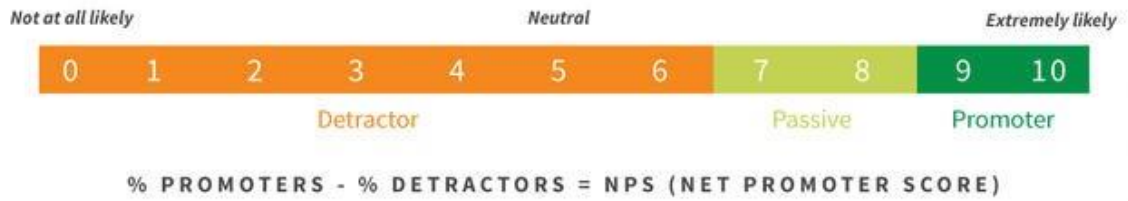
Figure 4. Net promoter score

Another metric to pay attention to is the Viral Coefficient. The viral coefficient is the number of users a customer refers to the company. A viral coefficient of two would mean that one customer on average refers two new customers to the company. Their viral coefficient needs to be larger than one to have growth. The following graph shows the exponential user growth that the company can have depending on their viral coefficient, i.e. the number of people one customer refers to them. (Balke 2017.)
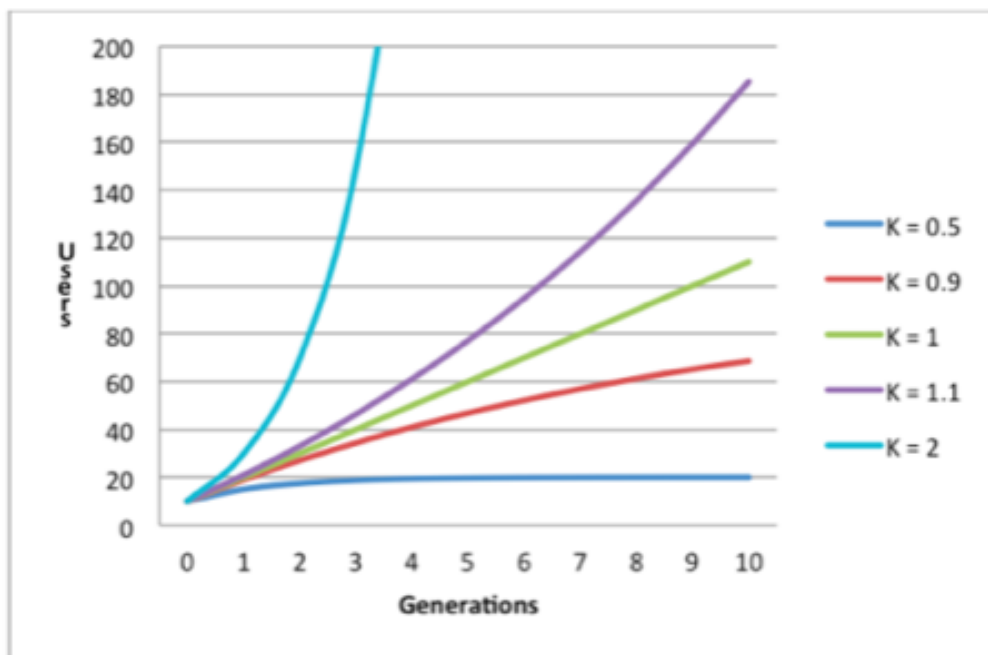

Figure 5. Viral coefficient

5.2.5 Revenue

If the company has optimized according to the four AARR metrics before, revenue should already be flowing in nicely. Revenue and figuring out a monetization plan

are important for any startup. Even Facebook and Instagram, companies that started out as pure social, non-monetary platforms, are only successful today because of the huge advertising business behind them. It can be said that the best way to increase revenue is increasing your Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) and decreasing your Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC). The customer lifetime value is the amount of revenue the company earn from a customer during their lifetime or rather the lifetime as a customer of the company. The customer acquisition cost (CAC) is the amount of money the company spends on acquiring their customer. That includes cost for marketing, sales, meetings, fancy dinners or whatever it takes to get the customer to convert. A good ratio of CLV to CAC for growth is 3:1. To reduce the customer acquisition cost the company should optimize their sales funnel. Summarizing, the AARRR framework is the simplest and most effective way to look at optimizing the business and measuring growth. (Balke 2017.)

5.3 Influencer marketing and collaboration with bloggers

A blog without ads and promotion that a car without fuel: it will not go far. People need to know about the existence of the company and its account on Instagram. Influencer marketing is a great solution for this. The goal is to select the appropriate influencers and request an advertisement but only after the company's account is filled with beautiful and interesting posts, and the number of followers reaches at least 1,000. After that, the next step is to contact only those bloggers who have similar or close themes to the company's blog.

In the past few years, if the company wanted to advertise their products or services on Instagram, they had to use sponsored posts. This requires negotiating privately with Instagram influencers and asking them to promote the brand on their account. It is a very effective way to drive traffic and sales through Instagram advertising. Sponsored posts still have their place in Instagram advertising. It provides social proof, adding a cool factor to the business, and people are more likely to buy something when someone they trust bought it first. In October 2017, Instagram launched paid partnerships in an effort to increase transparency for users and provide influencers and brands alike with more Instagram advertising opportunities. The feature, available to accounts with lots of followers and engagement,

offers more insights and reporting than standard sponsored posts. (Leishman 2018.)

When it comes to social media, the company start to have their regular viewers and followers who start to observe the life and activity of Instagram account. In order to save followers and do not lose the important part of the target audience, the company must somehow interest its potential buyer/client and raise the asset even more. Properly thought-out strategies, well-chosen design, loud headlines, and clear understanding of targeting are the key to success and further collaboration with other brands.

Working with influencers and bloggers is a great way to tap niche markets and get people talking about brand. The brand's influencers are users that employ the company's brand hashtag who have the largest number of followers. Influencer is a person with the ability to influence potential buyers of a product or service by promoting or recommending the items on social media. They are Instagram users who have an established credibility and audience; who can persuade others by virtue of their trustworthiness and authenticity. (Dictionary 2019.)

