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ADDING VALUE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA
– Case Autokiila
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ADDING VALUE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA – CASE AUTOKIILA

Social media has reached wide popularity among people during its short history. It has even displaced forms of traditional media like TV in people’s daily time consumption. Social media has given voice to consumers who are very eager to share their experiences with others. This has created a whole new problem for companies. Companies don’t master customers with advertisements any more but experiences of other consumers have become important aspect on purchase decision-making.

Free-flowing conversation about companies has driven businesses to join social media. Many companies have joined to get their share of cheap and fast marketing channel that covers millions of people. Social media is till not an advertising space but a chance to create two-way interaction between customer and the company. Even though the social media platforms are usually free, building and administrating effective social network is time consuming and requires resources. Company can make customer experience better by providing additional content for the product in social media. Adding content and taking customer needs in to consideration creates today’s most powerful mode of marketing; customer recommendation.

Thesis consists recommendation for Turku-based Toyota dealership Autokiila on how to utilise social media for its purposes.

KEYWORDS:
Social media, marketing, B2C, car dealership
Topias Terinkoski

LISÄARVON TUOTTAMINEN SOSIAALISEN MEDIAN VÄLITYKSELLÄ – CASE AUTOKIILA

Sosiaalinen media on lyhyen olemassa olonsa aikana saavuttanut suuren suosion ihmisten keskuudessa. Se on jopa syrjäyttänyt perinteiset median muodot kuten television ihmisten päivittäisessä ajan käytössä. Sosiaalinen media on antanut äänien kuluttajalle joka on hyvin innokas jakamaan mielipiteensä muiden kanssa. Tämä on muodostanut uudenlaisen ongelman yrityksille. Yritykset eivät hallitse mainonnalla kulutajia, vaan muiden käyttäjien kokemuksista on tullut tärkeä ostopäättökseen vaikuttava tekijä.


Lopputyö sisältää ehdotuksen Turkulaiselle Toyota-liike Autokiillalle sosiaalisen median hyödyntämisestä heidän tarpeisiin.

ASIASANAT:
Sosiaalinen media, markkinointi, B2C, autoliike
CONTENT

1 INTRODUCTION
1.1 Methodology

2 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?
2.1 Definition of Social Media
2.2 Beginning of Social Media
2.3 Social Media Genres
   2.3.1 Social Network Sites
   2.3.2 Content Sharing Sites
   2.3.3 Content Creation and Publishing Tools
   2.3.4 Collaborative Production Sites
   2.3.5 Virtual Worlds
   2.3.6 Add-ons

3 THE WORLD HAS CHANGED
3.1 Change in Consumer Behavior
3.2 The New Generation of Consumers – Gen D
3.3 Change in Company Behaviour
3.4 Slow advertising

4 GOING SOCIAL
4.1 Common Misconceptions About Social Media Marketing
4.2 Psychology of Social Media Marketing
4.3 Tactical Transparency
4.4 Creating Compelling Content
4.5 Building large and loyal following
4.6 Measure your social media efforts

5 CASE STUDY – AUTOKIILA
5.1 Teknotoimi Oy – Autokiila
5.2 Interview of CEO
5.3 Interview of Salesmen
5.4 Summary of Salesmen’s Answers
5.5 Comments on CEO’s Assumptions of Social Media

6
5.6 Recommendation 50
6 CONCLUSION 54
REFERENCES 57

PICTURES

Picture 1. 50

CHARTS

Chart 2. 29
Chart 3. 29

TABLES

Table 1. 15
1 1. INTRODUCTION

"Social media is one of the buzzwords that came along the web 2.0 rhetoric, along with some other terms, somewhere around 2005. As such, the concept does not have a strictly defined meaning, but people using the concept want to stress that there is a new era, maybe even a revolution taking place." (Liet-sala&Sirkkunen 2008, 17)

We can still remember time when people sent letters and postcards to friends and relatives to find out how they are, younger generations cannot. Internet has revolutionised traditional forms of communication almost completely. You don’t have to wait for a week to your letter reaches a friend or relative on other side of the world, and other week for his or hers reply. How one is can be found out by going to Facebook. You don’t even have to remember one’s birthday because Facebook reminds you.

Communication has become a lot easier. You don’t need to tell every relative individually about your trip. You can post it on your blog with pictures and those who want to know about it can go and read about it. This has created a whole new culture of sharing where everything has to be shared with other people. We are also more interested about others and what they have done.

Social media have given a voice to regular human being and a chance to mat- ter. Conversations do not have to be about mainstream topics. Like-minded people find each others developing niche communities. With the click of a but- ton, they turn from audience into creators and from strangers into friends.
Social media services like YouTube, Twitter and Facebook were ought to be momentary trends what would be replaced by new trends. Ten years after social media sites started to appear they have strong status in society and it is getting stronger and stronger every day. It is predicted that by the end of this year Facebook will reach one billion user landmark. This has attracted attention in companies. What else media can reach one billion people? None. The power of social media cannot be underestimated anymore. Social media has overtaken porn as the No. 1 activity on the Web (Ragan’s PR Daily, 2012).

People’s will to share has affected companies both in good and in bad. Enterprises have realized that customers will take care that companies are involved in social media whether they wanted or not. The task for the companies is to get the freely churning conversation under control and harness it to a marketing power.

According to one study (Ragan’s PR Daily, 2012) only 14 percent of consumers trust advertisements. Instead 90 percent of consumers trust peer recommendations. Social media is not just free advertising space but a chance to influence on consumer beliefs and images of a company.

In my thesis I will not be concentrating on social media as advertising tool but as a tool for building two-way communication between the company and it’s customers.

Literature review begins with defining social media, what it implies and how it has developed.

After this I will look at how social media has changed world and customer behavior and how these impact companies. In final part of literature review I investigate what tools previous literature gives for building effective social media strat-
In Case study I introduce Toyota Dealership Autokiila, which is planning to join social media. I start with interview of CEO. For additional information I continue with interviews of the salesmen. Finally I give my recommendation on what I believe to be the best way of starting in social media.

In conclusion I gather my findings and answer to research questions.

Research objective of this thesis is to find out the most suitable way to utilise social media for case company Autokiila’s purposes. To form effective vision for this the thesis consists three sub objectives:

- Investigate forms of social media available for businesses.
- Social media’s benefits for companies.
- Map social media’s strategic use in companies.

