

DIGITAL MARKETING IN A NICHE B2B COMPANY



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ABSTRACT

The use of social media in B2B businesses is not as common as it is in B2C companies and social media platforms have become highly popular and highly important, especially in the last few years. Today, there are social media platforms like LinkedIn which are created with businesses in mind. Social media and digital marketing should be used to support customer relationships and to ease customer's decision-making process. B2B companies are able to build communities online, communicate their brand to their audience through targeted social media posts. This thesis investigates Tonisco, a niche B2B technological company and how improving their digital marketing and website can improve brand awareness and increase sales.

For this thesis, mixed methods were used. Both quantitative and qualitative research was conducted. Google Analytics for Tonisco.com were analyzed in conjunction with a customer survey and an interview with a B2B social media strategist specialist was conducted.

The research obtained through Google Analytics for the Tonisco.com website revealed where on their website Tonisco should make changes in order to lower their website bounce rate, keep customers on their website for a longer amount of time and contact Tonisco. It was clear that there were overlaps with the Google Analytics and survey answers. Although, what was interesting was that none of the customers were keen on finding information on social media. From these findings, recommendations were made for Tonisco, in which ways they could improve their websites and social media content to be more engaging to their customers, improve their brand awareness and increase sales.

Keywords Digital Marketing, Content Marketing, Niche B2B Company, B2B Marketing

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Table of Contents

APPENDICIES	2
FIGURES	3
IMAGES	3
1 Introduction	4
1.1 Background information	5
1.2 Tonisco.....	7
2 Theoretical background	8
2.1 Business-to-Business Marketing	8
2.1.1 B2B marketing on social media platforms	11
2.2 Social Media.....	12
2.2.1 Different social media platforms	13
2.2.2 Decision-making process	15
2.3 Digital Marketing	16
2.4 Branding	16
2.5 Community and Communication	17
3 Research Methodology	19
3.1 Research Question	19
3.2 Method.....	20
4 Analysis	22
4.1 Google Analytics	22
4.2 Customer Survey.....	26
5 Findings	34
6 Recommendations	39
7 Conclusion	41
7.1 Limitations	42
7.2 Suggestions for further research	42
References.....	43
Figure References	45
Image References	46

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: CUSTOMER SURVEY

Appendix 2: TONISCO STYLE GUIDE

FIGURES

Figure 1. Business-to-business social media honeycomb (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Figure 2. LinkedIn for business-to-business (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Figure 3. Acquisition Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

Figure 4. Audience Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

Figure 5. Pages Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

Figure 6. Users Flow – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

Figure 7. Results to question 2 (Appendix 1)

Figure 8. Results to question 5 (Appendix 1)

Figure 9. Results to question 10 (Appendix 1)

Figure 19. Results to question 14 (Appendix 1)

Figure 11. Results to question 9 (Appendix 1)

Figure 12. Result to question 13 (Appendix 1)

Figure 13. Results to question 11 (Appendix 1)

Figure 14. Results to question 12 (Appendix 1)

Figure 15. Results to question 15 (Appendix 1)

Figure 16. Results to question 17 (Appendix 1)

Figure 17. Results to question 18 (Appendix 1)

Figure 18. Results to question 19 (Appendix 1)

Figure 19. Results to question 20 (Appendix 1)

Figure 20. Results to question 21 (Appendix 1)

Figure 21. Results to question 23 (Appendix 1)

IMAGES

Image 1. Tonisco.com front page (Tonisco, n.d.)

Image 2. Tonisco.com website – Services (Tonisco, n.d.)

Image 3. Tonisco.com website – Products (Tonisco, n.d.)

Image 4. Redesigns. (@ransegall, n.d.)

Image 5. UPM Energy front page (UPM Energy, n.d.)

Image 6. Smartly.io front page (Smartly.io, n.d.)

Image 7. Vahterus front page (Vahterus. n.d.)

Image 8. Recommended design for Tonisco's redesigned front page

Image 9. Recommended after the fold for the redesigned Tonisco.com front page

1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of business-to-business (B2B) businesses are that they traditionally make business by selling their products or services to other businesses and make sales by visiting or contacting potential clients. A niche B2B business is one that is in a certain industry and has a smaller customer audience. According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), a 'niche market' is defined as *"a small area of trade within the economy, often involving specialized products"*. Niche markets are usually ones that have clear segmented customers and are in general not covered by any major competitors.

Tonisco is an example of a niche B2B business. Tonisco is a company in the technological industry, they manufacture products and provide services for repairing and maintaining pressurized pipelines. Tonisco has been in business since 1969. Tonisco as a company falls into the niche framework since they provide products and services for repairing and maintaining pressurized pipelines, which is a niche industry, and they are the only company in Finland in this niche industry. Since niche companies work with clearly segmented customer based, marketing and sales have been done in traditional person-to-person relationships, that is a representative of the company approaches and manages the relationship with the customer. Currently, digitalization has brought new opportunities to improve or even disrupt that traditional setting.

In the past, digital marketing and content creation in the B2B field have been less researched than in the B2C field, and with the little research that there is, it is clear that these two are completely different and that B2B digital marketing as a whole should be researched in more depth. There has not been that much research regarding the B2B organizations and the influence that social media can have on their customer's buying behavior. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017) (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

In this thesis, the main topic of discussion is how improving digital content can help a niche B2B company like Tonisco to raise brand awareness and increase sales. The purpose of this investigation is important, as for instance, Koporcic and Halinen (2017) have researched, that there are B2B companies today who have neglected corporate marketing and especially social media marketing in their field. Conjointly, it is a topic, which according to Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, is not researched enough. It is necessary for these niche companies to understand the brand awareness they can achieve with digital content marketing and how it can be beneficial to them and help their company increase sales.

1.1 Background information

The year 2020-2021 has shown to be a challenging year for businesses. Especially for those that rely solely on traditional sales strategies like face-to-face meetings with clients and exhibitions around the world. Companies have suffered from this disruption and moving their businesses fully online. The speed of change has forced them to adapt quickly to the new digital environment and to find new ways to reach and keep in contact with their clients. As Guo, H., Yang, Huang, & Guo, A. (2020) mentioned in their research about the digitalization and public crisis responses of small and medium enterprises, because of COVID-19, especially small and medium-sized businesses and industries across the world have suffered from the pandemic situation.

COVID-19 has shown the importance of the digital environment and how without it, businesses would not keep functioning through a global pandemic. Before the pandemic, yes, the digital environment was already established and now in the situation of the pandemic, it has been used more by various businesses. It is especially important for companies to have already digitized so that in a case like this, they are able to survive. (IMD, 2020)

Throughout this thesis, the term “social media” is defined as “websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone”. (Social Media, n.d.)

Social media in 2021 is used by the majority of the population in their everyday lives, to showcase their happy life events, photos of everything and anything that they want to share. Social media can be viewed from many different points of view and that is the beauty of social media. Social media platforms can be accessed by anyone. They are free platforms accessible to everyone, with a phone and internet connection. To be effective online is something which needs to be researched depending on which type of content the company is going to be posting, for which audience and on which platform. When a company is present online it helps the decision-making process of their customers since they can make faster and more precise decisions with the help of supportive content posted on social media. (Coles, 2014, pp.3-6)

Social media platforms are there to help the customers, partners, and businesses to communicate with each other. It is important to make the communication between key accounts effortless and efficient. Usually, if a customer is in need of something they will reach out to the company, usually by email or phone. With social media, the communication could be simpler and faster. Social media is a great way for B2B businesses to collaborate with each other. Through these platforms' communities can be created where anyone interested is welcome. On these platforms'

innovative conversations, new ideas, and new customer relationships could be created. The way the business communicates online increases the company's credibility. "It is not uncommon for potential B2B buyers to consult peers within their industry", it is important to create a safe and open community for these customers to communicate and of course hoping for positivity is ideal. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

For B2B companies LinkedIn is a great platform, which is specially created for businesses. LinkedIn has recently created a new newsletter feature. LinkedIn has created their own newsletter feature on their platform, which encourages businesses to use LinkedIn and through that, they can stay connected with their customers all through one platform. This makes it more convenient for the companies, saves time and effort as well. Since this newsletter is a part of a social media platform it increases audience awareness, and it is a way to build and grow the company's audience. LinkedIn also provides analytics for these newsletters so that companies are able to analyze their customers and see what interests them the most and the company is able to receive real-time feedback. These analytics include impressions, clicks, interactions, followers acquired and engagement. (Zeeko, n.d) (Barnhart, 2020)

LinkedIn newsletters is one of the newest additions to LinkedIn and it has taken B2B communications to the next level. Through these LinkedIn newsletters, companies are able to be in directly contact with all their customers. With the analysis tools that LinkedIn provides, companies are able to mold their content marketing into something which their audience appreciates, and by doing this the company page on LinkedIn gains more views, which raises brand awareness and increases sales. (Barnhart, 2020)

Through LinkedIn, companies are able to identify the customers they want to reach with their posts. The companies are able to identify which positions in companies they want to reach, in which industry, and which company sizes. Through LinkedIn analytics companies are able to avoid clear problems and make changes to increase the value of their posts. By being able to target posts and advertisements, B2B companies are able to increase the value from their digital marketing. (Barnhart, 2020)

An example of the use of the digital environment is Vinga of Sweden, a Swedish company. In 2019, they conducted LinkedIn experiments with different kinds of posts for their followers. First, when they joined, they thought that they were going on LinkedIn 'just because their competitors were on LinkedIn'. They wanted to test if the posts they were going to post were going to strengthen their customer relationships with existing customers and to find new customers as well. They had 3 strategy categories: A- product-oriented, B- value-based oriented and C- action-oriented messaging. These three categories of messaging increased their followers and engagement percentages, all due to the fact that they were being personal, authentic, showing their personalities, company values,

having call-to-actions available and improving their customer involvement. Their posts inspired their customers to comment and share these posts. This example shows how it is important for companies to be online and show their customers something which is going to keep them interested and allow them to know the company. (Sundstroöm, Alm, Larsson and Lahlin, 2020)

1.2 Tonisco

Tonisco is a medium-sized family-owned company, that provides niche services and manufactures products, used in maintenance and modifications of pressurized pipelines. Tonisco is divided into two companies, Tonisco System, which manufactures the products and Tonisco Service that provides the services. Tonisco System was founded in 1969, and when Tonisco was passed on for a couple of generations, the new generation founded Tonisco Service in 2015. The company has grown since and at present has internationalized and now operates in over 20 countries worldwide. From the beginning, the company has been creating its identity, with each interaction and creating a sense of who Tonisco is as a company.

One of the owners has been representing the company at exhibitions in different countries from the start, which resulted in him being the influence for the personality of the company and how customers viewed the enterprise. For generations, Tonisco's marketing and branding has been done in an "old-fashioned" way, of inviting customers out for dinner, presenting the business ideas and in that way influencing them to buy their products and services. Even though this process was slow and there were never any guarantees, once the connections were built, they were strong and became long-term partnerships. Tonisco has not had a branding or marketing department and have been relying on the sales team to be persuasive, as well as word-of-mouth. They have still managed to create great success by creating strong relationships with their customers and building their brand by showing all their positive qualities through their employees.

Now, in 2020-2021, the company is investing in branding and marketing. As a brand Tonisco System and Tonisco Service are merging into Tonisco, as a whole. This will make it easier to market Tonisco as one. The idea is to create a brand for Tonisco and help them create content marketing, which would increase their sales and make them more known as a family-owned company from Finland and boost visitors to their renewed website.

The problem which needs solving for Tonisco is how they could use digital marketing, the most effective content marketing and website design to their advantage to help raise their brand awareness, increase sales and

build stronger customer relationships with the communication and trust being built online.

The general approach of this thesis is going to be with background context from what is happening around the world especially in this day and age. Tonisco has the opportunity to grow into something more substantial, the opportunities that social media, digital marketing and the internet has on B2B companies today are endless and now is the chance for Tonisco to be ahead of the game and build their brand into something great, new and exciting for their customers.