Moreover, it can be said that influencers are online celebrities who will often promote a brand or product and take it into the mainstream. A dependable influencer can bring the company's sales to a whole other level through increased return on investment and access to demographics that they normally would not reach. If the company uses a well-known influencer or blogger for their business, then they can spread word of the company or product to millions of followers with just a few posts. In addition, influencers and bloggers often share their opinions on products, services or things in their everyday lives. Influencers with high levels of engagement and a strong following can have the big impact on their audiences' purchasing patterns. (Freberg 2018.)

In other words, working with opinion leaders is a huge step in promoting of any product or services. Moreover, opinion leaders are able to correctly present information and interest the customer. In other words, opinion leaders can influence people, they inspire and provide confidence and reliability. That is why, a very important aspect of promotion is to purchase an advertising from famous people

that could help to increase the company's engagement and user involvement of their Instagram account. Therefore, the brand could get exposure and grow organically.

5.4 Content scheduling

Before the company begins their active work on the company's Instagram account, they must have a clear idea of what content they are going to share with users and think ahead about the schedule for posting pictures, stories and some thematic projects. Content scheduling takes the Instagram marketing to the next level and saves the company's time by planning all upcoming posts, stories and campaigns. Therefore, it is essential to plan all company's content in advance. Scheduling the content on Instagram means to create a certain plan that defines on which day and time of the day is better to post the content on the Instagram account. (Cooper 2019.)

When Instagram got introduced, the users saw the Instagram posts of people they follow, like and comment in reverse chronological order. However, Facebook changed its chronological algorithm a couple years ago and now every post of the company's account depends on the user's interaction, involvement and interest. In other words, content scheduling is closely connected to the characteristics of the Instagram algorithm, because of it, companies must pay more attention to quality of content which they post. (Lua 2017.)

Today, Instagram is perhaps one of the fastest growing platforms and every couple of months, developers introduce new changes in algorithms and functions. All these aspects are significantly changing the way of how companies do business and how they post content on Instagram in order to get the potential customers to see it. The interaction and involvement by users on Instagram account push the company's profile to the top of the timeline of the followers. The primary goal is to get the maximum interaction with potential customers who see the posts of the company and it has become rather important with the change of the algorithm of Instagram. (Gotter 2019.)

As mentioned, Instagram currently does not suppress posts from business accounts, as they did on Facebook. As this occurs, it will become increasingly more

difficult to gain exposure for free, and it will take longer to build a following base without investments. (Lua 2017.)

The company's goal is to understand that posting frequency is not as important as posting consistency. Moreover, there is not a universal best time to post something on Instagram. As it said before, the chronological order does not work for businesses and there is no exact order of seeing posts by users. Nowadays, Instagram is working better with video content and paid advertising for further promotion. Therefore, the company need to remember that videos might overtake images as the best content type. (Lua 2017.)

- The average engagement for videos is growing faster than the average engagement for images (NewsWhip 2017.)
- When you go live on Instagram, you will appear right at the front of the Stories feed.
- More than 400 million people use Instagram Stories every day (Instagram 2018.)
- Fifty-seven percent of brands believe that Stories play the very effective part of their social media strategy. (Buffer 2018.)
- While Instagram allows for a maximum of 30 hashtags per post, TrackMaven found that nine hashtags seem to be the optimal number for getting the maximum engagement. (TrackMaven 2016.)

5.5 Storytelling

Instagram is a great way to show potential customers that the particular company is more than just a faceless corporation. This can be done through many of the app's features, but the particular company can make an impression with their Instagram Stories.

First of all, Instagram Stories is a feature that lets users post photos and videos which disappears after 24 hours but their benefits can last much longer. (Instagram 2019.)

Properly designed Stories will benefit the company's outreach and level of engagement and help to find new followers and even potential customers. Stories

on Instagram is a complete tool for working with followers for commercial accounts. The rules for working with Stories in general are the same as when publishing posts – they need to be planned and maintained in the same style.

There are many different apps for Stories to make them as a small film with fantastic quality and further engagement. Various applications allow to make beautiful collages or use free and paid templates – layout with free space for images or text. The most popular are Unfold, Appfortype, StoryArt, InStories and Canva.

Therefore, Instagram Stories is a great example of how to promote the business with many features that Instagram provides. For instance, the location tag, the temperature, polls, drawings, gifs, Q&A sessions, countdown function, live videos and music can be easily added to everyone's story. With adding some of these features, the Instagram Stories and the business account itself become visible for other users of this social network who may not follow the company's page but can see their Stories from the global search. It actually works with all Instagram features and they drive the most engagement. For example, users can search something for locations and then they are able to see Stories that have been tagged with this exact location they searched for. (Tooby 2019.)

In addition, different polls and Q&A sessions are possibility to know the target audience better and become much closer with them. It is a good example of interaction with potential customers and understand their needs and desires. These tools help companies to encourage their followers to ask direct questions or to express their opinions about certain topic.

The best way to use Stories is to show behind-the-scenes insights into the company and the people who work there. For instance, some examples of videos can be used to show how products are made, videos of office employees interacting with each other, and live Q&A sessions between the company and their followers on Instagram. Instagram Stories are also an excellent way to build rapport, trust and credibility with followers, as well as showing that there's a human side to business. If consumers see the company as more than an entity looking to take their money, then they will be more trusting of the particular brand. It means that Instagram Stories make the business relatable. (Tooby 2019.)

5.6 Augmented reality or Instagram Masks

Augmented reality has come a long way, and apps like Instagram now offer a suite of impressive effects to play with. Instagram announced a program in May 2018 that let brands, public figures, celebrities, and other popular creators make original face filters for their audience via Facebook's Spark AR Studio platform. Accounts would join the closed beta through Facebook with a linked Instagram, then they'd design original face filters via the macOS application. In August 2019, anyone can join the new Instagram version, try this feature or even create AR effects and filters by themselves. Masks can be safely considered an exclusively entertaining function, if not for the cases of using masks by large brands for commercial purposes. (Peterson 2019.)