1.1 Methodology

Qualitative method was chose due to the research objective. Research objective is purely qualitative and could not be researched by quantitative methods.

Semi-structured interview will be conducted to allow more liberty for interviewee. This allows interviewer to steer interview without over controlling it. Small sample makes it possible to interview each person individually.
CEOs will be interviewed to receive understanding about company goals and assumptions towards this project. Interview questions will be designed after initial meeting with the CEO.

Salesmen were chosen as other interviewees because they are in contact with customers everyday. Their answers provide understanding about daily operations and communication with customers. Core questions will be designed beforehand but interview will be more like a discussion for receiving more comprehensive and wider view.
2 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is a concept that has created debates and criticism. Lietsala & Sirkkunen (2008, 17) points out that especially media researchers have questioned the concept because the metaphor that it raise is that the traditional media is somehow unsocial which is untrue. Putting terminology aside researchers have not been able reach agreement on what is considered social media. The main problem in defining Social media is how to define something that is constantly changing and new forms are created everyday.

In this chapter I try to gather information to help understand what is social media and how it got started.

2.1 Definition of Social Media

Some researchers understand Social media purely as a variety of internet based services. "Social media is a term that is used to describe web service that receive most of the content from their users or that aggregate the content from other sites as feeds. The sites build on social networks and on the creativity of the participants of one ore more communities. In Social media anyone can become a producer, but many of the people see themselves as participant who engage in the community rather than producers." (Lietsala&Sirkkunen 2008, 13)

In turn some researchers like Agresta & Bough (2010) sees social media as a verb. “It's the act of creating and posting content an any and all of the following hosted environments: online, mobile virtual, or as yet to be named. The key concept behind social media is that it is shared with those that you identify as friends or followers- an inner circle (which can in fact be quite large) that has
opted in to view any content or information you opt to share, thereby making it the act of being social online”.

Barefoot and Szabo (2010) gives five fundamentals which define the essence of social media.

It’s About Democracy: A Communication Revolution. Creating content is no longer in hands of companies, media agencies and newspapers alone; people in general are the new publishers of the news. This can be seen on nightly news were YouTube videos are becoming regular part of news.

It’s About Community: We Are Family. Traditional media did not include notion of community. This combined with the one-to-many type of communication did not give room for discussion about topics outside mainstream media. The key benefits of social media is that it provides space for niche communities so like-minded people can find each other.

It’s About Collaboration: Two Heads (or Millions) Really Are Better Than One. Technology innovations during past decade have made web the ultimate platform for collaboration. Web has had a reputation of being hostile and unfriendly environment but in recent years collaborations have shown that people bring the best of themselves to raise money or fighting cancer together. Collaboration has become the cornerstone of internet.

It's About Scope: The Infinite Internet. Generally social media is open for everyone. Everybody is welcome to join and the important part is that most of the social media tools are free. This reduces barriers to entre and encourages participating and sharing. Whereas newspapers have column inches, and television
has the 42-minute hour, internet seems almost infinite. Scoping is needed for reaching the right audience.

It’s About Authenticity: A Cult of Honesty. When talking about sharing, authenticity and transparency are the two key concepts of social media. Desire for authentic connection with like-minded people has developed a cult of honesty.

How social media is understood depends on the person. Media researcher understands and studies the term differently than business researcher. Other is the dimension of the term. In this thesis I am concentrating on internet based social media sites so I believe that following list provides solid definition for the research subject of this thesis.

Lietsala&Sirkkunen (2008,24) listed the 5 main characteristics that the most popular social media sites comprise.

1. There is a space to share the content.
2. Participants in this space create, share or evaluate all or most of the content themselves.
3. It is based on social interaction.
4. All content has an URL to link it to the external networks.
5. All actively participating members of the site have their own profile page to link to other people, to the content, to the platform itself and to he possible applications.
Social media has also few features that are not obligatory but often occurs.

6. It feels like community.
7. People contribute for free
8. There is a tagging system that allows folksonomy.
9. Content is distributed with feeds in and out the site.
10. The platforms and tools are in development phase and changed on the run.

2.2 Beginning of Social Media

The term social media came to people’s knowledge somewhere around 2005 so it is fairly new term but social media itself has been around a longer time. Depending on what is considered social media the birth of social media can be tracked to 1950’s. At first phone phreaking was about hacking into telephone operators test lines to get free phone calls because calling to another state could cost up to 40 dollars per hour. Social media aspect came along when phone phreaks got into telephone company’s conference circuits and started to host virtual seminars and discussions. First “blogs” or “podcasts” was also due to phone phreaking. People could call to hacked corporate voicemail system by dialling 1-800 number and entering an extension and listen recorded audio broadcast about phone phreaking content and social greetings. Person who called to the service could leave comments as a voice mail and the phreak would respond to it on next update. Phone phreaking had many of the aspects that are now considered the main characteristics of social media.

First computer based social media service was launched in 1979 by Ward Christensen. The first Bulletin Board System was small home computer based server attached to telephone modem where one person at a time could dial in. Early BBSes had no colours or graphics but users could have discussion on
and community contributed files and games that could be downloaded.

First large scale corporate attempts to bring online to masses came in 1980’s. Services like Prodigy and CompuServe provided safe and moderated environment for social networking. CompuServe offered the first online chat system called CB simulator but the high cost of the service made it infamous.

Jarkko Oikarinen created in august 1988 an Internet Relay Chat (IRC), which was used to break news on the Soviet coup attempt during the media blackout and keep tabs on first Gulf War. People were sharing links and files with their global network the same way as people now use Twitter. (Borders, 2009)

Internet as a network has existed since the late 1960’s but the World Wide Web became publicly available in august 6th 1991. Development of internet can be divide in to four stages (Salmenkivi&Nyman, 2007,30). In the beginning web was text based and trough links users could form information paths.

In second stage companies understood the commercial potential of the web. First came company web pages with product catalogues and information and later firms started to sell their product through internet. E-commerce provided the first steps of user participation on the internet.