Communicating with customers, and potential customers is important for B2B companies. This could be through any social media platforms but additionally by posting supportive content online, which is of value to the customers. Targeted content marketing is a way to convey information right to the audience that the company wants to reach. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Business-to-Business Marketing

There are many B2B companies that neglect digital marketing because it is not commonly used in B2B businesses. Marketing is important and should be learned how to be used in a way which is beneficial to the specific company. B2B companies should be adapting to change happening in the digital world. These companies need to learn how to be comfortable in the digital marketing aspect of their company since it is something that will not only increase sales, but additionally strengthen their customer relationships and improve brand awareness (Figure 1). B2B marketing differs from B2C marketing because it is not as public social networking based whereas it is more community-based. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)



Figure 1. Business-to-business social media honeycomb (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

The marketing strategies need to be established for the companies to be able to engage in B2B marketing. They need to be aware of the key features of the different digital marketing platforms and know how to use them to their advantage. The company needs to be able to decide on the appropriate social media platforms, which are used for different purposes, for example, branding, channel development, customer relationships, and knowledge management. It is necessary to take into consideration that B2B companies require a different approach to these strategies than B2C companies. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

All B2B companies have the potential for social media marketing and digital content creation. Yet these B2B companies are not putting their efforts into that. The usage for the most successful way of marketing for these B2B companies is low. There needs to be a change in the mindset of these businesses to start looking at their marketing and sales in a whole new way. They need to be open to change in the marketing world and to see how these new marketing strategies are working and how they could be beneficial to their company. These companies need to familiarize themselves with the digital space and use it to their advantage. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Today, as people are online, they are always on track with everything happening in the world. B2B companies' customers are there also; now the question is how to reach them. Of course, there are different types of buyers, and therefore, it is most important to be available for all of them. Some buyers require more personal face-to-face meetings, whereas

others only want to visit a well-designed, easy to navigate, website to find all the information they need and then contact the company. It is important to not forget the traditional selling techniques when working on the online platforms since there are still going to be customers who prefer the traditional way of purchasing and communicating still to this day. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

The purchasing behavior of customers is changing to a more digital atmosphere. Since digitalization is happening, people are online and are using these social media platforms to their advantage, even in work situations. These platforms are useful, and they are something that people in the B2B atmosphere are not using as much as in the B2C atmosphere. Some B2B companies have a concern for the negativity which is present online and can be brought upon their company. The risk with being online as a B2B company is that everything posted and said online, stays online and therefore companies need to pay immaculate attention to detail, and try their best not to make any mistakes, which could upset their customers or competitors. The fact is that negativity and mistakes are possible with or without these social media platforms, nevertheless it is something worth taking a risk on. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

B2B businesses need to market to the right audience, they need to make sure that they are placing their money and efforts into the right platforms. It is important for these companies to not waste their time and money, to start making the right marketing decisions, which will increase their engagement and sales. It is essential for these B2B businesses to build their credibility online and create trust between their customers. Through social media platforms, companies are able to communicate with their customers. Through the communication and the fact that they are keeping in touch will make the relationship more special. This is what builds that customer relationship and increases trust. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Brand reputation is relevant for these businesses when thinking about social media and their online presence. Equally important is the fact that they use these social media platforms to increase their sales by creating high value content for their customers by having important information about their products and services, which is useful for their customers to help them with their decision-making process. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

“Research shows that service quality improvement leads to customer loyalty and attraction of new customers, positive word-of-mouth, employee satisfaction and commitment, enhanced corporate image, reduced costs and increased business performance” (Berry et al, 1989).

It has been researched that consistent quality service leads to customer loyalty, as well as the attraction of new customers and this is important to remember when building the brand of a business since the employees are

the brand of the company. It is especially important in B2B companies to be aware of all the aspects which could influence the customer since it could be something that makes them or breaks them. (Ghose, 2009)

There needs to be some changes in traditions in the B2B world with customer relations. The long tradition of face-to-face meetings especially now in the time of a global pandemic need to be thinking of change. There are times when companies cannot meet face-to-face with their customers and still need to keep in touch and continue working. Not only interacting at exhibitions and conferences but also staying in touch outside from those events. Trust and loyalty are easier built when meeting face-to-face but there are additionally other ways of doing that, which could turn out to be the way of the future. (Sundström, Alm, Larsson and Lahlin, 2020)

2.1.1 B2B marketing on social media platforms

Digital marketing is something that is constantly changing, businesses need to keep up with the changing trends, new features on platforms and differences in popularity and use for each of the different applications on social media. It is important to flow with the trends and to stay up to date with them. B2B businesses need to know how to use digital content to their benefit. These companies should be aware of what works for them since, different types of posts, different platforms work for different businesses. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

The use of emotions in B2B digital marketing should be taken into consideration. Which types of posts do better, what is in those posts, who is in the posts, why do they gain a more positive reaction than other posts? It is valuable to stimulate emotions in the content to make it relevant and personal to the businesses. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

A niche B2B company's social media could be treated as a community for their partners, customers and viewers. These companies could create something new, something which is meant for a B2B social media environment. It needs to be something that works for the company's niche audience, this would be more high value driven content and more personalized for the customer to attract value. This could be something special for the business and could help them to create the audience and draw in people just to learn more about the niche. These B2B companies have the chance to change the 'taboo' around B2B social media marketing. They have the chance to make it whatever they want, since it is something which had barely been touched before. These B2B companies need to know how to use these social media platforms, they need to know where they want to be and how they want their audience to see them. In the beginning, it is trial and error, especially since there is not that much research that has been done into the B2B social media marketing aspect. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

Niche businesses face several opportunities when looking at the development of their social media marketing, by monitoring the different options of social media that they have available for them, evaluating social media values, comparing to see on which platforms at which times they have more value on their marketing. It is necessary for these companies to establish a way which works for them and then manage them in an organized way. Later, when they have established the right terms, they are able to develop social media strategies and have strategic approaches to their content to make it more appealing to the right audiences. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

When B2B companies are not using digital marketing, they might miss out on sales and customer opportunities. Social media is full of opportunities for companies. It is an opportunity for them to be involved, ready for questions, ready to showcase who the company is, there to help with any sales inquiries and stay connected. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

When starting out with digital marketing, it is important to first have an online presence and, be there, where everyone is, online. Then when the platforms have some sort of following, and the company is able to see what types of posts are working for the business, then the company can start getting into the specifics. It is important then later to create content which is tailored just for the customers that the company wants to address. Being credible, being online so when researched there is evidence and information found, which makes the business more trustworthy and appealing to the customers. Credibility in niche companies is highly valued by customers. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

B2B companies should try to be personal with their customers even when doing digital marketing. Especially in a niche B2B company since they need to reach a specific audience. This can be done through personalized messages to customers, newsletters, and customer relationship management practices. Before social media, B2B companies would traditionally meet their customers, take them out to dinner and make them feel special in that way, become friends with them and then secure a purchase from them. Now, this has to be translated into social media platforms as well. This means being personal with them also online and make them feel special and therefore personalized and niche posts are something which is the way of the future for B2B businesses. LinkedIn has added the feature of audience targeting, this allows for companies to create as LinkedIn Marketing Solutions (n.d. b) quotes “precise and powerful targeting”. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

2.2 Social Media

Social media as a platform is an ‘umbrella platform’ which includes different types of social media platforms under the name social media.

Social media as a platform is one that is always changing, new apps, new features and new ways to use these platforms are emerging and the users have to adapt to the change of these platforms in order to be able to use them to their advantage. Particularly in social media marketing for a B2B business. These businesses need to stay updated, so that when these social media environments are changing, they are not behind. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

There are many different social media platforms available for use. It is important for these B2B companies to do their research to see where their audience is, which channels are most popular and why. This will help with the type of content created on that page because where a certain post is posted, and why it is posted and for whom it is posted to and for what reason all needs to be figured out in order to access the proper success out of the post. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

It is crucial to remember that when using social media platforms for work purposes, which platforms are the audience using for their personal use and which are they using for work. This is a key factor to remember so that the content which is posed is made for the user and their purpose of using the platform. If the audience is using a platform for their personal use, they might not want to see work-related content. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

2.2.1 Different social media platforms

Not all social platforms are used for the same purpose and not all platforms work for all businesses. These B2B businesses need to find the right platforms for them and find out where their customers are. There is no point in investing into a social media platform, where customers are not active. Therefore, initial research is needed beforehand. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

LinkedIn is an exceptional B2B platform, it is made for businesses and businesspeople working in different types of industries. On LinkedIn, B2B companies are able to build relationships with potential partners and customers and stay connected to returning customers (Figure 2). LinkedIn is made for businesses to share professional content for their audiences to inform them and provide relevant information about their business and ongoing activities and campaigns. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

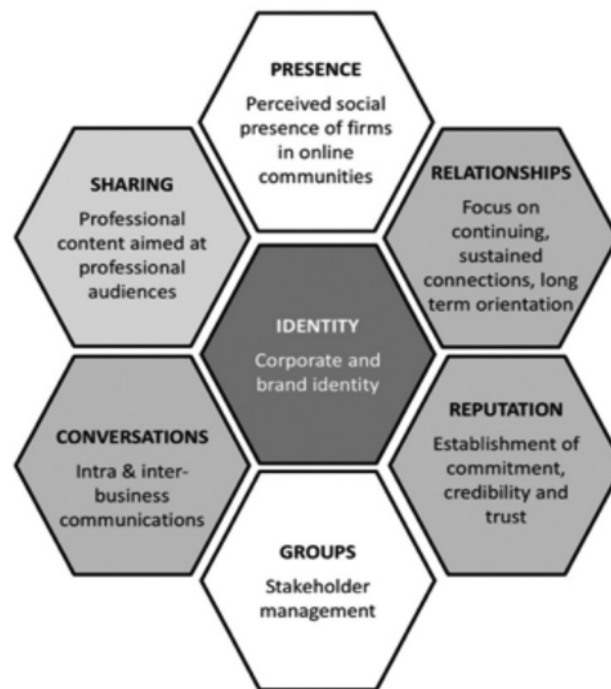


Figure 2. LinkedIn for business-to-business (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

LinkedIn has features that make targeting the company's niche audiences easy. The audience marketing tool has made it possible for companies to target ads and campaigns to specific audiences in order use their marketing budget in a smart way. This targeting can be done based on traits like job, position, company name, industry as well as interests. (LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, n.d. a)

B2B companies should combine the LinkedIn Growth-Hacking strategies to their digital marketing strategy in order to grow on LinkedIn. As Gil (2020) explains the Growth-Hacking strategies are:

1. Use the right keywords
 2. Have rich media content
 3. Connecting with customers and partners on LinkedIn
 4. Connect LinkedIn with other social media accounts and the company website
 5. Create content directly on LinkedIn
- (Gil, C. 2020)

Digital marketing on social media for a B2B company is more challenging than for B2C companies. Especially niche B2B companies, since they are all different, their customers are unique, their needs are different and therefore they all need to target different people and a niche audience of people. Social media can be a very useful platform for these types of B2B companies since the social media campaign management tools are made to reach just the right customers, which is beneficial for these niche B2B companies. Social media as a platform is quite special since it is a platform, which is available for everyone since everyone is able to access it and be a

part of any community and create communities and be a part of what they want to be a part of. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

It is important to note how social media is viewed in a business. Depending on the age of the employees, where they are from and how advanced they are with social media and technology. Today, the younger demographic is more invested into social media and the digital environment, but for the older generations, it seems to be a hard transition. In this digital world, it should not be a question, whether or not these digital platforms should be used in a business. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

It is known that social media has no boundaries and that today anything is possible; all companies have a chance to succeed and showcase their company on these platforms. These online platforms have made it straightforward for buyers and sellers to communicate and stay in touch with each other. Now, these companies need to start using these online selling tools and start increasing their sales. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Before these social media platforms, the buyer was limited in choice and had limited ways of reaching the seller since they always had to contact the seller in person, call them or visit them at exhibitions. Today, there are no limitations and social media has made everything easier. Now the customer can research and find out the information they need from online. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Creating a community to communicate with online, is an 'expanded electronic word of mouth' which allows for the business to be known around the world since there are no restrictions on social media. These webinars are almost unheard of in the B2B business world since companies think that they are not going to work and that they are not the way of the future since they are used to seeing their customers face-to-face and calling them and bribing them with dinners and drinks. Webinars are the way of the future; it is the way these companies are able to make their potential customers feel like they have access to all the information they need from the company and makes them feel special for being able to attend. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

2.2.2 Decision-making process

Social media helps the decision-making process of potential customers. It is a great platform to have everything about the company available for the customer. Customers benefit from seeing reviews about the products, product videos, a clear informative website, social media platforms with likes, comments and shares to make them feel like the decision is right to buy from the company. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Social media is an excellent platform to ease the buying process. Decision-making is made easier with social media since the content and information on digital media is influencing the customer to purchase. Social media platforms are making the sales employee's job easier. Content on social media provides the customers with the relevant information they need about the products and services, which makes their decision-making easier since they have all the information they need online. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

When companies have a social media presence it helps their potential customers to research them, find out everything about the products and services, read comments and go through all platforms before making a decision. This is how potential vendors can find these B2B companies, to see if they want to resell their products. Social media can help make partnerships and connections with different partners from the industry. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

2.3 Digital Marketing

It is vital to share relevant content online, which can be discussed and help the sales of the company. In addition, to share content which reinforces the buyer's recommendation. The content needs to be interesting for the right audiences, the ones that the company wants to target. There can also be branding posts every once in a while, for the marketing, it is the ones that grab the interest of the desired customers. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Social media is a great platform to get to know the company's audience, customers to see how they react to certain types of content and why. Over time the company will learn which content is relevant to their audience and which receives less engagement. Valuable content raises company awareness for the customers. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

The importance and use of digital marketing in a business depend on the business culture and how it is viewed at the business. Today, social media is becoming a norm, and today with the new generation, everything is most probably going to be online. So, B2B companies who are now getting into the digital marketing world are going to be ahead of time and leaders in the industry. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

2.4 Branding

Brand identity is marketed at events, on the company website, product packaging as well as online and through various social media channels and platforms. The integration of branding in all aspects of the company is essential, in order for the branding to be complete. Social media is a great place for all B2B businesses since all businesses have a chance of

succeeding on the platform, they all have the same chances of becoming known and building their brand. On social media, it is essential to create an identity and follow through with it throughout the business. With that identity, the company will create a following, not only from their customers and partners as well as from others who are interested in who they are as a company. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

The branding, of the company, includes all the intangibles of the company like, goodwill, trustworthiness, credibility and brand equity. Social media platforms are great places to exhibit these qualities through photos, campaigns, posts, videos, partnerships, sponsorships. All of this supports the brand image and social media is a great platform to convey these attributes to their customers. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Brand management is not something which is done only by the marketing and branding department in a company, but it is something which needs to be taken into consideration by the whole company. Since all the employees are the face of the company. This reiterates the fact that the whole company is one and should act like it as well everyone needs to know the company values and act accordingly since then they are able to be on-brand. (Ghose, 2009)

Brand image should be built around the core values of the company, and they should be present in the company's everyday activities. By having the brand be a part of every day for the company, it increases brand image consistency, and consistency is key. Brand values and brand vision need to be a well-known aspect around the whole company. All employees need to be aware of it and need to know how to act accordingly in order to be on-brand. (Ghose, 2009)