There is no deny that creating own masks on Instagram is a real trend in 2019. From banal entertainment, they turned into a tool to promote a brand, increase its recognition, engagement and user loyalty. Nowadays people enjoy taking Stories with their favorite masks, filters and presets from bloggers or brands.

Moreover, even if followers do not mark the author of the mask in Stories, in the upper left corner there is a direct link to his profile and the name of the mask. In other words, to receive masks, a person must follow to their author. After that, all masks are automatically loaded into users' Stories camera. (Instagram 2019.)

In other words, this function is significantly increasing the number of followers of the company's account and its recognition between others. Thus, it can be noted that creating own masks is a great way to increase profile recognition and involvement.

5.7 Interaction with followers

Interaction with followers is necessary in order to make a company's profile visible, to grow the engagement rate and to build a strong brand. It can be said that there are several rules that should be followed in order to interact with followers in the right way. Therefore, maintaining connections with potential customers in different ways is very important. The main idea is to understand that asking different questions on a post motivates people to give a comment and express their

opinion. This technique can be very useful in order to reach more people on Instagram with the help of appropriate hashtags, location, comments and likes. With this strategy a company can specifically target Instagram users but also becomes more visible for other users and therefore, increase the profile's engagement itself. (Collins 2019.)

When the company interact with users, it significantly helps to be in touch with potential customers and fully understand their ideas and desires about certain topic. Moreover, it makes the user feel valued and important for the company. The goal is to define the right time for posting something on company's account in order to achieve the main target and value from the users' engagement or interaction with the company's account and its posts in general.

6   Empirical part

For understanding how Social Media Marketing is working perfectly for business promotion on Instagram, the main idea is to look at the real example of one Russian tattoo company. The goal is use Instagram effectively to build a strong brand and reach more customers, improve its sales and customer communication. The aim is primarily focused on Instagram marketing for successful business promotion for the case company Drop Tattoo Studio in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

6.1   Case company

The object of this study is the case company Drop Tattoo Studio, located in Saint Petersburg, Russia. This company began its business relatively recently, about a year ago. It is an open space located in the city center of St. Petersburg, which works according to the coworking system. Coworking is a center where people can rent equipped workplace for the required time.

Until now, Drop Tattoo Studio is not using any marketing channels other than Instagram, Facebook and VK. The main social media platform used by the company is Instagram but there is no clear structure or marketing strategy behind the

online actions. The company's goal is to attract new tattoo artists for rent a work-place, as well as customers who want to get a tattoo, in order to increase their brand awareness and become more popular on Instagram.

6.2   Target of the research

The study of this thesis was conducted in order to create a marketing strategy on Instagram for the case company Drop Tattoo Studio and to build a unique, strong and profitable brand. The research includes a clear understanding of different marketing tools used on Instagram in order to apply them to the company's Instagram account and find out which are the most suitable ones.

The most important aim for the company is to increase their brand awareness and become more visible and popular on Instagram. The idea is to define the most appropriate Instagram Marketing Strategy that will help to distinguish the account between the other similar ones.

The goal is to analyze some Instagram accounts of the main competitors and case study of Drop Tattoo company itself. There is no deny that their Instagram account has a good presence and a quite nice appearance and design. The main problems are a lack of promotion and therefore a lack of followers. The possible solution is to get more engagement and more interaction with potential customers with using some theoretical background, knowledge and possibility of Instagram tools at the same time.

The tattoo sphere is very well-developed in Saint Petersburg and it has a great demand especially during the summer season. Speaking about the location of tattoo studios, most of them are located in the city center. The main competitors of Drop Tattoo Studio are located nearby. There is no doubt that most tattoo salons try to compete with each other, offering certain promotions, discounts and arranging various giveaways. It can be said that it is a huge problem for their further promotion but with the understanding of certain features this issue would be solved.
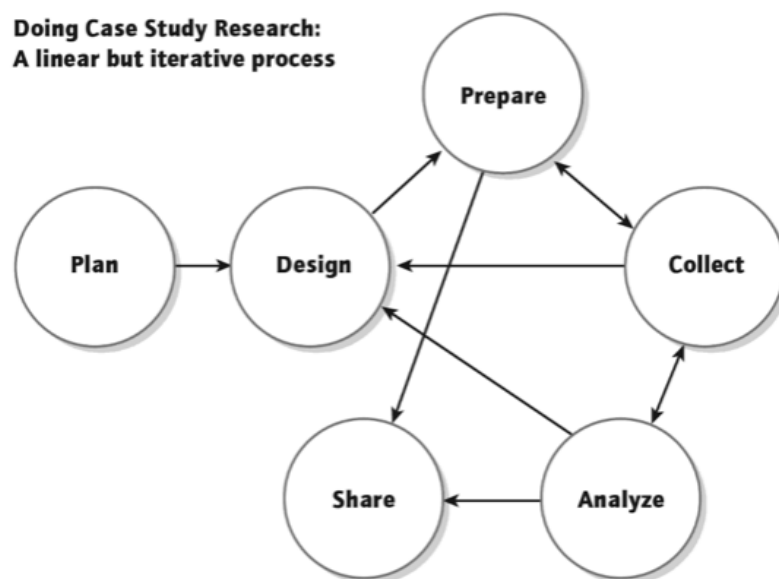
6.3 Case Study Research Method

Figure 6. Doing Case Study Research

The case study research method by Robert K. Yin was chosen for this thesis work. Since the book's first release 30 years ago (1984), case study research has gained considerable acceptance as a research method, likely a result of Yin's unyielding position that case study be considered a separate and all-encompassing method with its own research design. Importantly, Yin manages to link theory and practice by presenting the breadth of case study research and its historical significance at a practical level. It is Yin's view that, when "the process has been given careful attention, the potential result is the production of a high-quality case study" (p. 199). Ultimately, Yin argues that case study research is a challenging endeavor that hinges upon the researcher's skills and expertise. (Hollweck 2016)

In addition, a case study method is a research strategy and an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. Case studies are based on an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, company or event to explore the causes of underlying principles. A case study is a descriptive and exploratory analysis of a person, group or event (for the company in this study) (PressAcademia 2018.)