Third stage is often referred as web 2.0. The term was first introduced in 2005 by O’Reilly when he labelled conference with the word Web 2.0 (Liet-sala&Sirkkunen,2008,18). The term is not a synonym for social media nor that it is a totally new version of web. It refers to the change from information web to participation web, as can be seen on table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
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<td>Lectures</td>
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<td>Professionals</td>
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<td>Communities</td>
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<td>Owning</td>
<td>Sharing</td>
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Table 1. (Barefoot& Szabo, 2010, 4)

Birth of social media, as we now know it, is generally originated to the change from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0.

Fourth stage of internet development has probably changed social media the most. Smartphones and mobile devices have brought the user closer to internet than ever before. Possibility to access internet where and when ever you wan has launched user participation to whole new level.

2.3 Social Media Genres

Social media can be divided to six main categories: content creation and publishing tools, social network sites, content sharing sites, collaborative production sites, virtual worlds and add-ons. In addition to these six there are channels that are for messaging, but the media type in these are from person to another instead of from one to many. These kinds of channels do not provide marketing value for a company and due to this reason is not presented in this chapter. (Lietsala&Sirkkunen, 2008)
2.3.1 Social Network Sites

Social network sites as all social media sites are based on peoples will to collaborate, but these sites concentrate on networking. Boyd and Ellison (2007) (Lietsala&Sirkkunan) defines social network sites as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections may vary from site to site.” Social network sites profiles present virtual reflection of a person, company or even a pet. One of the main advantages of these sites is that when profile user updates his/hers page the information of the update is automatically transferred to one's social network.

2.3.2 Content Sharing Sites

Content sharing sites have many similarities to social network sites. User needs to register to create own profile and keep contact with friends but the main focus is in sharing particular type content instead of building social network. Best know content sharing site is YouTube where users can share videos with other people but there are other sites as well i.e. Flickr for sharing photographs and Digg for what is new in the Internet. Content sharing sites helps chopping content to smaller “micro chunks” which makes consumption easier and sources available for multiple locations.
2.3.3 Content Creation and Publishing Tools

Content creation and publishing tools can be divided to blogs, wikis and podcasts.

Blogs

Blogs are online publications that are usually run by one person (blogger). Blogger can be amateur or professional and topic can be anything close to blogger’s heart. Blogs like social media in general is relatively easy to use and free applications are offered for creating blogs. One important benefit that explains popularity of blogs over websites is that blogger does not have to buy domain name for launching blog. There are four key social media features (Liet-sala&Sirkkunen, 2008,31) that differentiate blogs from web sites. First is that blogs have authorial voice. Identified author/authors writes in personal, conversational style. Second feature is links and trackback. This service makes it easy for blogger to insert links to other articles or websites. Third and very important feature is comment section were readers can discuss with the blogger and give feedback. Readers can subscribe (4) their favourite blogs via RSS technology.

34 percent of bloggers post opinions about products and brands. (Ragan’s PR Daily, 2012)

Newest trend in blogging is micro-blogs such as Twitter where user can “tweet” short messages or updates for others to read.

In corporate point of view blogs can be especially for smaller companies useful way to increase company recognisability but studies have not showed any measurable ROI. Problem with corporate blogs is that it is not based on user experiences. For consumer point of view it is just company advertisement. Another problem is that company blogs do not create customer dialogue the same way that independent bloggers have with their followers.
Wikis

Wiki is a website that allows users freely edit and create content. Wikis can be public, semi-public or purely private. Public Wikis, like Wikipedia, allows any one to insert content to the site. If Wikipedia was made into a book, it would be 2.25 million pages long. (Ragan’s PR Daily, 2012)

Private or semi-public wikis can be used by companies or smaller communities for collaborative work. Important thing to remember when using especially public wikis is that because anyone can create content, it can be false or incorrect.

Podcasts

Podcast are short audio or video files that are published on Internet and can be subscribed by users. Name comes from Apple’s iPod for which podcasts were originally developed. Podcasts are mainly watched from portable media players. Podcasts similarly to blog feeds, once subscribed the new content is automatically downloaded to the user’s feed reader.

2.3.4 Collaborative Production Sites

In collaborative production sites user do not just share single files, but work on the same shared goal to produce bigger combinations from the content pieces. Good example, although it got crushing review from the movie critics, is Finnish Iron Sky project.
2.3.5 Virtual Worlds

Virtual worlds are computer-based simulated environment where community interacts with each other trough the avatars created by users. In virtual worlds users can be their alter egos and live different kind of life than in the real world. In example World of Warcraft players are situated in the Middle-ages where they can build defend and concur villages from other tribes. In this kind of fictional environment selling actual product is impossible so companies like Coca Cola solved this problem by placing vending machines in Habbo Hotel so Avatars can buy coke in the virtual world as well. And yes, users actually pay for it.

2.3.6 Add-ons

The new trend is not to create new websites but to create content to already existing ones. Typical for add-ons is that they would not work without the existing social media community. Smartly designed application on platform like Facebook can provide visibility of a site or a brand. Amazon launched application called Grapevine, which broadcasts users Amazon activities back to Facebook newsfeed. Others can then watch what books you have read and what kind of reviews you have given to the books.
3 THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

3.1 Change in Consumer Behavior

Buyers and sellers have been linked by word-of-mouth conversation for the past few thousand years. Reputation of seller was build by buyer experiences. Development of media and mass communication shifted marketing power to PR and advertising agencies. Voice of individual was buried under professionally created ads, taglines and messages. The pendulum is swinging back. Social media has brought customer voice back and it is louder than ever before. (Evans, 2008, xx)

Social media has changed the consumer buying cycle for good. Customers have added two crucial elements to purchase routine. One before purchase and another shortly after it. Importance of these two steps rises in proportion with how expensive, infrequent or important the purchase is. (Agresta&Bough, 2010, 32)

Information from social media has significant impact on purchases over €50 (Digitoday, Communication Agency Text 100, 2008).

Pre-shopping has become important part of the purchasing process. Almost 90% of internet users in Finland are using social media to help in decision making although the purchase itself is made outside internet (TNS-Gallup Online Shopping 2008). Opinions of social network carry huge weight in the minds of consumer.
Internet Research can be divided to three groups (Halligan&Shah,2010, 6). First is information gathering trough search engines like Google. Idea here is to get better understanding about the product and its specs for decision-making.

Second is through blogs. In 2011 there were over 150 million blogs in the world, which basically means that there is a blog for every industry and consumer niche you can think of. Advantage is that blogs are kept by semi-professionals or enthusiasts of certain area, so information is usually reliable due to the personal experience of the blogger.