Branding changes constantly, there are seasons and occasions, people change, employees change, customers change, customer needs change. Therefore, the brand should be adapting all the time. It is important to create a face for the company in a way that no matter who from the company, the customer has a feeling that they know the person, that they are comfortable with them, and trust them since they showcase the brand and their values. The people create the brand of the company and how their customers see the brand and therefore, the employees should pay attention to the way that they make the customers feel. (Koporcic and Halinen, 2018)

2.5 Community and Communication

It is valuable for the B2B companies to know how to communicate with their customers. They need to know their customers. What interests them, what time they are active and on what platforms and why are they there, work or free time. (Wang, Rod, Ji, and Deng, 2017)

B2B companies should create a community for their audience online since it can aid them create the right campaigns and reach their desired audience. By building this community, they have an audience to communicate with, who are interested in what is happening with the company and want to stay connected on the daily to get all the news. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

Digital marketing platforms for B2B companies should be used to reinforce these customer relationships, they are a great way of building trust, loyalty and connecting with customers almost on a personal level. Social media networking sites should be used to keep in touch with customers. Social media has made it simple to communicate with many people at the same time through an online platform, this has given many more opportunities to communicate with customers, build brand awareness and increase sales. Customers are able to give their input to certain topics and their opinions, which makes them feel as if they are a part of something, creating that trust and loyalty value. The communication makes the customers more engaged with the brand, makes them feel as if they are a part of the company community. (Sundström, Alm, Larsson and Lahlin, 2020)

An increasing amount of effort should be put into customer experience. This is not just when face-to-face with customers, but this customer experience can also be enhanced through social media platforms, user experience and engaging with the customers. It is not just the marketing and branding teams who keep the brand alive, it is the whole company. Each interaction should convey the brand and enhance the customer experience. (Ghose, 2009)

It is always the first impressions which are the most important. Whoever it is from the company, the first impression should always be on brand and enhance the customer experience. This should not be forgotten about in social media either. If the brand wants to be available for their customers, they also need to be available online. (Ghose, 2009)

The company needs to find an ideal customer experience and define what it should be for their company. Creating interesting and informative content and targeting the right customers, on the right platforms, using the right terms, words and phrases is where all the work needs to be set to reach the company's audience online. (Ghose, 2009)

Now-a-days ways in which customer relationships are made are changing, and it is just difficult for business to change their traditional ways to be more modern, it is thought that strong relationships cannot be built online. What if the change about to happen in B2B social media marketing is going to make these relationships stronger than ever? Social media could bring about even better opportunities than have ever been seen before and change the whole game. Like the uprising of new platforms especially

made for B2B requirements and demands like LinkedIn. LinkedIn is created for these B2B companies to be able to connect and network online. (Sundström, Alm, Larsson and Lahlin, 2020)

These social media platforms are an excellent way to maintain customer relationships outside of these events, exhibitions and meetings. Especially now since there is a global pandemic going on, even international customers have the opportunity of keeping in touch and staying up to date through these platforms. Not just in a pandemic but even without it, social media is a way for customers to stay in touch with these companies daily and not only in special events, exhibitions or meetings, but on a more regular basis. This online environment is something which the B2B field still needs to get more used to since it would benefit them greatly. (Sundström, Alm, Larsson and Lahlin, 2020)

Social media is a great platform for companies to communicate with their customers and further enhance their brand communication and portray their loyalty and trust through these platforms. Online presence and proper communication to the desired audience can change how partners and especially the customers perceive the company. This can also increase brand loyalty and bring in new customers. (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015)

Social media has opened new ways of communication for B2B companies. Customers are getting insight information from companies and beginning to see companies in a new light with the way that the companies are portrayed online in a new light. The communities are learning more and more daily about the companies and staying on track with changes instantly. The companies are also able to learn from their audience and about what they want and in this way the company engagement increases. Keeping in touch with the company's customers and partners indicates a great deal about the company. Communication increases the associations made with the company. (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015)

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Question

Based on the theory which has been already researched for B2B digital marketing there seem to be quite a few gaps in the research. Diba, Vella, and Abratt (2019) mentioned that 'there has not been much theoretical research regarding B2B organizations and the influence that social media can have on their buying and selling behaviors.' As Tonisco is the focal company for this thesis; Tonisco is one of the companies that has not been adapting to the changes of the digital marketing world, but they also have

not inputted much effort into their marketing. Since Tonisco is a niche company, they are already a world-leading global company. Therefore, digital marketing will benefit them to reach even a larger customer audience. (Diba, Vella, and Abratt, 2019)

With the use of digital content marketing, Tonisco has the opportunity to be a world-leading example for technological companies being in the social media atmosphere. For Tonisco, social media platforms have not been something which have got a great amount of their attention. Therefore, it would be paramount to research the effects of improving digital content, social media marketing, and how all of that affects brand awareness and sales. The expectation is that the use of social media, the presence of the company on social media and the use of digital content marketing would be beneficial for the company, to build brand awareness and increase sales.

Research Question:

How could sales and brand awareness be improved by utilizing digital marketing tools and content marketing in the context of a niche B2B company, like Tonisco?

In 2020, Tonisco started rebranding their company and redesigning their company website. In this thesis, recommendations for the redesign of the website and the content of the website are going to be collected. Digital marketing has also been started however will not be fully onboarded until the website is complete. Therefore, this thesis is going to be a research about the improvements Tonisco could be making to their digital marketing and content marketing to improve brand awareness and help increase sales in the future.

This thesis will provide Tonisco a series of recommendations as to which types of changes to make to the Tonisco.com website in order for it to be user-friendly, easy for users navigate and find the needed information. Insight as to which pages are most visited and which ones need the most attention according to analytics. Recommendations for which social media channels Tonisco should use for digital marketing. As well as tips on social media content creation.

3.2 Method

The two types of research methods that are used are qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative research methods are ones where structured data is gathered and analyzed; these are usually measured numerically. Quantitative research methods are data, which is gathered from feelings, opinions, beliefs, understandings. Whereas mixed methods are a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, which are specific to research projects. (Matthews & Ross 2010, 141-142)

Mixed methods were chosen for this research so that the research question could be answered, and recommendations could be made for Tonisco using both types of data. Data for these recommendations are going to be derived from both qualitative and quantitative research. These mixed methods include surveys from Tonisco's customers; Google Analytics data, from which recommendations are going to be made to improve specific measures from Tonisco.com website analytics. The survey has been conducted in order to get an idea of what the customer's views are on the company at the moment and using their feedback to create a suggestive change for Tonisco to make with their company's digital content. (Matthews & Ross 2010, 144)

The Google Analytics data is going to be from the old Tonisco.com website, from which data will be analyzed and recommendations will be made as to which type of additions and changed should be made to the website to make it more user-friendly. The surveys will support the Google Analytics data which will back up the suggestions being made for Tonisco. Google Analytics will give data for the performance of the old Tonisco.com website, which can be analyzed to see which changes could be made to the digital content and the website to better the analytics from Google Analytics.

Quantitative research was the Google Analytics data research. From Google Analytics, data which could be improved by making changes to the website's content and user-friendliness was analyzed. For this part of the research, custom metrics were chosen from Google Analytics, which could be improved for the redesigned Tonisco.com website. These analytics were: Acquisition overview, Audience overview, Pages and User Flow. The Acquisition overview was chosen to see from how the users are reaching the Tonsico.com website. Audience overview to find out Tonisco.com's audience, their demographics, age and location. Pages to find out which pages are most viewed and which ones have the highest bounce rate in order to be able to improve on them. User flow was analyzed to see how the users behave on the Tonisco.com website, this gives an understanding of how the users navigate through the website and what the customers are searching for. By understanding these analytics, Tonisco is able to improve their performance and make the needed changes to then increase their sales in the future.

Qualitative and quantitative research was the customer survey (Appendix 1). With this survey, the customer's opinions on certain questions were able to be answered. This survey was aimed at Tonisco's customers who have visited the old Tonisco.com website and would have some feedback to give about the usability and their opinions on the website. The survey also included questions for the customers about communications and where they would prefer to be communicated by and how they found out about Tonisco in the first place. By having Tonisco's customer's views on

the company, will help Tonisco to make improvements on their performance in terms of customer service and help them provide better customer experience.

As supportive material, a style guide was created for Tonisco (Appendix 2.) in order to tie in the branding and utilize it for the website and digital marketing. As can be seen from the style guide, coherence and simplicity was key when rebranding. Keeping the website, social media channels and traditional marketing in mind when the designs were made for the style guide.

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 Google Analytics

For Tonisco the discussion of making changes to the website, digital marketing, and content marketing was raised after analyzing the Tonsico.com Google Analytics. From Google Analytics, it is clear to see that Tonisco should make changes in these following aspects of their company website. Their bounce rate is high for a niche B2B company. According to CXL (2020), the average bounce rate for B2B companies is 25-55% and Tonisco's bounce rate is 60.71% as of January 2020. The Google Analytics for the Tonisco.com website which have been analyzed are acquisition overview, audience overview, pages, and user flow. (CXL, 2020)

Figure 3. showcases Google Analytics for acquisition. Acquisition means the way the website brings in the users and their behavior on the website after being on the website. In Figure 3. The acquisition is for all the website users, bounced sessions and for this overview, the primary dimension used is top medium. Top medium provides the information of how the user came to the website; options for these are organic, none and referral. Organic means that they have typed out the URL of the website in the search bar, whereas referral means that they have clicked on the URL from another website or social media channel. None on the other hand means that there is no information to provide as to how the user came on the website. (Google Analytics Help, 2021a)

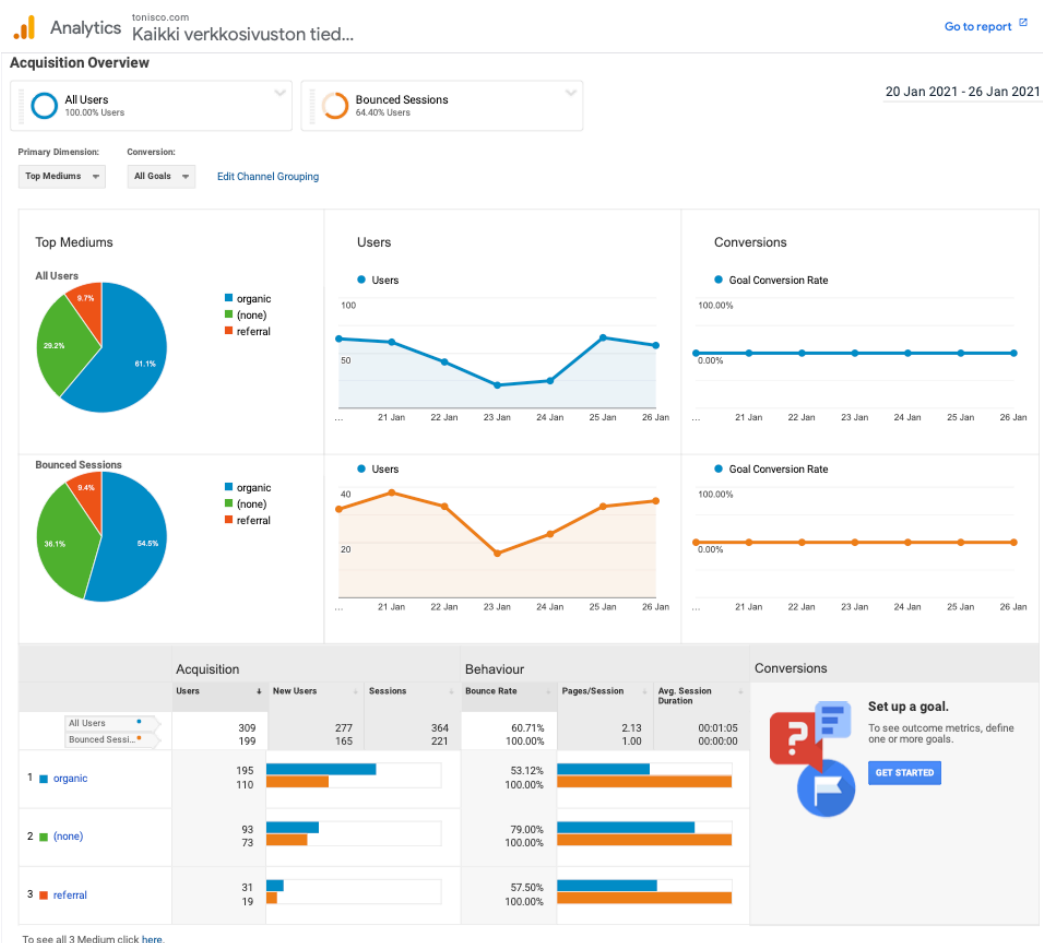


Figure 3. Acquisition Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

The data in Figure 3. indicates that 61.1% of the users come from organic search, 29.2% from none, and only 9.7% from referrals. The bounce rates of these top mediums are that organic search is 54.5%, none is 36.1%, and referrals are 9.4%. The overall bounce rate for Tonisco.com is 60.71%, which one of the aspects which Tonisco wishes to lower in the future. According to Google Analytics Help, bounce rate is defined as “a single-page session on your site”, this means that that the user has only opened the website and not triggered any other requests and exited the page. This implies that the first impressions of the website and the front page should be formatted in a way, which invites the user to stay on the company website and read more. This would decrease the bounce rate of the website. Also, a new website design, consistent branding and better user experience on the website would decrease the bounce rate. The front page of Tonisco.com is shown in Image 1. (Google Analytics Help, 2021c)