The research process itself started with understanding of the main objectives and aims of the case company by combing the knowledge from the theoretical part and the analyzed data from the research. The idea is to generate a certain Instagram strategy that will be suitable for the Russian Tattoo company and meet their needs and interests in order to increase their brand awareness and interaction with followers significantly. The starting point for identifying a suitable strategy for the case company's account was an interview to define the main preferences and desires of the case company itself. A number of questions were asked to find out how they see their company, what goals they want to achieve and what budget they are ready to use for investing in advertising and promotion. The research questions were defined and posed correctly based on the main preferences and the objectives of the thesis.

The theoretical part is based on the literature review and the clear understanding of Social media marketing concepts and definitions mainly focusing on Instagram. After that the methodology was identified and the way of how to gather the most suitable information was chosen. The most suitable way of how to use already known information was benchmarking as a process of measuring the performance of a company's products, services, or processes against those of another business considered to be the best in the industry. In other words, the perfect plan was to analyze the company's main competitors and their way of doing business with using Instagram services. With the knowledge and applying on practice of all theoretical aspects and key components of good Instagram strategy, the company's account will be created in order to gain target audience and manage the brand successfully and profitably.

The companies that were chosen for the research are Peplum Tattoo Studio, Small Size tattoo and Vivo tattoo as their Instagram presence is very well-developed and work successfully. Their customer base is large and their services are in great demand in Saint Petersburg. These tattoo studios deal not only with tattoos, but also offer piercing services, conduct copyright training courses for beginner tattoo-artists and even offer rental studio space for people who want to work in a big team and develop their skills in tattoo sphere. The benchmarking of

the accounts of the competitors give an outlook on different approaches and strategies in using various marketing tools on Instagram. While proceeding the findings and making a comparison between these accounts, it becomes evident that there is no one right way to be a successful brand on Instagram and there is no one exact strategy that companies could use.

How to analyze all actions of main competitors on Instagram?

- Analysis of competitor's content on Instagram: what content he publishes, what content works better, with which audience he is communicating, how he is selling itself, how he works with engagement and reach?
- Analysis of the pricing policy of a competitor: prices for all services that he provides for other users, what loyalty and discount system does he offer?
- Analysis of promotion channels: does he use Instagram promotion, collaboration with bloggers and how often?

After answering these questions, it is evident that all companies at the initial stage of the development of their business make a huge contribution to advertising on various Internet platforms. In addition, it can be seen that most begin their active work with bloggers and offer them their services for small ads in Stories or as a post in their Instagram feed. After analyzing the main competitors, the case study was conducted. All the data was collected and analyzed in order to define the results and apply them into a successful Instagram strategy that will perfectly work.

6.4 Solutions for further development of Instagram account for the case company

The goal for Drop Tattoo Studio is to make something special that will help to promote themselves. For a tattoo company in St. Petersburg, an important part of doing business was not only building their brand, creating a unique name, logo but also to show how they differ from other tattoo companies and how they can attract a larger flow of customers. First of all, it is necessary to identify research questions or other rationale for doing a case study; decide to use the case study method, compared to other methods and understand its strengths and limitations.

After that, the goal of analysis such as Instagram Marketing strategy for the case company must to be defined with the developed theory, propositions and issues underlying the anticipated study. The case study design (single, multiple, holistic, embedded) is must also be taken into consideration with procedures that help to maintain the quality of case study.

The solution to this issue includes several successive steps that could significantly increase the case company's recognition not only among potential customers, but also tattoo artists. The first step is dedicated to focus on the educational component, organizing various courses for tattoo artists who only begin to work in this field and want to understand subtleties of this profession. The second step of these courses and workshops is focused on tattoo artists who have already made a great progress in this area and they want to improve their skills and reach a new level. The next step is to become closer to the target audience, conducting various interactive sessions in Stories and posts to attract their attention and interest. The third part is the opening of a coffee shop based on a tattoo studio, which could also contribute to its recognition. Moreover, the case company will organize their first giveaway with the main prize in the form of a gift certificate for a free tattoo. Targeted advertising will be set for this post and Instagram Story to attract new users who want to participate in the contest and win the main prize. Further, working with bloggers on a barter basis will help to increase recognition and improve activity in the profile of the company.

All these steps will be taken to successfully achieve the case company's goals in order to create the perfect profile on Instagram and increase brand awareness.

6.5 Analysis of Instagram marketing tools

The analysis of current situation of Drop Tattoo Company's Instagram account is an essential step in creating Instagram Marketing strategy. The idea is to look closer and understand what tattoo studio has already done for their Instagram presence and which marketing tools they use on the daily basis. The goal is to collect information about the tools which the company actively use in order to create a systematic and structured strategy. Analysis of Instagram marketing

tools is necessary in establishing a good Instagram appearance and it is important to take into consideration all aspects and work with different Marketing tools.

From the theoretical part it can be seen that there are many various marketing tools that companies can use for their account on Instagram. For the research the goal is to use all of them: influencer marketing, Instagram ads and promotion, storytelling, interaction with followers, content creation and content scheduling. All these aspects are important for Instagram strategy and they must be taken into consideration in doing business online.

6.5.1 Content creation

Content is the main engine on Instagram and based on this fact, the case company should devote as much time and attention to its creation as possible. Content drives attention and the desire to stay in the account for longer and if it turns out to be useful, then an Instagram user will definitely be a follower or even potential customer.

Based on the theoretical knowledge gained through the studied literature and academic articles on the Internet, it can be concluded that there are certain rules for creating quality content on Instagram. It is necessary not only to observe a certain style of photography, editing, color correction, but also to carry the right approach and message for the audience that the case company is addressing.

Content is the face of the company in the form of photographs, videos, stories and posts that carry some informational component. To create an idea, bring it to life, come up with a photo, and at the same time become popular, the case company and their marketing managers need to know the trends and be in a few steps ahead, thereby trying to predict the wishes and desires of potential customers. The main thing is to understand that each photo should be a continuation of the other. Photos should be made in one color scheme. It is necessary that in each photo there is the same or as similar editing filter as possible, so that the overall appearance of the profile looks holistical and harmonious for the user. Moreover, a good publication is characterized by a good quality image with a strong title, live action and eye-catching concept to reach more Instagram users.