Third place for consumers to search information is own social media network. Consumer experiences are generally thought to be more reliable than the information coming from a company, especially when it is from a friend or people you know.

Second added part is compelled feel to share about the purchase, review and discuss whether the product they have bought have lived to their expectations. This is a way to give back something for the community that helped buyer make the decision. When they agree to amplify your message it is best kind of advertising, but when they don’t companies are in big trouble (Evans,2008,xx).

Communication is not always just from consumer to another. Modern customer wants to interact with brands they use. According to eMarketer report (Agresta&Bough,2010,50) more than 40% of all consumers would want to have closer connection to the brands of their choice. Consumers have probably always wanted to communicate with brand but they have not had a way to do it. They could not talk back to the TV or go to visit company headquarters. Social media
has given opportunity for it. Now they can for the first time talk to the brands and share their ideas, complaint, compliment and observe in a way that ensures that they are heard.

3.2 The New Generation of Consumers – Gen D


The Generation D’s are product of thirtyfiveup parents who’s generation blurred business and leisure into “bleisure”. They are used to manage their lives through cloud computing and mobile technology. These parents can easily switch from Facebook to LinkedIn to downloading music in the same timeframe with the same piece of hardware. These digital parents are the gatekeepers to the technology that enters the home and they are as excited by the technology as their Gen D Children.

Generation D’s are born in the digital world. According to American consultant Marc Prensky they are “digital natives” as such they truly understand technology, filling the criteria set by philosopher Martin Heidegger, because they have ceased to notice it. They can’t im-
agine world without computers because they have never lived in a world pre-internet, pre-google or pre-mobilephone. For the generations before, even technology-adapted ones, see technology as a tool, as a category that can be boxed but for this generation they don’t think about it, it is just there. Their involvement is complete.

Generation D’s are raised on the instant gratification of the web, so they expect the information to be short, punchy blast, preferably with video to save the bother of reading. They feel entitled not just to have opinions but also to have them heard, so they will tell about it or post a reaction video on Youtube. Due to web cams, flip videos and broadband connections, video is becoming the language of the internet. 15 year old Anthony from San Francisco told that when he had to do a project about Edgar Alan Poe, he watched a video from Youtube because it is easier to watch a video of a poem than reading it. For Generation D’s it is all about the easiest and fastest way. This is not the case only for Gen D’s but also young people in general. The study shows that in UK 51% of non-voting18-25-year-olds could not bother to go to a polling station but 76% would probably vote if it could be done with text, Facebook or Twitter.

For Gen D’s it doesn’t matter if a product is physical or digital but it has to be available now. If your company can’t deliver wanted good now, they will find another provider who can. Faster is not better, it is essential. According to Google CEO Eric Schmidt Internet places around 5 million terabytes of information, which means that everything is just clicks away. This means for companies that competitors are also just clicks away. Kids pre-shop on the internet so that they have all the information and best offers before hitting the shops. Be-
cause of the time spend in the internet Generation D’s have become the experts and decision makers on big family purchases.

Media is not passive, it is two-way activity. Generation D’s embrace the aspect that they can not only create content but also comment, debate, friend and rate things. The line between consumer and creator will blur in the future Some companies are already understood that these kinds do not seek for a monologue to listen but a dialogue that they can participate. Mattel for example asked customers to co-create two new Barbie dolls.

This social media has caused that these youngsters share more details about themselves than no generation before. Older generations prefer keeping information close to the chest but for Gen D’s power lies in being the first to share.

Kids of the digital generation do not see the difference between virtual and real world so they expect from the companies to be on both worlds. This has forced brands to create experience that adds virtual aspects to the physical product. Diesel has put Facebook kiosks in their stores in Spain for customers to post photos of the clothes to get feedback from their friends. Because of the their good product and price awareness due pre-shopping retail businesses need to offer unique experience with best price and service.

Because availability and speed is the most important aspects to Gen D’s they show no loyalty if your company can’t deliver quickly. These natural born multi-taskers who skitter, haul, mod and hack are the
consumers of the future so your brand’s survival might just depend on how well you can adapt to the way they behave.

3.3 Change in Company Behaviour

Internet has raised customer’s product awareness, which has affected companies. Before seller was the person who had the knowledge and consumer was the student. Due to the pre-shopping consumers have become experts who have not only the knowledge of the company’s product but also competitors’ products. This has lead to a demand of whole new level of expertise of the seller.

Brands that don’t meet the expectations will be the topic of discussion in social media. Consumers have always shared their experiences with network of close people. Now the close network is just exponential. Everything put into internet stays there forever. Before bad experiences told stayed in relatively small group of people and was forgotten when time went by. Now bad experiences can be read by anyone five or ten years after. This is a huge challenge for companies. People don’t pay attention to when the comment was posted. They believe what they read and act according to it without thinking that in five years problem might be fixed.

Reacting to reviews and experiences is crucial for companies. Staying silent sends a clear message that you don’t care how your customers communicate or what are their needs towards your company
(Agresta & Bough, 2010, 39). This has lead companies to create departments dedicated on following social media.

If you don’t know what is said, how do you know what needs to be fixed? Although following social media requires huge amount of resources it has also positive affect on businesses. It gives companies ability to involve consumers to product development. The way consumers and companies communicate today allows companies to create true consumer-centric product-development lifecycle. (Agresta & Bough, 2010, 33-34)

Social media has changed marketing strategies, which means that days of controlling message are over. Consumer’s ability to consume and publish their views has created whole new dynamic for marketers. Possibility to listen customers helps marketers follow trends and react to the public demand. Real time word of mouth tracking gives marketers chance to build and manage audiences. (Agresta & Bough, 2010, 8-9)

Digital technology allows conversations flow freely without boundaries. Social network sites provide array of communication activities that creates opportunity for organisations to communicate on a truly interactive platform. (Richardson et al, 2010, 12)

People “like” brands in Facebook rather than companies, so branding matters more than ever before. Brands today are on-demand, personal, engaging and networked according to Kelly Mooney’s book The Open Brand. By evolving their brand with the needs and wants
of the customer, brands can rely on consumers’ passion to create content. (Agresta&Bough,2010,11-12) Brand image is build on company values thus integrity is necessity for a company. Brand Image can be destroyed over night in social media if it is caught from lie or environmentally hostile act.