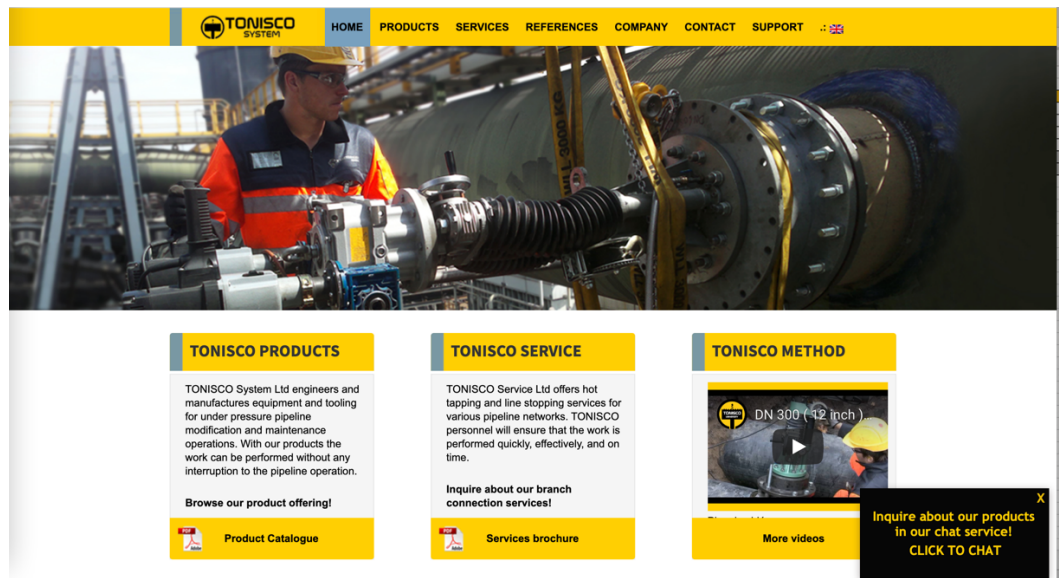


Image 1. Tonisco.com front page (Tonisco, n.d. a)

Figure 4. illustrates the user audience for the visits to the Tonisco.com website. The audience reports allow for investigation into the composition and behavior of the users on the website. This overview allows for the company to see how many users there are on their website, how many new users there have been in a certain time period, the number of sessions they have had, and the number of sessions per user. This overview also allows for the companies to see which language their customers view their page in, and each of those bounce rates. (Google Analytics Help, 2021b)

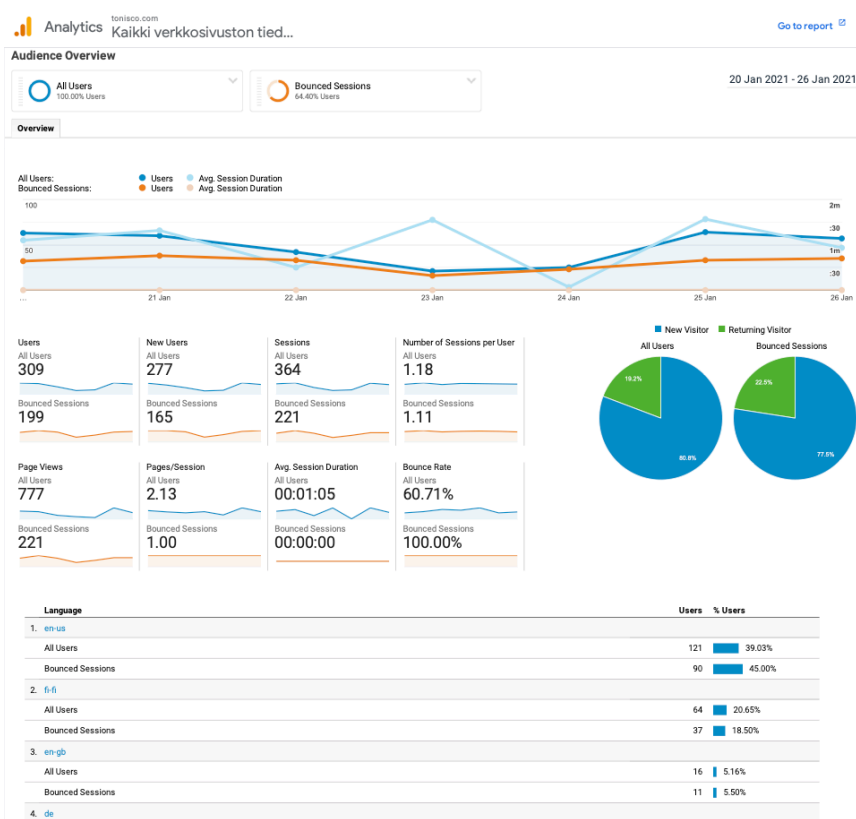


Figure 4. Audience Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

From Figure 4. it can be noted that the Tonisco.com website has 80.8% of new users and only 19.2% returning users. The average time that a user spends on the website is 1 minute and 5 seconds. Out of 309 users visiting the website 199 of them are bounced sessions, which is 60.71% of bounced sessions. Moreover, the number of sessions per user is 1.18 of which bounced sessions are 1.11. These values were alarming since Tonisco is a company, which covers only a niche industry. This means that their website is not at the appropriate level it needs to be for their company to be providing adequate information online to their website users about their website. These challenges could be fixed by improving the user experience on the website so that the number of returning customers increases.

Figure 5. reveals the Pages views and Page bounce rates for the Tonisco.com website. These page views and bounce rates show the Tonisco, which pages the users are drawn to, and which pages make the users leave the website. Figure 5. Indicates that overall, there are 9,079 users, of which only 2,290 or 25.22% are bounce sessions. The most popular pages on the Tonisco.com website are the hot tapping machines page, English language website, Finnish language website, contacts page and about page in Finnish. For Tonisco, this illustrates which pages their customers are interested in viewing, but also the pages which Tonisco should improve on.

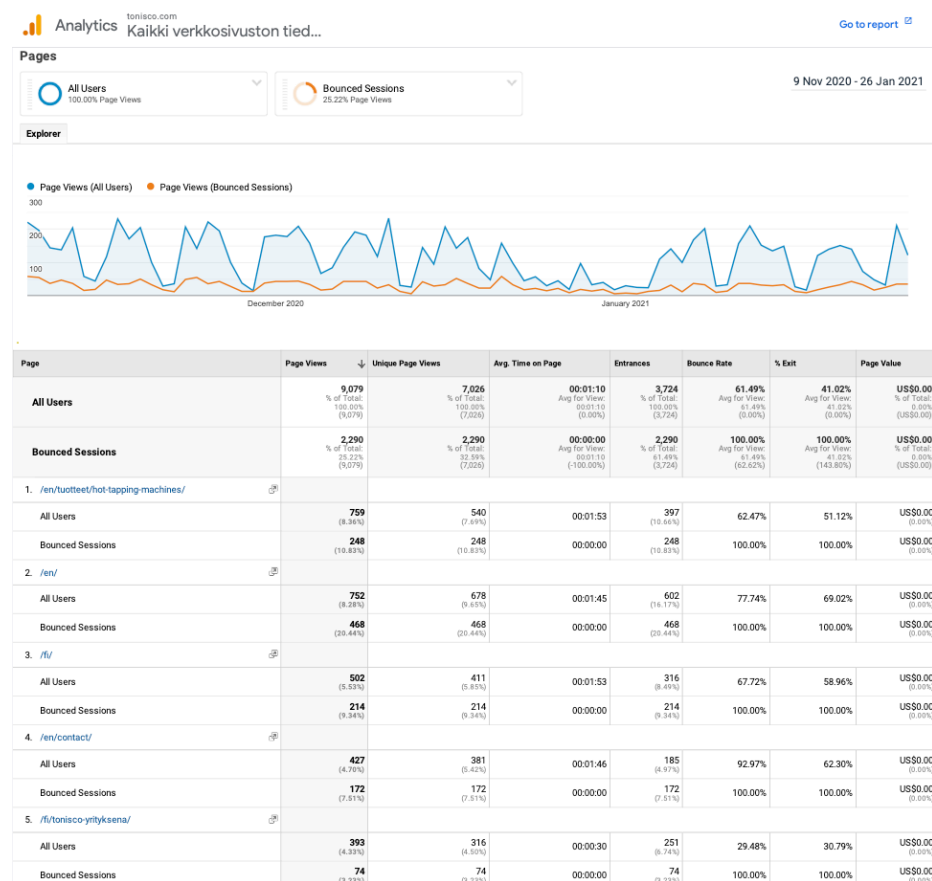


Figure 5. Pages Overview – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

In Figure 6. the User flow on the Tonisco.com website is presented. From Figure 6. It is evident that most of the users come from a country not mentioned, secondly from Finland and then Germany. This gives Tonisco direction and helps them prioritize their content and how to make the content more valuable and personalized for their customers. This is an interesting data for the company to see where their company is viewed country-wise. This data also demonstrates for Tonisco which pages the users maneuver through on the website. This user flow can also be manipulated with website design and digital content, which has been discussed after viewing this data. Overall, from the starting page, it can be seen that already 68.1% of the users drop out. On the first interaction 58.8% and on the second interaction 18.76.

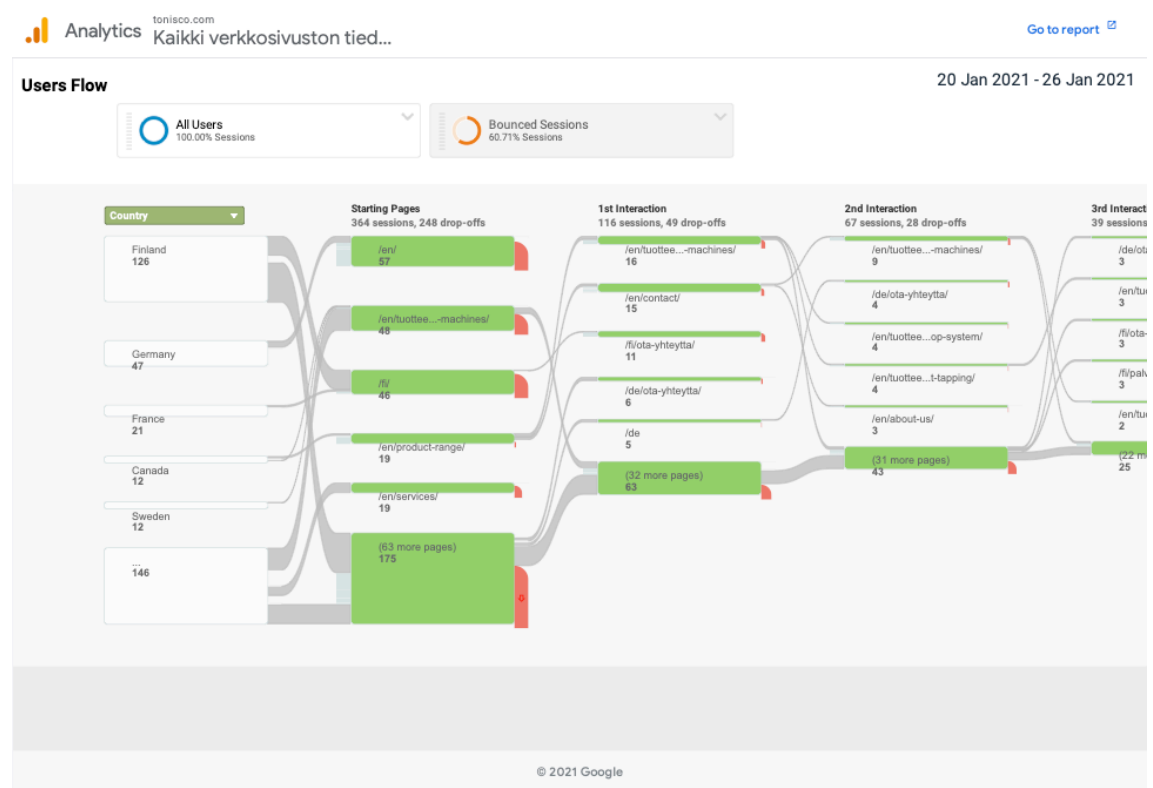


Figure 6. Users Flow – Tonisco.com (Google Analytics, n.d.)

4.2 Customer Survey

Before designing the new website and improving the way Tonisco is handling their marketing and sales, the customer's opinions were gathered through an anonymous survey. The survey was kept anonymous in order to get the customer's honest opinions about changes being made to the marketing and communications of Tonisco. It was also important to keep the survey anonymous in order to not harm any customer relationships. The survey included questions about the way that Tonisco is

communicating with their customers; the way the website is built; their opinion on the usability of the Tonisco.com website; and how they wish to find information about Tonisco products, services and contact details. A survey (Appendix 1) was created to then be able to generate recommendations for the design of the new website, marketing and communication aspects. These recommendations are beneficial for Tonisco as a company since from them they are able to implement the right changes to their website, customer relationships, and marketing strategies in order to increase brand awareness and increase sales.

The questions in this survey were to get the customer's overall perspective of Tonisco's website, marketing, and communications. These different types of questions were chosen because Tonisco wanted to find out what their customers think about these aspects of their company. Tonisco also wanted to hear about the changes which would be made for the website, in order for the customers to stay longer on the website and connect with Tonisco through the website. Overall, Tonisco wanted to find out how they could bring more value to their customers to help increase sales and improve their connections with their customers.

First, the questionnaire started with questions about where the customer was based, in order for Tonisco to make connections with the Google Analytics data. Questions 2-8 asked the customer whether or not they have purchased anything from Tonisco before, and if they have visited the website before purchasing. This was to see what the behavior of the Tonisco customers is. The next sections of the survey were asked about Tonisco Services and Tonisco Products to see how familiar the customers are with these and to hear what the customers were looking for on the website and how familiar they are with different products which can be found from the old website. These sections also include 1-10 answers to see how easy it was to find certain aspects of the website.