If everything is done this way, the content will work effectively and bring more attention to the company as well as more profit and more potential customers.

An important aspect that this year began to play the key role is Instagram Stories. As practice has shown, most Instagram users devote their attention to viewing Instagram Stories than reading posts. Instagram story coverage is much more than photo or video posts and more likely to be viewed by other users. In the following chapters, best functions for Instagram Stories is described and advised to use in order to increase the users' involvement and brand awareness for the case company.

6.5.2 Content scheduling

Once the content is created, the period of its planning and the process of its publication on Instagram begins. Content plan plays the effective role in marketing and it saves the company's time of thinking what to post and in what time. Social media scheduling tools are more than just a convenient shortcut to queue up posts. The right tools help the case company overall social media management process, improving their efficiency so they have more time to push out great content and develop connections with followers in real time.

Now there are many applications that help to plan the account feed for several weeks directly from mobile phone. Such functions are very useful because they show how the business profile will look. Moreover, it helps to understand whether the photos will look harmonious with each other.
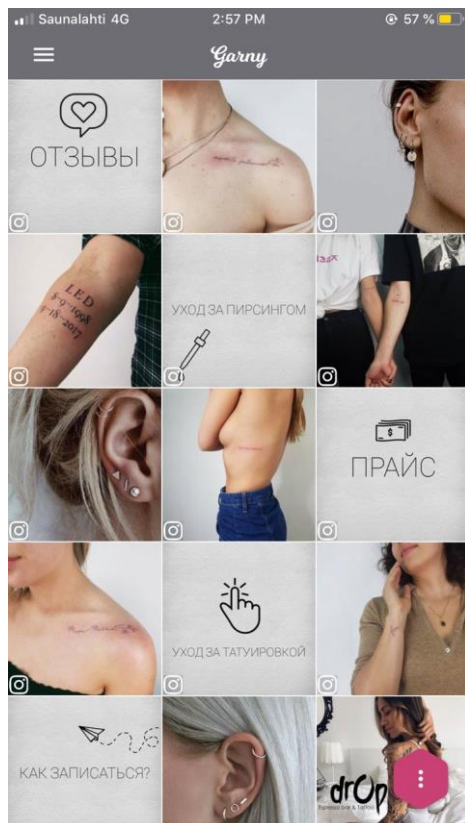
Figure 7. Screenshots of Drop Tattoo Studio account on Instagram

These 8 social media scheduling tools can be useful for marketing workflow of the company: Sprout Social, CoSchedule, Feedly. Airtable, Tweetdeck, Planable, Sked Social and Post Planner. Their capabilities cannot be overestimated be-cause they help to effortlessly plan, organize and deliver content and campaigns across social networks, especially on Instagram.

A good example of scheduling app is Garny where the company can organize their feed and decide what photo content is better to post. This application allows to add photos, change their place and edit the general view of the account from multiple phones at once. This is very convenient not only for the company itself, but also for the SMM manager who is engaged in promotion.

There are many opinions about how many posts the case company needs to upload per week and at what frequency, so as not to annoy the audience, but at the same time remain visible and fall into the "popular" section. After analyzing the situation of potential competitors, looking at the accounts of other business companies, it can be concluded that it is better to publish posts every two or three

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days. As for Stories, they should be published daily, thereby helping the company to remind themselves and their importance.

Moreover, a mandatory point is to announce the publication of a post on Instagram Stories. As practice has shown, users are more interested in viewing Stories and in order not to miss a certain post, it is better to duplicate its publication in Instagram Stories for the convenience of the subscriber.
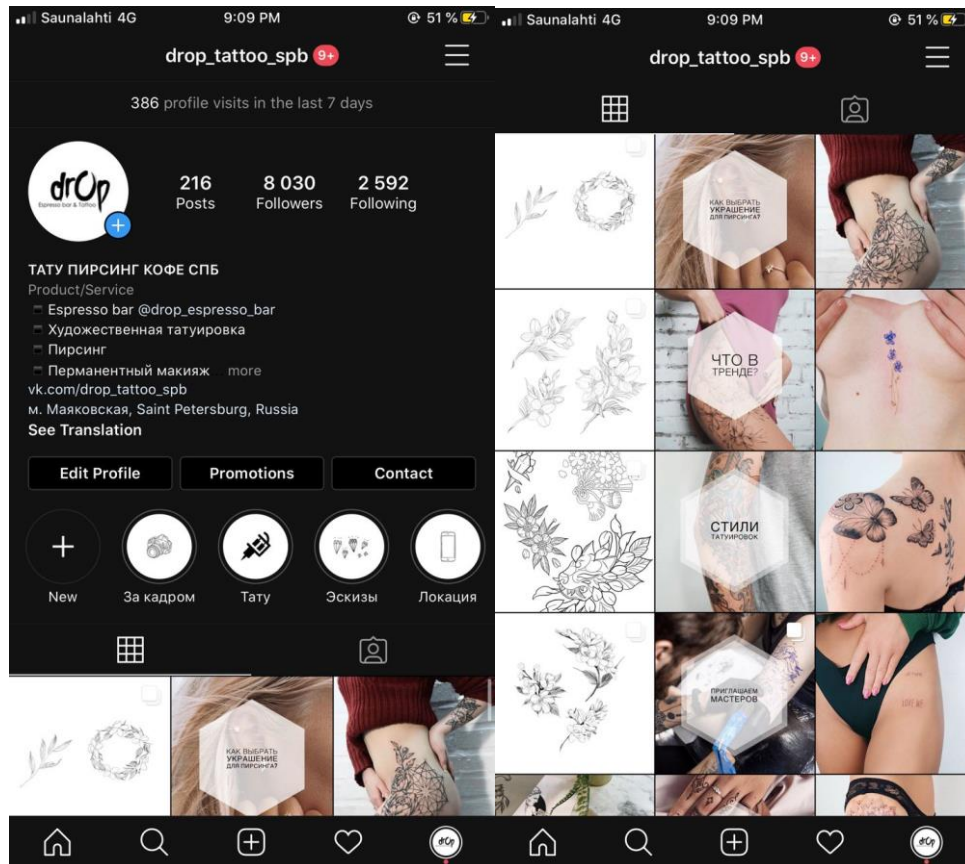

Figure 8. Screenshots of Drop Tattoo Studio account on Instagram.