3.4 Slow advertising

"It takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place." – Queen of Hearts. I believe that this thought from Alice in Wonderland represents the world companies are operating in. Companies want new things all the time. They are afraid that soon it is too late or the train has already left. There is not enough time to invest in projects. Internet and social media enable information to be available in everywhere at any time. This has raised the speed of consuming and companies have hoggd this mentality to their operations.

Juuoso Myllyrinne gave presentation in TEDx Helsinki that is in contradiction to this mentality.

We all know the concept of slow food. Making food from good ingredients with interesting people with time. Concept has spread to other areas of life like slow parenting. The basic idea is to take time, people and relationships into consideration. Should there be also slow advertising?

General idea in marketing is that company and product is perfect and the flaw is in customer. Consumers don’t have enough or they have
wrong information about the product, which can be fixed with a silver bullet that is advertising. This perspective should be changed. What if the problem is in the company end? Instead of producing messages, ask customers how can we make owning of this car a better experience.

Model of quick marketing was born when traditional media was digitalised. This kind of advertising pays attention mainly to coverage and frequency. If you want to sell one car you need to get three test drives. To get three test drives you need to get 200 new webpage visitors. To get 200 new webpage visitors you need to get one 100.000 banner shows. Average banner click trough rate is 0,2 per cent. Myllyrinne compares this to space scrap. Huge amount of effort is used to build a satellite that is launched to space where it works for a while and then become space scrap. Then builders move on and all the past efforts are wasted.

There is a general assumption that everything in internet happens quickly. This is false. Actually new ideas take long time before becoming popular. For example Facebook and Twitter, it took both about three years before becoming popular.
Chart 1. (Dybwad, 2011)

Chart 2 (Techcrunch, 2009)

Companies should believe in what they are doing. With short time frame great projects can end up as space scrap.
One important idea of slow marketing is that it does not stop when company has got money out the product. The experience continues after customer has purchased the product. Great example of this is Nike+. Nike created running shoes that record information to user’s iPod, which can be inserted into training diary in Nike’s Web page. This project first took couple of years before public took on it but eventually Nike’s market share grew from 48% to 61%.

Myllyrinne gives four guidelines for his slow marketing manifesto.

1. Idea does not get better by changing it to another.
2. Give 1000 days for a new idea
3. Invest in development – Listen.
4. Think about user, not consumer
4 GOING SOCIAL

“Social media is like teen sex. Everyone wants to do it. Nobody knows how. When it’s finally done, there is a surprise it’s not better.” Google’s Analytics Evangelist, Avinash Kaushik (Meyersson, 2010, 4) In this chapter I concentrate on the ways that help companies to succeed on their social media efforts.

4.1 Common Misconceptions About Social Media Marketing

Often companies think that opening a Facebook or a Twitter account is doing social media and it solves every digital question (Agresta&Bough, 2010, 25). False! Social media has somehow got reputation of being fast lane to happiness.

Social media is just another ad space. Although for advertisers it is attempting to think i.e. Facebook as a free advertising space with almost one billion users, this kind of thinking is lacking the true meaning of social media. Creating conversation with customers is the real opportunity that social media has to offer. (Agresta&Bough, 2010, 42)

Other wrong conception is that social media is cheap and it produces instant results. The direct cost from putting your profile in is usually nothing but the overall efforts you need to resource to make it to work properly requires hiring person who is responsible for
it (Clapperton, 2009, 153). Social media is labor-intensive work that requires lots of human resources when done correctly. It also takes time. Many companies have missed a chance in social media because they have not had enough patience to stick as long as needed. Large-scale campaigns don’t occur in one night.

(Agresta & Bough, 2010, 43)

Traditional marketers think that they need social media campaign. Traditional marketing campaign is for short period for example Christmas and during that time marketers try to produce maximum amount of buzz around their product and when Christmas is over campaign is thrown to garbage. Idea in social media is to produce long time relations with customers. If social media campaign is successful after campaign there should be community in place having conversation with the company. It is better to gain few loyal customers than few dozens of competition participants. (Agresta & Bough, 2010, 42)

Some still believe that social media is just a passing fad. It can be said with certainty that social media is here to stay. In the 90’s people were sceptic about company web sites but now it is unthinkable for company not to have web site. Now it just the same thing with social media. (Agresta & Bough, 2010, 43)

Now when companies are launching Facebook pages and twitter accounts it is important to remember that social media is not only online. It is important to remember to make offline connections as well. Everyone is not in social networks so it is important to take care of those customers also. (Agresta & Bough, 2010, 43)
4.2 Psychology of Social Media Marketing

To understand social media marketing you need to understand people and what makes them to tick. Social media is about human psychology. If you want your message to be successfully spread you need to touch the core fundamentals of influence.

Founder of Copyblogger Brian Clark process four powerful elements of influence which present backbone for social media marketing:

1. Reciprocity - All human societies subscribe to the principle that we are obligated to return favours or invitations. The same element allowed us to evolve from primitive tribes to complex global economy. Reciprocity is the reason why waitresses leave mint with the check or why you receive free gifts via direct mail. In social media free mints are content, valuable information for customers. Creating quality content is hard but as more people come in contact, your content will self-reinforce by social proof.

2. Social Proof – It is psychological mechanism in which we guide our own actions by looking others. Unfortunate events like suicides, murders and school shootings often occur in clusters when reported in media. Social proof has also positive affects for example child is more likely to learn new skill by watching other child to perform it than by one-on-one parental instruction. Because of social proof testimonials, case studies and word-of-mouth referrals are such a effec-
tive part of marketing. If some one likes your product it is easier to others to like yours as well.

3. Liking – Being likable is important. In court, how Jury feels about client is often more important than the law, evidence or the truth. The same thing is with customers. Likability is affected by five variables. When we see good-looking people we automatically assign other favourable traits such as honesty and intelligence to them without knowing. Good look make us believe something to be better than it might be. We tend to like similar people with similar interests. People are positively bias towards people they feel comparable to themselves. We like people who give compliments. People are more likely to choose familiar thing over unfamiliar. Familiar feeling is stronger with those companies which co-operate with us. Customers like products that have positive association. Once people like you, your position allows you to act as authority.