Moreover, it was asked whether they would purchase a product or services online. The last sections were general question about communications and marketing, to see if there are changes which need to be made, from the customers side, to find out where they want to receive information, how they would describe the Tonisco.com website and purpose of visiting the website.

This survey was sent out in English, Finnish to a total of 235 Tonisco customers. Overall, 12 Finnish customers filled out this survey and 0 English customers. It is evident that (Figure 7.) 75% of the customers have used Tonisco products or services before and only 25% have not. 33.3% of the 75% of customers who have used Tonisco products or services, visited the Tonisco.com website before purchasing a product or service (Figure 8).

Oletko ostanut Tonisco-tuotteita TAI käyttänyt Tonisco-palveluita aiemmin?
12 responses

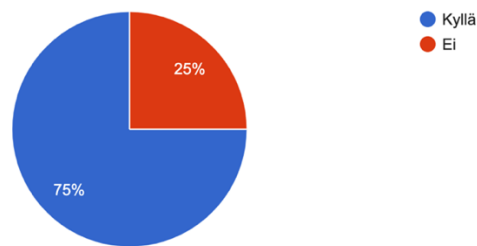


Figure 7. Results to question 2 (Appendix 1)

Vierailitko verkkosivustolla ennen tuotteen tai palvelun ostamista?
9 responses

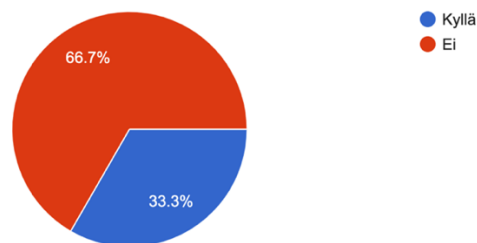


Figure 8. Results to question 5 (Appendix 1)

As can be observed from Figure 9. and Figure 10. when asked where the customers found information about the products and services; for the services 25% from online and 25% from salespeople, whereas for the products they were found 41.7% from salespeople and only 25% from the website. This insinuates that the website's products page is not sufficient enough and therefore customers need to be contacting salespeople to get the information they need. Therefore, the product's page should be redesigned, and user experience needs to be taken into consideration when doing so.

Kuinka löysit tietoja näistä Service-palveluista?
12 responses

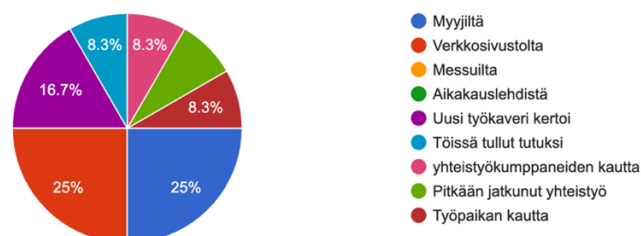


Figure 9. Results to question 10 (Appendix 1)

Kuinka löysit tietoja näistä tuotteista?
12 responses

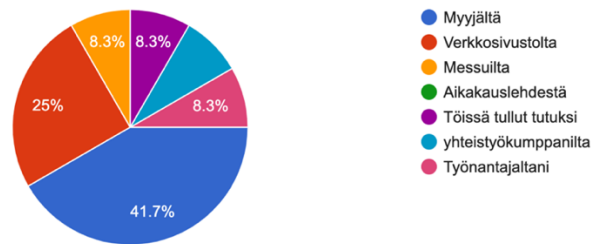


Figure 10. Results to question 14 (Appendix 1)

As the survey was split up into questions about Tonisco Services and Tonisco Products, information about these were found separately, which provides more data to apply to the marketing, and how to improve to increase sales in the aspects which need to be improved. From Figure 11. and Figure 12. Data about the customer's knowledge about Tonisco Services and Products was gathered. The most recognizable Tonisco Service is Hot Tapping, and the most well-known Product is the Tonisco Hot Tap Valve. This information is going to be useful for when designing the layout of the website's products and services pages. The information additionally implicates to Tonisco which of their products and services are most popular and which ones should be marketed more.

Mitkä näistä palveluista ovat sinulle tuttuja?
12 responses

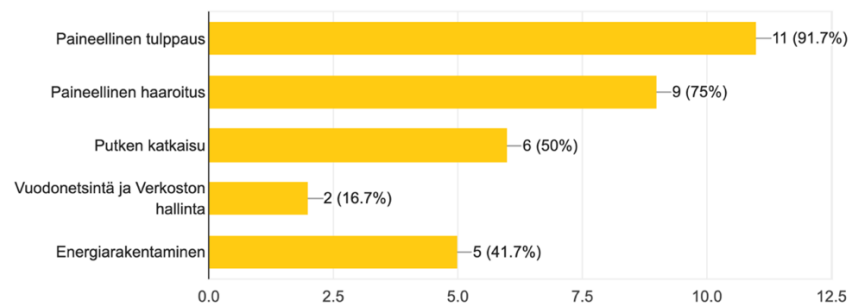


Figure 11. Results to question 9 (Appendix 1)

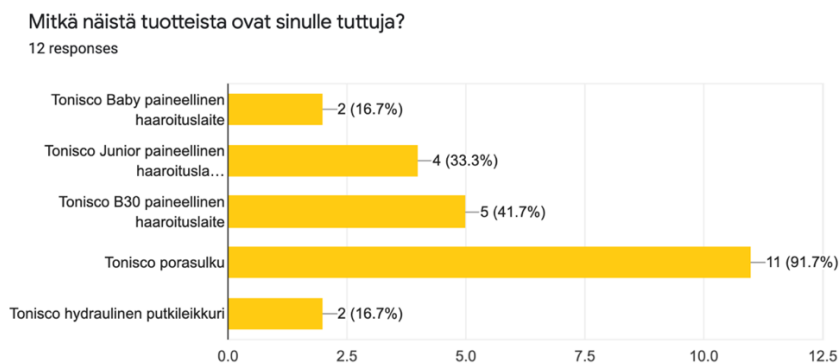


Figure 12. Result to question 13 (Appendix 1)

When the customers were asked how easy it was to find someone who could help them find the right Tonisco Service for their needs, as can be seen from Figure 13, 41.7% answered 10 (Easy), whereas only 8.3% answered 4, which was closer to the very difficult end of the chart. The customers were then asked whether they would purchase Tonisco Services online and as can be seen from Figure 14., the majority of the customers are likely to purchase these Services online. By changing the website flow, adding sufficient information about products and services and perfecting the user experience is paramount for Tonisco. Content marketing combined with the changes to the website can help increase sales.

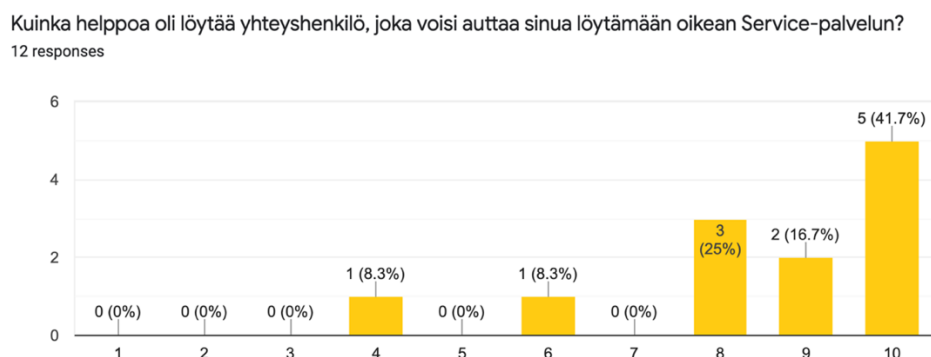


Figure 13. Results to question 11 (Appendix 1)

Kuinka todennäköistä on, että voisit tilata Service-palveluja Toniscolta verkossa?
12 responses

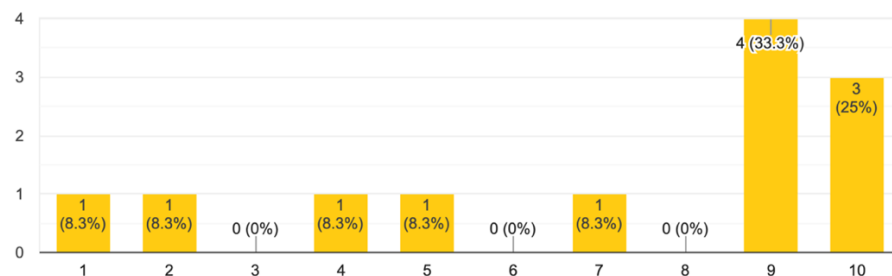


Figure 14. Results to question 12 (Appendix 1)

Then when asked about Tonisco Products, 41.7% of the customers answered that it was easy to find the right product, whereas 16.6% thought that it was more difficult to find the right products (Figure 15.). When the customers were asked whether they would purchase Tonisco Products online there were some mixed opinions on this question. This could be because the customers are still not as familiar with all of Tonisco's products or because in the industries that Tonisco works in, there are many different materials, conditions and pressures to be taken into consideration. These different factors need to be discussed, but a well-designed website with ample information could help the customers understand Tonisco's products and make them feel more comfortable using them. 16.7% of the customers answered that it is unlikely that they would purchase Tonisco products online, on the other hand, 16.7% of the customers answered that it is likely that they would buy Tonisco products online (Figure 16.).

Kuinka helppoa oli löytää oikea tuote?
12 responses

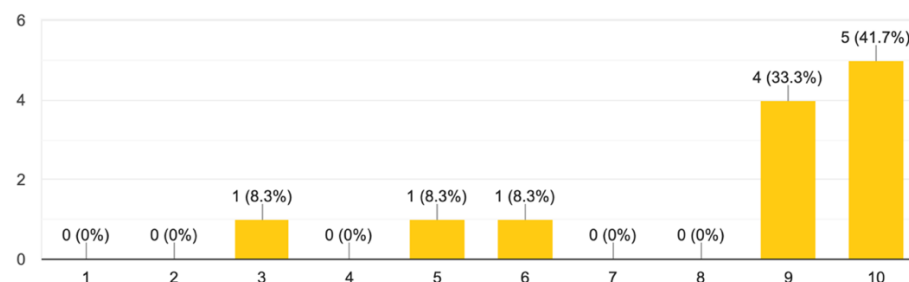


Figure 15. Results to question 15 (Appendix 1)

Kuinka todennäköistä, että ostat tuotteita Toniscolta verkossa?
12 responses

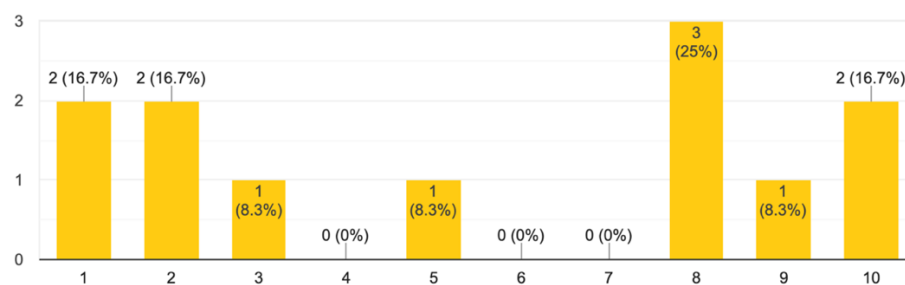


Figure 16. Results to question 17 (Appendix 1)

When the Tonisco customers were asked about the communications and information, as can be seen in Figure 17., they wish to find or receive information through their email (50%), from their phone (50%), and from the website (41.7). From this survey, it is clear that none of the customers wish to receive information from social media. Which was a surprising turn of events. The researcher wanted to know more about this result, since it is not common for B2B companies to think about social media as a way to communicate with niche customers. The readings pointed to the direction of the value those could have, for instance thinking about LinkedIn. These results from the survey could be because the customers might view social media as platforms like Instagram and Facebook and not LinkedIn or YouTube as a platform for content.

Kun etsit tietoja, mistä haluat ne löytää?
12 responses

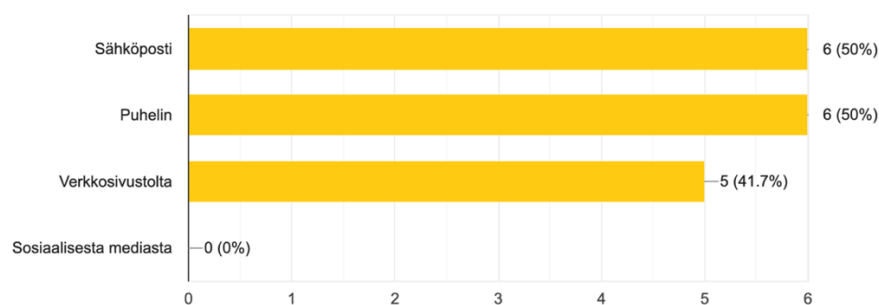


Figure 17. Results to question 18 (Appendix 1)

When asked about the Tonisco.com website, there were yet again some differences in the customer's opinions. This could be because different customers have different requirements for the website, depending on what they are searching for or whether they are a new customer or an old customer. As Figure 18. demonstrates, 16.7% of the customers answered 10, that it was easy to find information from the Tonisco.com website and 25% answered 3 or 4, which leans to the very difficult to find information. Figure 19., when the customers were asked to describe the Tonisco.com

website 41.5% of the customers thought that the website is 'Clear and informative' and 'Has all I need', whereas 25% of the customers answered that the website 'Could be improved'.