6.5.3 Storytelling

On social media, there are many people and the brands who tell and post the most interesting Stories that build the massive audiences. Instagram calls itself a visual inspiration platform and the best way to inspire others is through the power of visual storytelling. On Instagram, the best brand storytelling involves uploading various Stories that tie into the brand's values, mission, and purpose and also include interaction with followers. It can be understood that the power of Instagram Stories is so huge and it develops a strong brand presence and uniqueness.

Good, consistent visual storytelling is what cuts through all the mediocre content posted online today. If the company want to grab people's attention and build an online audience that is excited to hear about the company. Moreover, the company need to use proven methods and get creative with how they share their ideas and use Instagram Stories.

For instance, in the Russian case company Instagram account, users can see how masters work, how the process of tattooing is going on, what free tattoo designs people can choose and ask specific questions dedicated to tattoo industry. In addition, the capabilities of Instagram allow not only to see the overall picture of the account, but also to keep in touch with followers with using question and answer sessions, quizzes and comments.
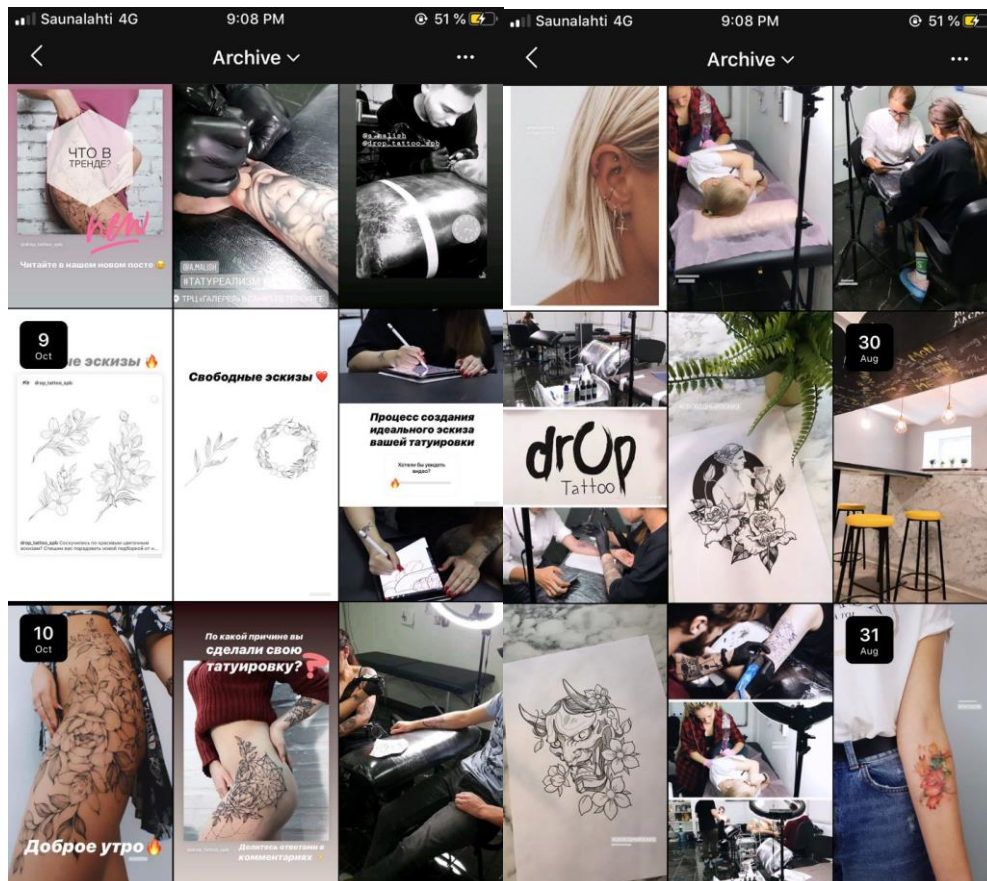

Figure 9. Screenshots of Drop Tattoo Studio Stories Archive.

The usage of many different features for Instagram Stories, such as location tags, GIFs, question and poll tags, quizzes and many others help to become closer to the audience and keep the followers interacting with the account. Moreover, after

10,000 followers on Instagram, the company's account will be able to use the swipe up link function on Instagram Stories. This feature is very useful and it makes a brand more serious. With the help of this link, it will be possible to visit the company's website, other social media accounts and many promotional campaigns easily and quickly.