4. Authority – Context matters more than the actual content. Things said by authority figure are accepted more easily as a fact although it might be otherwise objected. Creating continually content about your field of expertise makes one an authority figure.

(Meyersson, 2010, 13-28)

4.3 Tactical Transparency

Holz et al. (2008, 15) points out that rise of social media has declined trust in companies and increased customer scrutiny. Businesses are operating now in atmosphere that demands greater openness. Companies are in transparency revolution caused by information technol-
ogy. Unlike traditional one-way media, no one can control conversation in multidirectional internet – except its users.

Because of social media companies are transparent. However it is also a force that can be used with candor to build trust. Transparency is a new form of power that has become essential for success. Company can choose to hide behind the barriers of the organisation or examine how to embrace the transparency. Tactical transparency is methodology for your business to develop a greater authenticity of your organisation. (2008,2-3)

Authors Holz et al.(2008,22-23) gives definition for effective transparency tactics.

_Transparency is the degree to which an organization shares the following with its stakeholder publics:_

- **Its leaders:** The leaders of transparent companies are accessible and are straightforward when talking with members of key audiences.

- **Its employees:** Employees of transparent companies are accessible to reinforce the public view of the company and to help people where appropriate.

- **Its values:** Ethical behavior, fair treatment, and other values are on full display in transparent companies.

- **Its culture:** How a company does things is more important today than what it does. The way things get done is not a secret in transparent companies.
• The results of its business practices, both good and bad: Successes, failures, problems, and victories all are communicated by transparent companies.

• Its business strategy: Of particular importance to the investment community but also of interest to several other audiences, a company’s strategy is a key basis for investment decisions. Misalignment of a company’s strategy and investors’ expectations almost always result in disaster.

Important thing to remember about tactical transparency is that none of these dimensions are all or nothing. It is important to understand what can be said and what can’t. Reporting about the problems that has affect on customers is sound strategy, but reporting every little problem in R&D is unnecessary and can harm business. (2008,23)

Business environment requires transparency, it is not a choice. It is futile to hide bad news or build walls to mask questionable practices because those will be revealed. Companies are not expected to be perfect so it is in company’s own interest to behave ethically and talk with consumers. To be successful, transparency must be spread across the entire company. Companies need to become open members of the same networks as their customers and be transparent through conversations. (2008,23-24)

If your company is currently saying nothing, start by saying something. Every company needs to find their own limits within the corporate culture. Be more transparent rather than less and see what happens. (2008,2)
4.4 Creating Compelling Content

Ann Hadley, the chief content officer of MarketingProfs.com points out that interrupting customers repeatedly with marketing messages is simply not enough anymore. (Meyersson, 2010, 47-64) Rules have changed. Organisations need to get customer attraction with compelling content.

Good content is relevant and informative that your customer find educational, interesting and fun. Well created content can position your business from plain seller to trustworthy source of information. Ms Hadley suggests that companies should ask these five questions about its business before creating content.

1. **What are your goals?** Cornerstone of content strategy is to match it with business objectives and strategic goals.

2. **Who is your audience?** Who are your target customers? What are their problems and more important how can you help them? Anticipate their needs so you can meet them. Give their purchase a context.

3. **What do you want the content to achieve?** What kind of effect you hope your content to achieve? How you want your customers to react? How will you measure and define success of your content?

4. **What are you going to develop?** Think about the best ways to engage targeted audience. Their preferences, type of media, platform and your budget.

5. **How are you going to develop it?** What is your approach on what ever you are developing?
After you have answered these five questions you are ready to start creating content. For this Hadley gives eleven rules for publishing compelling content.

1. **Compelling Content has an objective.** Best content is created for a purpose, with business objective in mind.

2. **Compelling content is vendor-agnostic.** First think of your customer’s needs and help and educate them.

3. **Compelling content is trustworthy.** Deliver content that is relevant to customers consistently on a regular schedule you set.

4. **Compelling content is engaging.** What is engaging depends or your customer’s needs. Create a point of view that set your content apart.

5. **Compelling content allows for interaction or dialog.** Create content that makes customers to take part.

6. **Compelling content speaks the language of your customers.** Make sure that your content is understandable for your customers.

7. **Compelling content meets your audience where they are – specifically.** Do some research. Get clear sense where your audience is.

8. **Compelling content is well–executed.** Make sure that content is working and it is easy to use.

9. **Compelling content experiments a little.** Social media space is still quite unknown. Do little experiments to find out what attracts your readers.

10. **Compelling content creates Hot Triggers.** Hot Trigger is an action user can take right now. What action you want your customer to take.

11. **Compelling content is search-optimized.** First think about the content and search engine preferences second.

As a bonus rule Hadley reminds companies not to put content behind registration. Make it possible for audience to share the content.
4.5 Building large and loyal following

Having followers is the key for successful social media marketing. Loyal followers have become the most powerful tool of advertising. Mari Smith has gathered set of rules for building a large and loyal following. (Meyersson, 2010, 181-198)

1. *Always be yourself.* Be authentic and transparent.
2. *Stay focused.* People use only nanosecond to see your page and decide if you are suitable for their social network so make sure that you display total clarity in what you do, who you help and how you help them.
3. *Have abundance mind-set.* There is enough for everyone.
4. *To be an authority, you must be an author.* Regularly update your status. The more you create content the more authority you command. Post everything with strategic intent.
5. *Be generous;* Give your best stuff away. By giving your best stuff away your network will think of you as knowledgeable and generous.
6. *Lead by example.* Stay just one step ahead of your competitors. Demonstrate that you are in top of your game.
7. *If content is king, connection is queen.* Relationship first business second. Connection and conversation brings content to life.
8. *Implement “radical strategic visibility.”* Be presence and be seen.
9. *Take imperfect action and be patient.* Building large and loyal fan base takes time. Keep creating content and followers will come.
10. *Have objective, strategy and means of measurement.* Have an objective of having x amount of fans but also additional objective what you
want those fans to do. Strategy to add fans and measurement to monitor how your strategy is working.

4.6 Measure your social media efforts

According to Star Hall (Meyersson, 2010, 119-127) there are two main reason why businesses don’t profit from social media. First one is that they are selling instead of developing relationships. Second is that they don’t have correct measurements and tracking tools to manage and improve their social media appearance. Hall gives five reasons why measuring is important.