Kuinka helppoa on löytää tietoa Tonisco.com-sivustolta?
12 responses

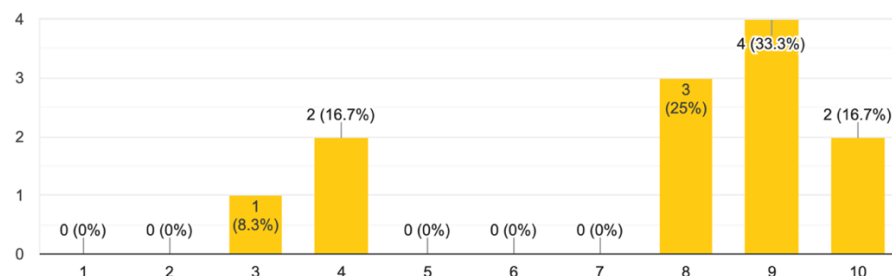


Figure 18. Results to question 19 (Appendix 1)

Kuinka kuvailisit Tonisco.com-verkkosivustoa?
12 responses

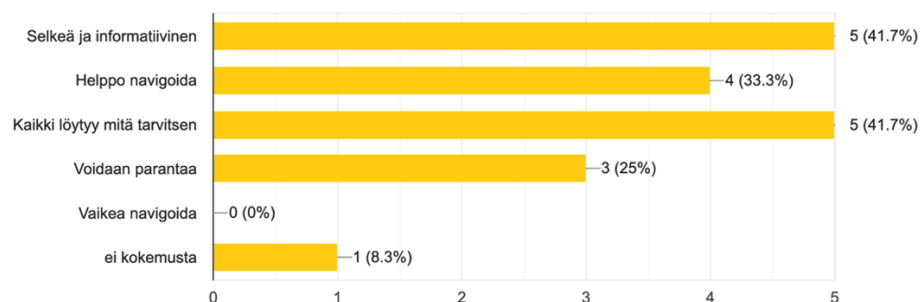


Figure 19. Results to question 20 (Appendix 1)

When the customers were asked about their purpose of visit to the Tonisco.com website, Figure 20 uncovers that 50% of them were searching for information about Tonisco Services, 50% of them were searching for contact information, 41.7% were searching for information about Tonisco Products, 8.3% wanted to buy a product and 8.3% wished to find Tonisco news. 50% is a high amount for the customers showing interest in Tonisco's Services and contact information. If the website does not operate well, the user experience and flow of the website is not adequate there is a high risk of losing potential customers and therefore losing sales.

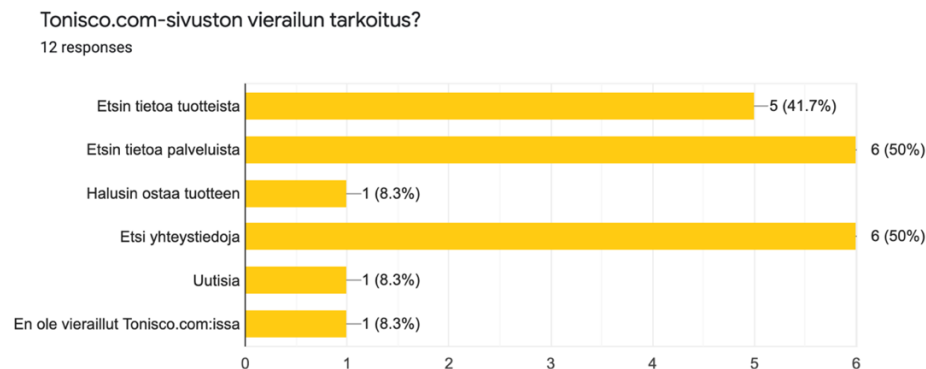


Figure 20. Results to question 21 (Appendix 1)

In the survey, the customers were also asked about potentially receiving a newsletter from Tonisco. Figure 21., shows their thoughts on if they would like to receive a Tonisco newsletter. 41.7% of the customers would like to receive a newsletter from Tonisco, if they are able to learn something new about Tonisco. 25% would like to receive if one if the newsletters have meaning and only 16.7%, would not like to receive a newsletter. This suggests great opportunity in creating a newsletter for Tonisco's customer needs and maintain their customer relationships through the newsletters.

Olisitko kiinnostunut Toniscon uutiskirjeestä? Lupaamme lähettää sinulle vain olennaisia tietoja, arvostamme aikaanne!

12 responses

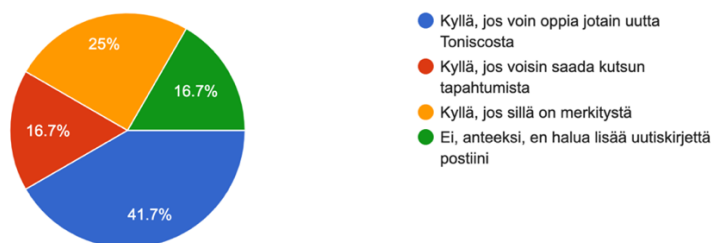


Figure 21. Results to question 23 (Appendix 1)

5 FINDINGS

From the analysis of the Google Analytics and the customer survey, some explicit connections could be drawn to make links between the two data which was gathered for this research. As can be seen from Figure 5, Figure 12, and Figure 21, in the analysis, 759 of the website users visit the hot tap machine page on the website, which also correlates to the products which are most known, which is hot tap machines, with 91.7%. This is an opportunity for Tonisco to improve their sales as well as brand awareness by using this data to their advantage in digital marketing. Furthermore, the

contacts page is the 4th visited page on the Tonisco.com website which correlates to the fact that 50% of the customers wish to find contact information from the website. The parts of the website which are visited the most need to be constructed in a way that they work flawlessly. They should include all abundant information, the call-to-action buttons as well as information about Tonisco products and services, in order not to miss out on any possible sales due to poor website flow or user experience.

From Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 13, Figure 15, and Figure 20, it is visible that there is a correlation between the navigation difficulty of the website and bounce rate on the website. The overall bounce rate is 60.71% and 41.7% of the survey answers answered that it is more difficult than easy to find Service (Image 2) and Product information (Image 3). This difficulty in finding the information is an interdependence to the high bounce rate on the Tonisco.com website. The difficulty of finding needed information, and the customer leaving the company website, directly correlates to the company's sales.

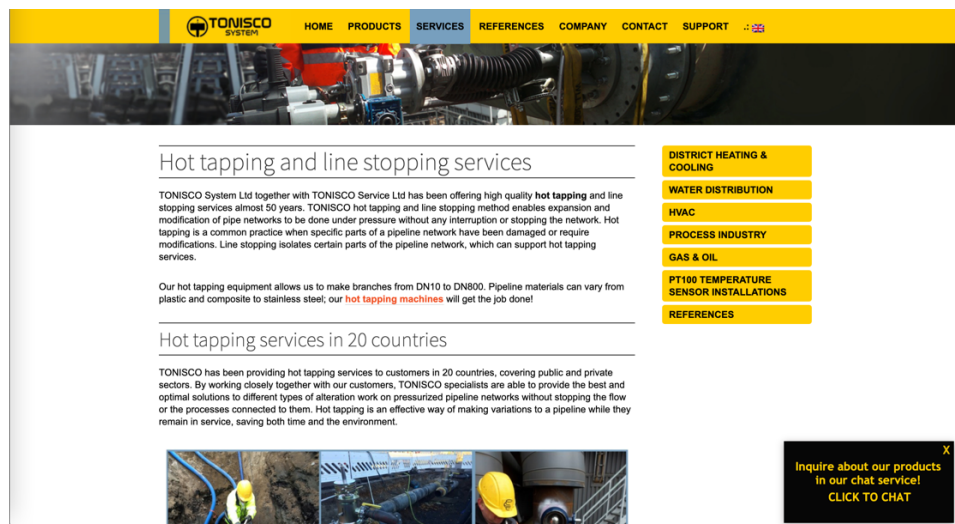


Image 2. Tonisco.com website - Services (Tonisco, n.d. b)

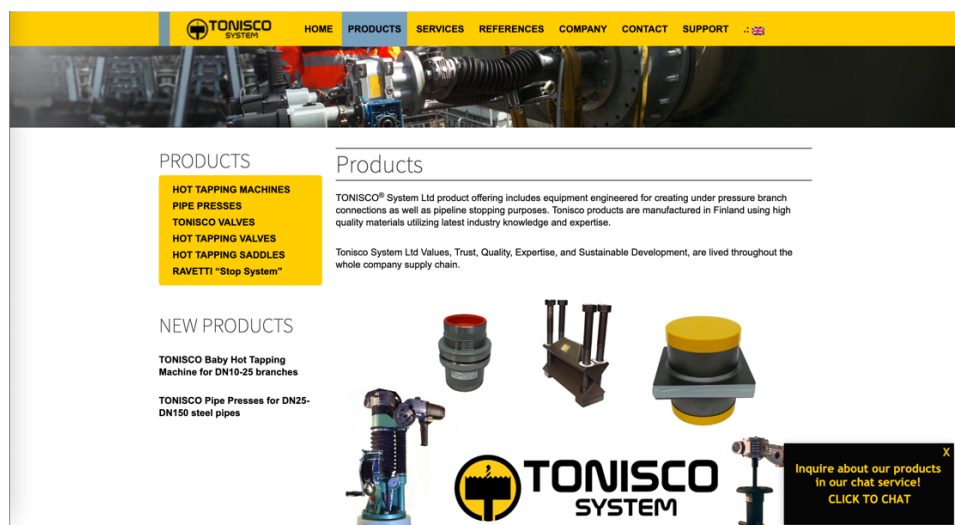


Image 3. Tonisco.com website - Products (Tonisco, n.d. c)

Figure 18 and Figure 19. reveal that there are clearly some changes that need to be made on the website and this correlates with Figure 6, the user flow. 25% of the survey answers suggest that there are improvements that should be made with the Tonisco.com website. In Figure 18, 25% of the respondents find it difficult to find information from the Tonisco.com website and therefore, in Figure 6, this could be the reason for high bounce rate.

It is clear that the customers want to find information from the website (50%), in their email (50%) and through their phone (41.7%), indicated in Figure 17. This correlates with the fact that 83.3% of the customers want to receive a newsletter from Tonisco, shown in Figure 21. This makes it evident that the Tonisco customers are interested in staying connected with the company, learning something new, receiving information about events, and receiving meaningful information. This connects with the content marketing plan for Tonisco since their customers are clearly interested in Tonisco. Content marketing with information about the company, the opportunity to learn something new and meaningful content could be interesting for Tonisco's audience and help increase brand awareness and sales.

An interesting finding from the survey was that 0% of the customers wanted to find information from social media. The expectation for the response on this survey for this thesis was that LinkedIn and other social media platforms are great platform to use for B2B marketing. The reason for this could be because in this customer survey, the term 'social media' was not defined in the survey, as to which social media channels were meant. These respondents perchance thought of Instagram and Facebook as social media channels, since LinkedIn was not specified. In addition, there could be a correlation with the type of industry these respondents work in; the age of the respondents; and their interpretation of social media. There is a disconnect with LinkedIn and social media since none of the respondents wanted to receive information through social media. To find out why there is a disconnect, a professional B2B social media strategist was interviewed for their professional point of view.

Sandra Fernández is a professional B2B social media strategist with a background in Graphic Design and Creative Design. In the past, she has worked for companies like Fox Networks and Smartly.io. At the moment she is working as a Design Consultant for Columbia Road, where she helps companies translate their business goals into successful digital solutions.

From the interview with Fernández, the reason for the disconnect with Tonisco customers and social media platforms was discussed. She brought up the point to find out exactly who Tonisco wants to target as a company. Also, to find out where those people are and how are they bring influenced, since that is where Tonisco needs to be targeting their marketing.

Something Fernández stressed on the importance of a high-quality company website. That is customer-friendly, user-friendly and help the customers with their customer journey. Call-to-action buttons ready for the customer to be able to easily contact Tonisco without any complications. Quotes from satisfied customers and adding company logos which Tonisco has worked with in the past are a great way of showing social proof. As for the website, Tonisco should invest in Google Optimization, and ranking higher in Google Search, since customers search for keywords. Additionally, investing in Google Advertisements would be beneficial for Tonisco, with which they would be able to target the right audience.

Fernández shared Ran Segall's Instagram profile where he shares redesigns of websites and tips on how to redesign websites to make them high-value and more successful. Segall is the founder of Flux Academy, Image 4. shows how Segall describes a high-value layout for the front page of a company website. Like Fernández mentioned in the interview, the importance of social proof and call-to-actions right on the front page of the website. (Flux Academy, n.d.)

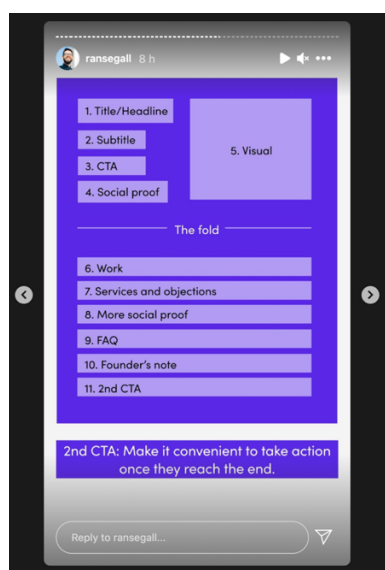


Image 4. Redesigns. (@ransegall, n.d.)