For a beautiful design of Instagram Stories, there are many applications with ready-made layouts that companies can easily use for their account. Using these apps, the company can easily create Instagram stories and Highlight Covers.
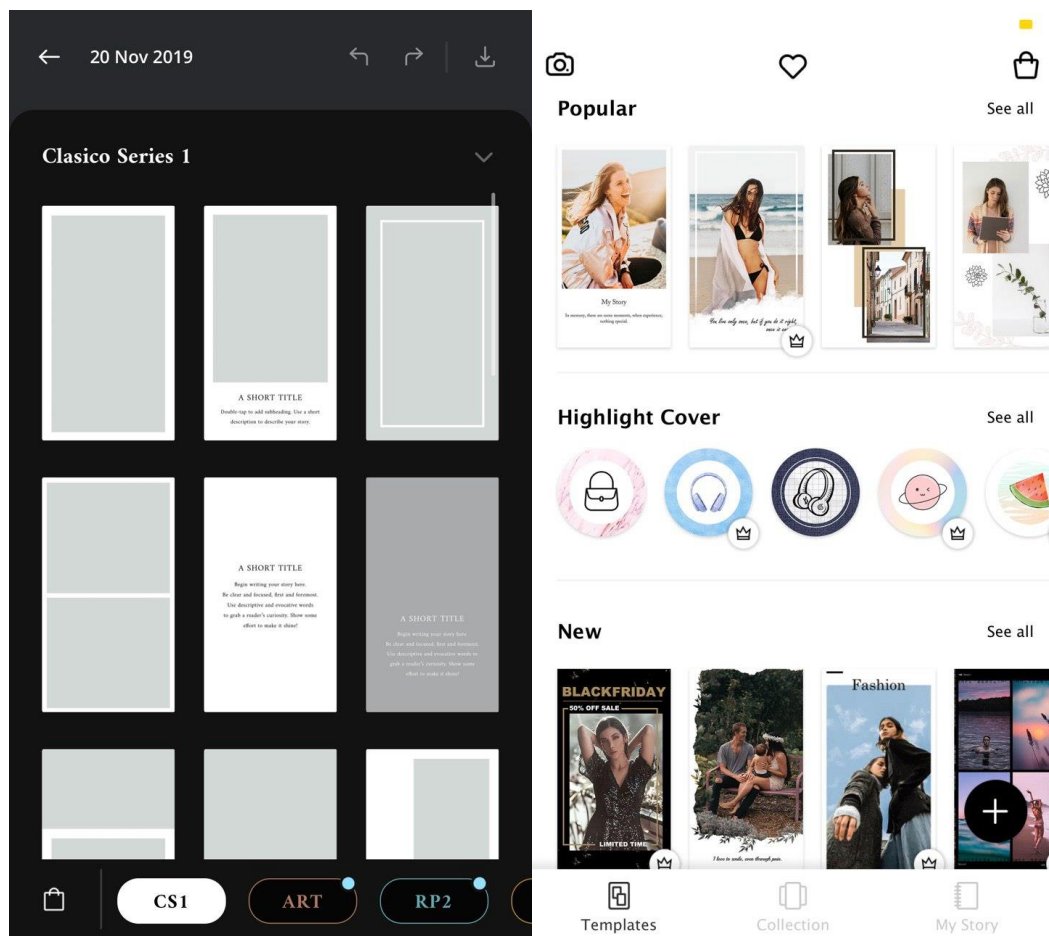

Figure 10. Screenshots of Apps for Stories: StoryArt and Unfold.

6.5.4 Interaction with users

Interaction and communication with the target audience is something without which the case company cannot exist. It is one of the main stages in creating the integrity of the company and its importance among people. In addition, people always like to be involved. They like to feel important when answering questions

or polls, commenting on posts, like photos, or simply expressing their point of view on a particular topic.

The constant involvement of followers in the life of a business account on Instagram helps not only to understand their desires and needs, but also helps to increase the asset and engagement. In other words, the more activity on the profile, the more likely that the account will be visible and recognizable to other users in the global search. Thus, it is very important to ask questions to followers, thereby prompting them to action and feedback.

6.5.5 Influencer marketing and collaboration with bloggers

Influencer marketing and collaboration with bloggers help to increase brand awareness and user involvement for the case company. As practice shows, collaborations with large and very popular bloggers do not bring huge success and increase in the number of followers now. All this is explained by the fact that people are already tired of advertising and just flip through it, without delving into details and offerings. In the case of a tattoo studios, the appropriate solution is to pay attention and concentrate more on micro bloggers who are just starting their way and only gaining their audience. It is much more convenient to work with such bloggers on a barter market without investing a lot of money in advertising.

Nowadays, micro bloggers are in a great demand among brands. It means that they are not so very popular but are aimed at gaining their audience. Such bloggers are very profitable cooperation, which does not end on one advertisement. Working with nano or micro bloggers leads to a long collaboration and constant inclusion in the activities of the case company. It is a very good marketing step, after which a long-term cooperation begins, which includes mutually beneficial communication. During the constant involvement in the company's activities, micro-bloggers are engaged in its promotion and interest their target audience, causing trust, honesty and a desire to use the services of the case company.

The question remains only how to distinguish a good blogger from a bad one. There are some tricks and subtleties of how easy to check and understand with whom the business company can cooperate or not. First, it is needed to require account statistics, analyze the reach of the target audience and make sure that

the blogger's followers can be interested in the services that the company pro-vides. Good micro bloggers start from 10,000 followers with a good coverage on their accounts: in the form of likes, comments and statistics. After a thorough analysis, the cooperation can be started in form of advertising in Instagram Sto-ries, a free tattoo or a gift certificate that bloggers can use themselves or give it to their friends or create a giveaway among their followers.

Based on the theoretical framework, influencer marketing and collaboration with bloggers might be a good way to spread the brand image and to make brand more visible to others. It would be suggested to continue to work with different bloggers and expand the case company's audience. It is very important to re-member that such tools as influencer marketing work quite well only if they are used carefully and responsibly. For instance, the selection of appropriate influ-encers or opinion leaders take time with observing their profiles, actions, traffic and engagement. Doing some research and analysis must be done right and only after that the results will be effective and profitable for Drop Tattoo Studio's ser-vices.

Speaking about benchmarking and analyzing the competitors' accounts, it can be said that it is hard to identify if people have been paid for content creation and their appearance in the companies' profiles. Nevertheless, it is not clear to find exact information about their usage of influencer marketing.

6.5.6 Using Instagram ads

Using Instagram advertising is the next step of promotion and it can be explained in more detailed way. First of all, Drop Tattoo Studio has already used Instagram ads for their promotion in Stories and in Instagram feed. It should be said that the budget for successful Instagram marketing must be very large in order to achieve the desired target and involve more people as a target audience. Instagram ads is a great possibility to reach Instagram accounts that are not following Drop Tat-too Studio but can found it with the help of advertising.

However, a good piece of advice is that business companies should not rush into the implementation of advertising on Instagram until the account itself do not in-clude other components of the Marketing Strategy such as brand image, vision,

mission and activity. It is recommended to start with implementing the strategy and after that continue to work with Instagram ads and invest money on effective promotion.

When the company start thinking about Instagram Ads, they need to create a workable layout to interest the users. Moreover, the services that the company advertise should make a good first impression. Well-designed images are always in trend therefore the first task is to create powerful Instagram ads, which attract lots of customers. The case company goal is to make effective Instagram ads that work. It must present information in an easily understood way with excellent visualization about the case company and services which they provide. In other words, Drop Tattoo company is ready to concentrate on their first giveaway with free tattoo as a prize. It is the best idea to set up advertising on Instagram for this kind of posts, because users like contests and love to win good prizes in such activities.