1. You can not improve what you cannot measure
2. Joint venture partners will pay more when they know your conversion rates.
3. You can better understand how you are being talked about as compared to your competitors.
4. You will know whether or not you are currently part of conversation in regard to your product/industry.
5. You can learn how to build better relationship with your key audience.

Social media success cannot be solely measured by ROI. You are missing important part of social media when measuring its returns by monetary units.

If you want to measure traffic, sales or SEO ranking there are some free tools offered, i.e. Google Analytics that helps analyse your site traffic or Webslub.info that compares your site’s performance to any other site.
But if you are interested in brand reputation or customer relationship more cumulative measurement approach is required. You can find out who is talking about your company and what the conversation is about with monitoring systems such as Google Alerts. It also gives notification when your company is mentioned in web.

Second measurement is to find out if you have build more relationships to your target market through online. This can be done by keyword search in connection section on social sites.

Third is simply to go on your social network and measure the growth of your fan base.

There are no agreed standards on measuring social media efforts because objectives of the companies differ. When clear objectives are set to company’s social media presence it is easier to measure its success.
5 CASE STUDY – AUTOKIILA

This part consists of interviews of CEO and Salesmen Autokiila, commenting concerns raised in interviews and my recommendation on how Autokiila should proceed on in social media.

5.1 Teknoitoimi Oy – Autokiila

Teknoitoimi Oy was founded in 1939, and so the 73 year old company is one of the oldest companies working in car industry in Finland. Company's branches are located in Turku but the operating area covers whole Varsinais-Suomi region.

Since 1939 Teknoitoimi Oy has represented many car brands. Volkswagen Beetle created foundations for the company's success in the mid 60's when car dealership was deregulated.

With trade name Autokiila, Teknoitoimi oy have had Toyota dealership in Turku business area since 1978. Autokiila operates as a full service car dealership selling both new and used cars, providing service, selling spare parts and additional parts. Company owns also body repair and paint shop.
Toyota as a brand has been market leader in Finland for years, even decades, in both passenger car and delivery van segment. However the competition in Finland has tightened and gaps between brands have diminished.

In 2011 Teknotoimi Oy sold 550 new cars and 1 110 used cars reaching turnover of 23 million euros. Company employs 56 persons.

5.2 Interview of CEO

Q1. Why social media interests?

A1. In short time remarkable part of people’s use of time and intercourse has moved to social media. In marketing point of view it is compulsory to analyze the possibilities to be part of something where potential customers are. I'm also interested what kind of possibilities social media provides for communication and contacting existing customers.

Q2. Why Autokilla has not joined social media before?

A2. Management consists of people over fifty-five so there is serious lack of knowledge and understanding of social media. Second reason is that we have not felt the need to be the pathfinder for car dealers in social media, but to monitor social media development and
experiences of others.

Q3. Are competitors active in social media?

A3. I don’t have very clear view about the competitors’ participation but what I have understood it is minor. I believe that larger chains and companies run by importer are already somehow involved in social media.

Q4. What are the doubts and concerns towards social media?

A4. Main concern is the uncontrollability of the conversation in social media. What are the possibilities to follow, react and participate?

Other thing is the average age of customers. I understand that younger generations are active in social media but our customers are typically middle aged or older.

Third thing is that car dealership is not very sexy or hip thing to like. I can see why some one is a fan of a brand but why some one would fan of a local car dealer?

Q5. Which areas you hope that social media could improve?

A5. For closer communication with own clientele.

Q6. Which modes of media Autokiila uses now?
A6. We are not involved in social media in any way. Other medias in which we are involved are newspaper, webpage, industry’s internet portals and sometimes radio- and TV- spots. We have also planned some billboard ads in the future. Our main marketing channel however is direct mailing.

Q7. What kind of resources Autokiila poses for administrating social media?

A7. At this point quite limited. We have to reorganize some activities after we have more knowledge about the resources needed for this project. One option is to address this task to our marketing assistant.

Q8. What kind of expectations you have towards my research?

A8. Gaining knowledge about social media’s applicability for previously mentioned activities in our company perspective. I also hope to get clear recommendation what forms of social media would be most suitable for us and how to execute it.

5.3 Interview of Salesmen

Q1. Do you use social media?
Q2. Have you used social media in your work?

Q3. Do you think that social media could help you in your work?

Q4. How do you find communication with your customers?

Q5. Does customers have improvement suggestions? What kind?

5.4 Summary of Salemen’s Answers

Q1. Five out of nine salesmen said that they use social media actively. After more thorough interviewing turned out that that the rest four has also used social media in form of reading blogs or forums.

Q2. Four said that they have had few quires about cars trough social media but they all have come from people the have known.

Q3. Two said that they don’t believe that social media could help them in their work. Four believed social media has significant potential and three predicted small positive effect.
Q4. SMS and direct mail was found the most reliable way to contact customers. It was found difficult to contact customer by phone because people don’t answer when they see unknown company number. E-mail was effective way to contact some customers but many have said that they don’t read e-mails from companies because it is considered spamming.

Q5. In general customers have very little improvement suggestions. Most common feedback is that there are not enough pictures of used cars to get clear view of the condition of the car.

5.5 Comments on CEO’s Assumptions of Social Media

Assumption of competitors’ social media presence turned out to be quite accurate. Brands in general have Facebook sites run by importer. These sites are active and have fairly wide fan base. Content is created by both administrator and readers.

Bigger chains have also Facebook sites but those are generally poorly managed. For example Autotalo Laakkonen, which is biggest single car dealer in Finland has 77 fans and almost none content creation from administrator.

Because other individual dealers are not involved in social media there is potential to differentiate. Autokiila has not have the need to be the pathfinder in social media, but it could provide competitive advantage.
It is hard to control what customers say in social media. The main problem is that customers are in social media even though the company they are speaking of is not. By providing platform for your customers, company can follow and control what has been said. The ideal situation would be that consumers would talk only in the platform provided by the company.

In uncontrolled environments customer problem can expand to lot bigger when is not dealt correctly. Often the best customer service situations are those when customer’s problems are taken care of. You cannot fix something when you don’t know what needs to be fixed. Dealing with customers problems in public environment show other customers that company cares about customers and their needs.

Social networking is no longer just for younger generations. Internet activity of middle aged people have increased immensely past few years. “Over half of e-bay buyers are over 45. Silver surfers (over 55) are increasingly visible online” (Richardson et al.,2010,32). Impact of this group can no longer be underestimated.