Fernández also shared some websites which are formatted similarly, for Tonisco to take inspiration from. The websites she mentioned were www.upmenergy.com (Image 5.), www.smartly.io (Image 6.) and www.vahterus.com (Image 7.). These companies' front pages and Segall's suggestions, have a similar theme going on which is simple, yet to the point. All have visuals on the right, a capturing title with more detailed text below, with call-to-actions to keep the users engaged. Smartly.io included social proof with company logos already before the fold. Whereas UPM Energy added only the title of the next section before the fold, to lure in the user further down the page. On the other hand, Vahterus kept their front page simple yet intriguing to the customer by adding an image of

their product with the words ‘virtual experience’ to gain the interest of the viewers.

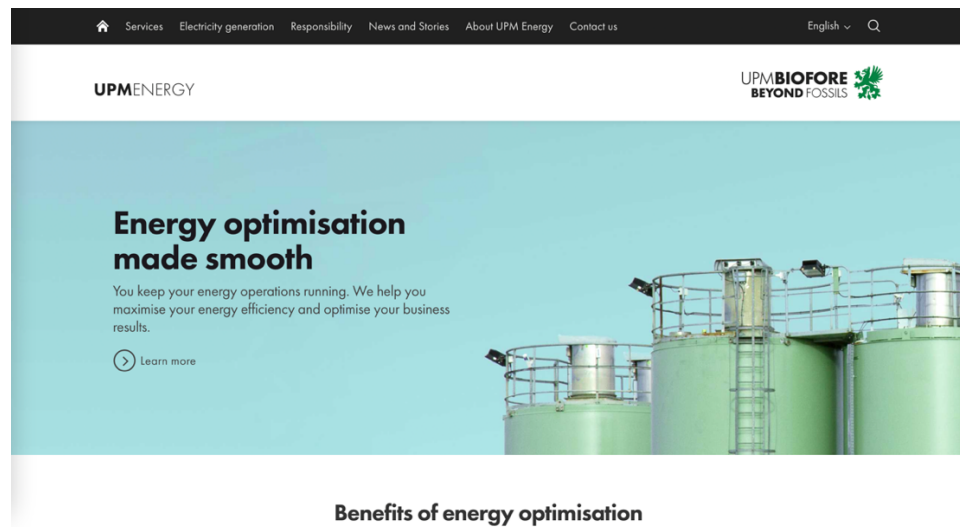


Image 5. UPM Energy front page (UPM Energy, n.d.)

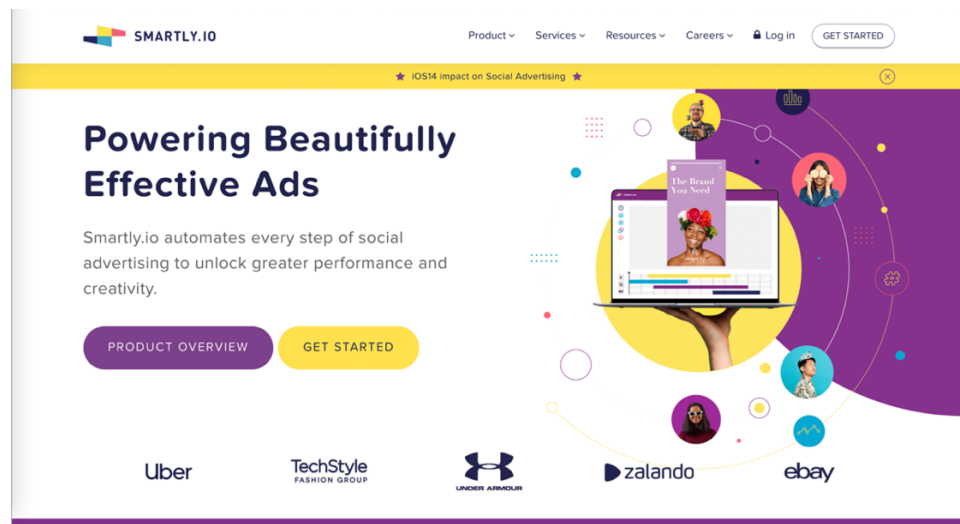


Image 6. Smartly.io front page (Smartly.io, n.d.)



Image 7. Vahterus front page (Vahterus. n.d.)

Another point Fernández brought across was how to use social media platforms like LinkedIn and Instagram. She suggested using social media platforms as supportive material to the customer relationships and the company website. LinkedIn as a platform is a great place for B2B companies to communicate and share company activities, and for Tonisco it could be a great place to start conversations about their industry. As well as to showcase some of the work Tonisco is doing on a daily basis, behind the scenes and finished projects. This is content that is valuable for Tonisco's customers and has the potential of easing the decision-making process to buy or to work with Tonisco.

Fernández suggested for Tonisco to post case studies on social media platforms to showcase companies with which they have worked in the past to increase credibility. Another post idea was to highlight the benefits of using Tonisco and making that clear for the customers. Also, linking Tonisco to words like sustainability, and concepts like saving time and money; would benefit Tonisco's brand awareness and help increase sales.

Another suggestion from Fernández was to create targeted posts to the employees in companies who make the decisions, this could increase their knowledge and make them interested in working with Tonisco. This could be through targeted posts or even direct messages through LinkedIn. She suggested using Instagram as a platform to share posts that increase brand awareness, and which could be beneficial for users interested in the niche industry as well.

Not only using these social media platforms as support to their customer relationships as well as to link users from social media platforms back to the Tonisco website in order to get more customers to Tonisco's website. Not only linking the website either but also other social media channels like Tonisco's YouTube channels. This increases the links between channels and increases the customer's knowledge of Tonisco as a company.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which can be made for Tonisco are that they need to work on their company website design flow and increase the user experience and usability changing the layout and usability of the site in order to keep their customers more engaged. Tonisco should add more call-to-action points on their new website to make sure that customers have the option of contacting Tonisco if needed. This could be on social media platforms, on the website or through newsletters, just so that the communication could be made easy.

It is recommended that Tonisco formats their front page like shown in the cited examples above. The front page of a website is the gate customers cross to get into the company's products and services, executing that successfully implies improving the user experience and understanding the user flow. This includes social proof, call-to-action, testimonials, and overall, making the front page of the website more appealing and easier to for the customers. Image 8. shows the recommended front page layout for the redesigned Tonisco.com front page. Image 9. shows the suggested layout for the Tonisco.com website after the fold.

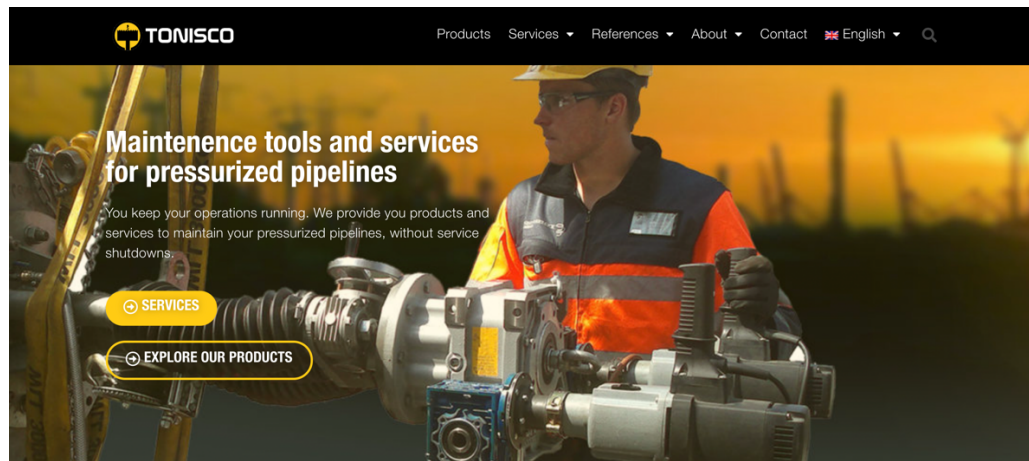


Image 8. Recommended design for Tonisco's redesigned front page

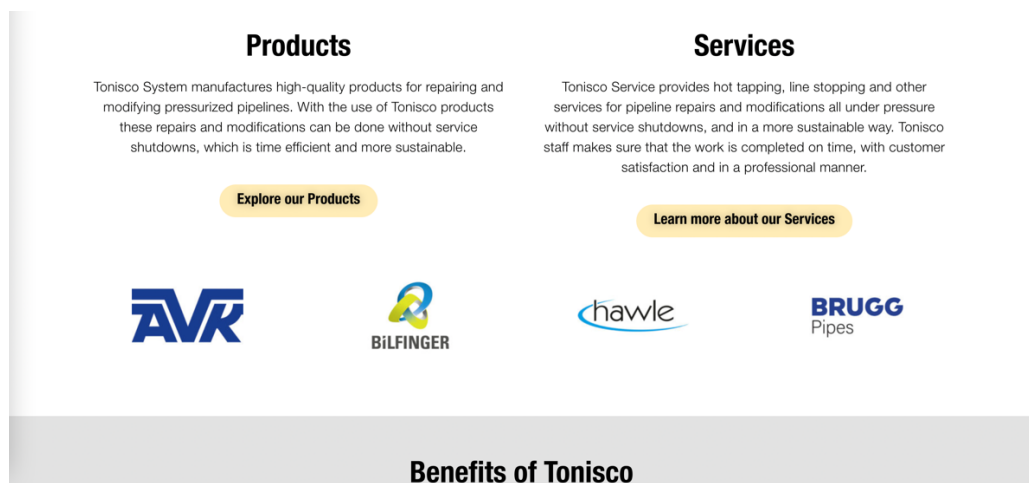


Image 9. Recommended after the fold for the redesigned Tonisco.com front page

More valuable information about Tonisco products and services should be added to the new website in order to make it easier for the customers to find the required information from the website. This would increase customers' knowledge about Tonisco's different products and services. By adding more information about the products and services and making the website more user-friendly, the bounce rate of the website should decrease, and time spent on the website would increase. Therefore, call-

to-actions from the website should increase, and through which sales should increase as well.

Furthermore, the pages which are the most visited should be redesigned carefully in a way that makes navigating the website more user-friendly and finding information about Tonisco products and services easier. For Tonisco these pages are their product page about hot tap machines, contacts page, and about us page. This would reduce time spent on explaining Tonisco products and services to their customers, instead, their customers are able to find sufficient information from the Tonisco website.

Recommendations for Tonisco's social media content would be to create diverse content for LinkedIn and Instagram. In the past, it has been apparent that Tonisco's Facebook and Twitter accounts have not been getting the same amount of following as Tonisco's LinkedIn and Instagram accounts. Therefore, it would be beneficial for Tonisco to market and generate supportive content through those channels.

Content on Tonisco's social media platforms should be used to support traditional sales and marketing techniques. The content should be available for those who would be interested. Therefore, also targeted marketing on LinkedIn is suggested. In order to reach the right audience. It is essential that Tonisco links different channels, for example, Tonisco's YouTube videos on LinkedIn and their website to increase user flow between Tonisco's different social media channels. This would also allow for an increased number of customers to have more knowledge about Tonisco's products and services, and therefore increase brand awareness and sales.

Tonisco should continue to invest in Google Optimization and Google Advertisements in order to reach the customers reaching for keywords on Google. Since this industry is niche and there are only a handful of companies in the world who do these services and make specialized products, it is common that customers search for keywords and through that come across Tonisco. Therefore, it is important to push Tonisco through Google to new potential customers.

7 CONCLUSION

To conclude all the points stated so far, there are clear modifications which Tonisco should make on their website in order to decrease their bounce rate, increase customer contacts, and ultimately increase sales. Tonisco should also take advantage of social media platforms like LinkedIn and Instagram in order to support their customer relationships and to increase brand awareness. Since Tonisco is a niche B2B company they have the chance of becoming well known on social media platforms and possibly

create an online community for those interested in their industry, this could include their customers as well as other professionals.

7.1 Limitations

Some of the limitations of this thesis included the fact that due to the late development of the website the researcher could not yet prove the benefits suggested and some of the recommendations could not be tested. The website is a key marketing tool and moving forward that would need to be tested. In the recommendations only suggestions for the redesign were made, but the evaluation for further changes, if correlations do not work as expected needs to be analyzed when the website is published, this step was not reached. Additionally, in the customer survey “social media channels” were not properly defined as to what it meant in the setting of the survey and therefore some of the survey answers could have been different. Another limitation is that the survey was only sent to Finnish customers and not to Tonisco’s whole customer base, which narrowed the answers largely.

7.2 Suggestions for further research

It would be interesting to research after Tonisco has renewed their company website to see if there are changes which can be seen in the number of followers on LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube. As well as to see how the Google Analytics have changed after the renewal of the website. This would bring knowledge to Tonisco whether they have made the right decisions with their website and where they could make improvements in order to increase their sales even further or expand their company into other countries. Further research could also include content marketing analytics to see what type of content marketing tools and practices work for a niche company like Tonisco.