An important aspect is the correct and step-by-step setup of advertising and compliance with certain rules in selection of target audience in order to reach more people. In other people, the target is to reach the users who are interested in tattoo sphere and located in Saint Petersburg.

Investing in advertising on Instagram must be conscious with a clearly defined goal and objectives. Advertising will work only when the company understands exactly what their target audience is, in what kind of people it is oriented and what type of services the company plans to promote and offer.

Example of targeted advertising for the case company on Instagram:

- an audience that is within a radius of 5 km from you
- men and women who have a birthday soon
- men and women with interests on tattoo and beauty
- tattoo artists who work from home or do not find any place for work
- accounts that are interested in doing sketches for tattoos or providing tattoo equipment

It is better to set up targeted advertising a month before the holidays and make a calendar of important events, such as March 8, New Year, Saint Valentine's Day.

7 Conclusion

In the conclusion part the main findings of the thesis and suggestions for further possible research on this topic are identified and explained.

7.1 Main findings and discussion

In the modern world, where social networks and the newest technologies play a huge role, it is not so difficult for the average user to know about the existence of a company or brand if their account is managed well.

Instagram is a social network that allows to reach lots of new people and opens up a great variety of opportunities for further promotion. In order for the company to become successful and gain significance and recognition among other Internet users, SMM specialists must do everything possible to create an individual and unique marketing strategy. Social Media Marketing is a key to success and the ability to stand among a great number of competing companies in the global market. In order to succeed, the company must be able to present itself correctly in the visual component, that is, to attract a potential buyer with its uniqueness. Communication, interaction with followers and engagement are the most important factors of Instagram Marketing strategy.

However, it is very essential not only to be able to talk properly with followers but also to know how to promote yourself as a business company. In such situations, the company invests money in advertising, promotion and work with bloggers and opinion leaders who could help the company to gain fame and significance. As mentioned, advertising on Instagram is not the cheapest way of promotion. With its proper use, it can bring new active followers and further profit. When investing in advertising, it is necessary to remember the quality of the account, its visual and informative component. A unique and effective marketing strategy must be fully followed in order to attract a potential user and force him to follow the case company's Instagram account.

According to the research, the key elements of building a successful Instagram Marketing strategy are identified and explained:

- Creating a unique brand image with a full understanding of company's goals, values, mission and vision in order to run the business successfully online.
- Creating a workable content that users can follow and identify between other brands.
- A content plan has to be created in order to simplify the work in the company's account for a certain period of time: one week, two weeks or even one month.
- Identifying the company's target audience and their needs and desires.
- Analyzing both positive and negative feedback with creating of special programs or applications which could make this process more effective and qualitative.
- Posting Instagram content continuously in order to stay visible and recognizable among other Instagram users.
- Starting promotion campaigns, using Instagram ads and working with bloggers and opinion leaders to create trust and confidence in services that the company provides.
- Increasing engagement and involvement of the company's account via active interaction with potential customers.
- Creating traffic on the company's profile in order to be recognizable and well-known brand on Instagram.

In order to be efficient and successful on Instagram, the case company must combine all the key elements together and apply them in their profile. It can be said that only after a full understanding of the case company's target audience, their needs and desires, Drop Tattoo company can become profitable, recognizable and visible among other users.

Creating a unique and workable strategy which help the company to differ between other similar brands is a good way to deliver the right message to their potential customers. The main goal for the research is to find the suitable strategy and apply them in the company's account. After applying all aspects of SMM

strategy and have more interaction with followers, the company has achieved a certain target and became profitable. Therefore, it can be concluded that Instagram is a successful and creative platform for the company's promotion and recognition. It is a great foundation for the company's success and a good example of the great variety of options and opportunities for building the brand online.

According to the study of theoretical literature, conducting the company's research and applying the findings to the business account of Drop Tattoo company, a new Instagram Marketing Strategy was created.

7.2   Evaluation of research process for the case study

After analyzing the company's main competitors, it can be noticed that there is not one exact strategy that the business could follow and become successful. It Is the result of a consistent work with well-structured ideas about the products or services that various businesses can provide. Every company has their own mission, vision, values and beliefs according to them they work and promote their business online. Every business work in a different way and choose their own path to achieve their targets. The personality and overall appearance of the company's profile on Instagram must to be unique and show an appropriate picture concerning to the theoretical framework that is used in the thesis research. The social media voice and Keller Model are a good example of how the company need to start to think about building their brand online and in which aspect they must to pay attention.

For benchmarking, the chosen companies were very different. In addition, every account was unique with different methods and ideas about how to run business successfully and profitable in order to stay visible on Instagram.

7.3   Suggestions for further research

Since now people live in an age of technical and innovative progress, in an age of modern technology, where the Internet and social networks play a huge role in doing business, all trends changed very quickly. Social Media Marketing and brand building on Instagram is quite a new way of doing business and it only

continues to develop. The trends and ways of how to promote business successfully are changing every year.

Everything changes with the advent of new opportunities and functions that are gaining popularity and interest of the target audience. There is not much information, theoretical frameworks and academic literature available about how to do business online successfully and profitably with using only one correct Instagram strategy that will work in one hundred percent. A marketing strategy that will achieve with a great profit has not been identified. Therefore, now companies are only generating ideas of how to reach significance and recognition in a short period of time with using lower costs. Most bloggers and opinion leaders are just starting to launch their own courses about promotion, targeting, online advertising and brand building on social media. The competition is high and companies must understand that every year the emergence of new services and products will only increase.

This thesis touches on all key marketing functions that the company can actively use on its Instagram account. In further research, Drop Tattoo Studio can analyze its actions for a certain period of time and understand which functions work the best. Regular advertising and collaboration with bloggers will be the most effective way of promotion and must be actively used on a barter basis. Creating the company's website and working on its design will be an excellent continuation of the online business and it will help to reach more people in the future.

In conclusion, for further research each of the mentioned marketing tools could be analyzed deeper with understanding of the company's new targets, goals and desires that they want to achieve.

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