Car dealership has stuck to it old ways of doing business. The way dealerships operate don’t attract younger people and I believe that social media could be the answer for this.

It is true that local car dealerships don’t generate same kind of fan base that rock bands or brands have. It is easy to be a fan of your favourite rock band in Facebook, but fan of local dealership is seeking for deeper relationship. People are brand loyal when it comes to cars. Person can drive with Toyota for all his or hers life so building
two-way relationship with local dealer is important. Local businesses have over 5.3 billion fans in Facebook.

Picture 1 (HubSpot Blog, 2010)
5.6 Recommendation

Many companies have the false assumption that social media is easy, cheap and fast way to boost business. Opening Facebook and twitter account is not a social media strategy. To build effective two-way communication requires time and resources. Because of the limited resources Autokiila has for administrating social media I recommend to concentrate on one platform first.

I see that Facebook is the most suitable social network site for Autokiila for two main reasons. Firstly Facebook is the most commonly used platform of social media in Finland with over two million users. Secondly other platforms are usually concentrated on one form of media i.e. YouTube for videos and Flickr for photos. Range of media forms in Facebook is much wider. You can share videos, photos and music, post articles and news and have conversations with customers.

Chinese have this old saying: "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand". This sums the core idea of social media marketing. Ask customer what we could do better to make owning the car a better experience. People tend to stick and protect something that they have created. By giving customers the idea that they are involved in building a better dealership they will cherish it as their own.
“The key with boring brands is to get people talking about their problems, since they won’t talk about your brand”. –Josh Bernhoff-

As we already know car dealerships are not very sexy or cool. When the company itself does not generate conversations, you have to get customers talking. Us Finns are not very open when it comes to our problems. This leads usually for us to struggle alone with our problems and then changing something that we hope to take the problem away. Usually these are problems that could be easily solved by professional. Be that professional. Encourage customers to speak what is on their mind and tell them that you are here to help you. Promotion is good way to get fans but dialog is for deeper interaction with customers.

Give followers reason to be your fan. If you don’t provide content people don’t have reason to be your fan. When thinking about last year there were big changes and events that affected car industry. Taxation of car changed in Finland and tsunami in Japan had huge impact on Toyota. These events could only be read or heard in news and public media. No one explained what it meant to a customer of specific brand. Therefore I suggest that for example once a month CEO’s newsletter would be published in Facebook. Topics would handle current events and it would explain how it affects Autokiila’s customers. For example people are talking about how taxation is again increasing and cars are becoming more expensive. Emission based taxation means that polluting cars gets more expensive. Here is a chance to remind that because Toyota is pathfinder in hybrid technology many of Autokiila’s models are actually getting cheaper. Idea is to explain these events in the way that customers understand what they mean and also how they affect them. This kind of content is important because it can be shared with followers own social network.
Content can be also half service and half advertising. Now when summer is closing Autokiila could post reminder for customers to check their tyre conditions before hand so when the time comes to change the tyres they don’t notice that new tyres are needed and have to wait two weeks for them. This shows that you care about your customers but also as a reminder that customers can buy and change tyres in Autokiila.

Social media is considered to be acceptable spam. Salesmen pointed out the problem that companies send so much e-mail about offers and campaigns that people don't read them anymore. By addressing majority of offers and campaign into Facebook E-mail can be saved for important personal mailing.

Other feedback that salesmen got was the lack of pictures of used cars. This could be solved by posting videos of interesting cars. There could also be Facebook offer of the month. Video of car that is on special offer for that specific month. For this Autokiila needs to open YouTube account so the video can be linked to Facebook. Use of YouTube can be increased in the future after Autokiila has got Facebook running smoothly.

Important thing to remember is that Social media is not an advertising space to boos car sales. Autokiila is full service car dealership so Facebook needs to cover also full service and not only car sales department. Marketing Assistant can be pointed as the Facebook Responsible but persons from car service and body paint needs to be pointed to this project also.
Human resources to this project must be harnessed so that in case of sickness or vacation there is always one who can answer to customer’s problems orquires.
6 CONCLUSION

There is wide range of social media modes available for businesses. Social media genres can be divide to six major groups: content creation and publishing tools, social network sites, content sharing sites, collaborative production sites, virtual worlds and add-ons. Depending on the company and its goals different genres can provide range of marketing possibilities for companies. It is still important to understand that social media is not free advertising space.

Against general perception building working social media presence is not cheap or fast. It requires resources, time and strategy like any other mode of marketing.

Social media has declined customer trust towards companies, which has forced companies to be more transparent. Tactical transparency has become one of the key strategies in social media. It develops greater authenticity of organisation and builds trust in consumers. Customers don’t expect for organisations to be perfect so companies should talk with customers and ask how they could better fulfil the needs of consumers.

Social media is powerful because of four psychological reasons. 1. People feel obligated to return favour. 2. We seek for social acceptance. 3. Being likable is important. 4. We respect authority. By fulfilling these four demands in your social media presence you will succeed.
These needs can be fulfilled with creating compelling content. By creating contents that allows consumers to participate makes them feel involved and they return favour by adding content. Providing customers with interesting and fun content makes your company likable. Authority possession can be reached with informative and educational content.

Gathering followers takes time and is a continuing task. Promotion campaign can produce burst of followers but keeping them is lot harder. There is no use to follow social network site if there is nothing to follow. So continuous creation of content and reacting immediately on customer’s needs is crucial for successful social media site.

One of the main reasons for companies to fail in social media is that performance is not measured. Numerous service providers, provide free measurement tools i.e. Google, for companies. With correct measurement and tracking tools businesses can track what needs to be fixed.

Companies, especially smaller ones, can still manage without social media presence but they might miss huge potential. Social media has become more important in companies’ operations and in future it will probably be as compulsory as web sites are today for companies. In the case of Autokiila I believe that they could maintain their market share in coming years also without social media presence but it could provide possibility for increase in market share.
Social media success cannot only be measured in increase of market share. Utilizing social media now Autokiila can offer better customer experiences by building two-way communication with their customers. With affective social media presence Autokiila can differentiate from other dealers in the region and gain competitive advantage. With limited resources building social network can take up to a year. This is why I think it is important for Autokiila to join social media as soon as possible.
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