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FIGURE REFERENCES

Figure 1. Diba, H., Vella, J.M. and Abratt, R. (2019), Business-to-business social media honeycomb. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 34 No. 7, pp. 1482-1496. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.hamk.fi/10.1108/JBIM-12-2018-0403>

Figure 2. Diba, H., Vella, J.M. and Abratt, R. (2019), LinkedIn for business-to-business. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 34 No. 7, pp. 1482-1496. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.hamk.fi/10.1108/JBIM-12-2018-0403>

Figure 3. Tonisco.com Google Analytics (2020), Acquisition Overview – Tonisco.com. Retrieved 26. January 2021 from https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/#/report/trafficsources-overview/a71416156w108876473p113475579/_u.date00=20210120&_u.date01=20210126

Figure 4. Tonisco.com Google Analytics (2020), Audience Overview – Tonisco.com. Retrieved 26. January 2021 from https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/#/report/visitors-overview/a71416156w108876473p113475579/_u.date00=20210120&_u.date01=20210126/

Figure 5. Tonisco.com Google Analytics (2020), Pages Overview – Tonisco.com. Retrieved 26. January 2021 from https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/#/report/content-overview/a71416156w108876473p113475579/_u.date00=20201109&_u.date01=20210126&overview-graphOptions.clearCompareConcept=true&overview-graphOptions.selected=analytics.nthDay&_useg=builtin1,builtin27

Figure 6. Tonisco.com Google Analytics (2020), User Flow – Tonisco.com. Retrieved 26. January 2021 from https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/#/report/content-engagement-flow/a71416156w108876473p113475579/_u.date00=20200120&_u.date01=20210126&_useg=builtin1,builtin27

Figure 7. Results to question 2 (Appendix 1)

Figure 8. Results to question 5 (Appendix 1)

Figure 9. Results to question 10 (Appendix 1)

Figure 10. Results to question 14 (Appendix 1)

Figure 11. Results to question 9 (Appendix 1)

Figure 12. Results to question 13 (Appendix 1)

Figure 13. Results to question 11 (Appendix 1)

Figure 14. Results to question 12 (Appendix 1)

Figure 15. Results to question 15 (Appendix 1)

Figure 16. Results to question 17 (Appendix 1)

Figure 17. Results to question 18 (Appendix 1)

Figure 18. Results to question 19 (Appendix 1)

Figure 19. Results to question 20 (Appendix 1)

Figure 20. Results to question 21 (Appendix 1)

Figure 21. Results to question 23 (Appendix 1)

IMAGE REFERENCES

Image 1. Tonisco (n.d.) Tonisco Front Page. Retrieved 19 February 2021 from <http://www.tonisco.com/en/>

Image 2. Tonisco (n.d.) Tonisco Services. Retrieved 19 February 2021 from <http://www.tonisco.com/en/services/>

Image 3. Tonisco (n.d.) Tonisco Products. Retrieved 19 February 2021 from <http://www.tonisco.com/en/product-range/>

Image 4. @ransegall (n.d.) Redesigns (Instagram highlight). Retrieved 25.3.2021 from www.instagram.com/ransegall/

Image 5. UPM Energy. (n.d.) Energy optimization made smooth. Retrieved on 25 March 2021 from www.upmenergy.com

Image 6. Smartly.io (n.d.) Powering Beautifully Effective Ads. Retrieved on 25 March 2021 from www.smartly.io/

- Image 7. Vahterus (n.d.) Welcome to Vahterus Virtual Experience. Retrieved on 30 March from www.vahterus.com
- Image 8. Recommended design for Tonisco's redesigned front page
- Image 9. Recommended after the fold for the redesigned Tonisco.com front page

CUSTOMER SURVEY

Customer Survey

This survey is to improve the Tonisco customer relationships and to get your input to the changes being made in the future!

***Required**

1. Where are you based? *

2. Have you purchased Tonisco products OR used Tonisco Services before? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Customer Survey

3. Where are you based? *

4. Have you purchased Tonisco products OR used Tonisco Services before? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes,

5. Did you check the website before purchasing a product or service? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes,

6. Which of these were you looking for? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Product information
☐ Service details
☐ Both
☐ Contact information
☐ Other: _____

If no,

7. Are you considering purchasing Tonisco products OR using Tonisco Services? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If no,

8. Why not?

Tonisco Services

Questions to customers about Tonisco Services and customer experiences.

9. Which of these Services are you familiar with? *

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Hot Tapping
- ☐ Line Stopping
- ☐ Pipe Cutting
- ☐ Leak Detection
- ☐ Welding & Insulations

10. How did you find information about these Services? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Sales person
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Fair/exhibition
- ☐ Magazine
- ☐ Other:

11. How easy was it to find the contact person that could help you find the right service? *

Mark only one oval.

[illegible]

16. How easy was it to order the product? *

Mark only one oval.

[illegible]

17. How likely it is that you would purchase products from Tonisco online? *

Mark only one oval.

[illegible]

General

General questions about Tonisco, Tonisco.com and your thoughts on somethings we are working on!

18. When looking for information, where do you prefer to find it? *

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Social Media

19. How easy is it to find information at Tonisco.com? *

Mark only one oval.

[illegible]

20. How would you describe the Tonisco.com website? *

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Clear and informative
- ☐ Easy to navigate
- ☐ Has all I need
- ☐ Could be improved
- ☐ Difficult to navigate

Other: ☐ _____

21. Purpose of visiting Tonisco.com? *

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Find information about products
- ☐ Find information about services
- ☐ Purchase a product
- ☐ Find contact details
- ☐ News
- ☐ I have not visited Tonisco.com

Other: ☐ _____

22. If you decided not to use Tonisco, we would love to hear why, so we can improve our offer and services. Could you tell us why?

23. Would you be interested in a newsletter from Tonisco? We promise to send you only relevant information, we value your time! *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes, if I can learn something new about Tonisco
- ☐ Yes, if I could receive invitation about events
- ☐ Yes, if it's relevant information
- ☐ No, sorry I don't want more newsletter in my mail

If yes,

24. How often would you want to receive it? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Every week
- ☐ Every 2 weeks
- ☐ Every month
- ☐ Every 2 months
- ☐ Every 6 months
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Other: _____

Other
comments

Please feel free to leave any other comments and improvements, which we could take into consideration into bettering Tonisco!

We appreciate your thoughts, ideas and improvements and are going to be implementing them!

25. Other comments?



Tonisco Style Guide

This style guide is for guidance in the branding of the company to be used in all aspects of the company.

The Tonisco design philosophy is based around the logo which has been used since 2015. Tonisco products are used in the logo, which already portrays the industry of the company. Since Tonisco is a technological company who works with pressured pipelines, the yellow and black colors represent the construction tape/area associated with their industry. As a company Tonisco is sophisticated, trendy and modern.

Tonisco's mission is:

"Together with exceptional motivation of Tonisco System Ltd staff, our values create a strong foundation to high quality not only in manufacturing but also in service. We believe that continuous improvement and exceeding one's expectations belong to the main principles of a successful company. This is highly visible in everyday operations of Tonisco System and Service Ltd."

Tonisco is a technological company that manufactures products and provides services for a niche B2B audience. Tonisco's target audience are businesses who need maintenance in their pressured pipelines, without interrupting the flow in the pipes. This saves material, time and effort.

Please consider the environment before printing. At Tonisco, digital copies are preferred.



Logos



TONISCO



TONISCO
SERVICE



TONISCO
SYSTEM




TONISCO
UNIVERSITY




TONISCO
SYSTEM

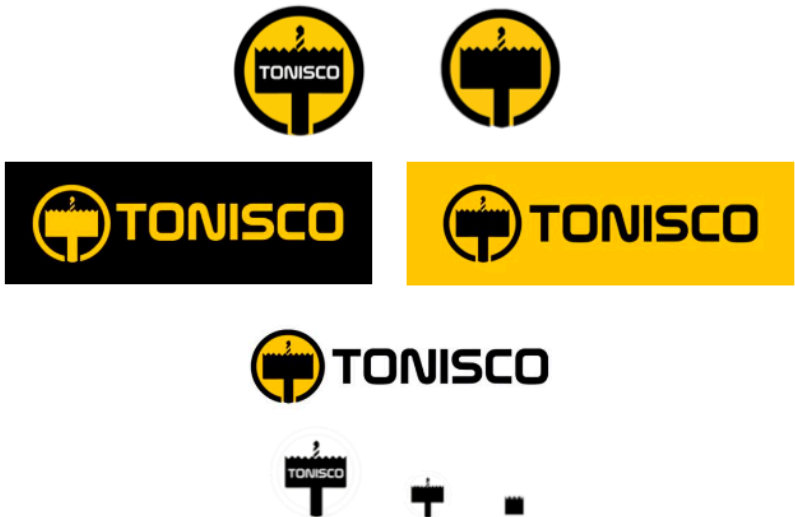
When using the Tonisco logo, always make sure that the logo is legible, so that it separates from the background, and so that it is not too small, so the text is not legible. The black and white logo should only be used when printing special products, scanning or faxing and partnerships and collaborations.



Logo evolution



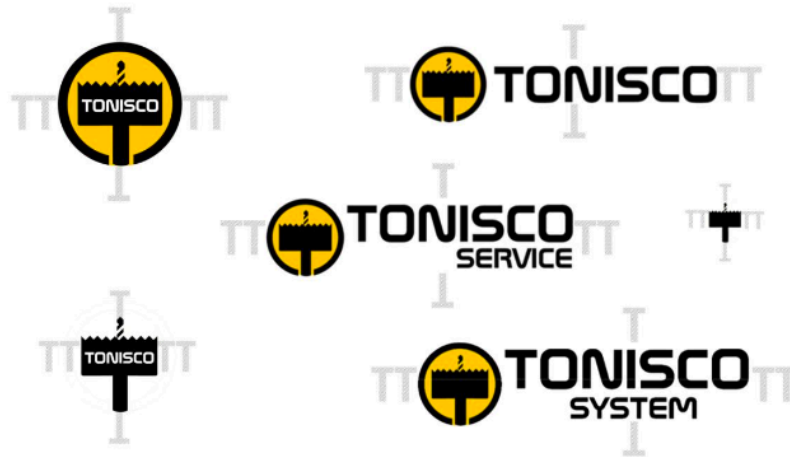
Responsive logos



Depending on where the logo is used and what space is provided for the logo. Example: Use vertical logo when needed. The last one can be used as an icon.

Space around the logo

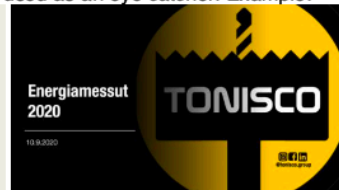
Provide at least as much space around the logo as shown below. This helps the Tonisco logo appear clean and uncluttered.



If the logo takes up the whole space, it can be used as an eye catcher. Example:



Car tapes



Tonisco presentation slide



Poster

Tagline

Tonisco's tagline is **'Under pressure since 1969'** – Translated into Finnish **'Paineenalla vuodesta 1969'**. This tagline tells the audience what Tonisco does 'under pressure' and since when they have been around '1969', which shows some context for the audience about how long they have been doing this.



Color palette



Tonisco Yellow: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 20, 93, 0
HEX	FFCB12
RGB	255, 203, 18
Pantone	116 C

Black: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 0, 0, 100
HEX	000000
RGB	0, 0, 0
Pantone	6 C

White: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 0, 0, 0
HEX	FFFFFF
RGB	0, 0, 0
Pantone	White

Mustard: Color codes and mixes

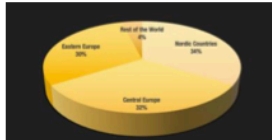
CMYK	0, 14, 64, 0
HEX	FFDC5C
RGB	255, 220, 92
Pantone	121 C

Mustard: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 9, 40, 0
HEX	FFE999
RGB	255, 233, 153
Pantone	2001 C

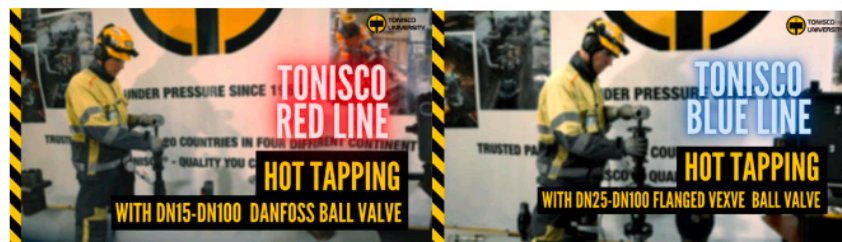


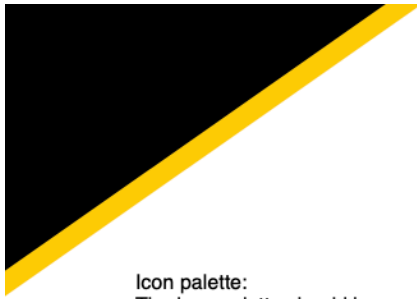
Depending on the purpose. The yellow can be shaded down to be lighter and more transparent for example for shaded boxes, or pie charts.



Primary colors are black and yellow as they are in the logo. The Tonisco yellow is an accent color but can also be used as a background color especially for eye catching pieces. Text color depends on the background color. Black is the text color but depending on the background color this could change. The text should be visible from the background and easy to read and see. Shaded boxes could be a lighter shade of yellow.

Make sure you do not add any other colored accent colors, which do not match the palette. No reds, greens, blues **unless** it is part of a logo. Example:

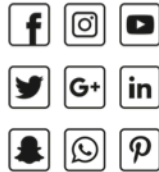




Icon palette:

The icon palette should be used accordingly and the icons should not be changed.

Social Media Icons:



Service Icons:



Service Icons color palette: On hover color change on website

Red: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 90, 90, 5
HEX	F20C0C
RBG	242, 12, 12
Pantone	18-1664 TCX

Blue: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	71, 47, 0, 12
HEX	2C68E1
RBG	44, 104, 225
Pantone	PMS 292

Green: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	34, 0, 31, 25
HEX	6AC070
RBG	106, 192, 112
Pantone	PMS 360

Grey: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 0, 3, 28
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HEX	B8B7B1
RBG	184, 183, 177
Pantone	1 C

Yellow: Color codes and mixes

CMYK	0, 15, 67, 100
HEX	FFD953
RBG	255, 217, 83
Pantone	PMS 212

The color of the icons can change from black / Tonisco yellow. Example:



Bullet points on presentations:



Patterns



This pattern is used to make designs more interesting still using the Tonisco colors. Examples:



KARLO NISSO
CEO / Sales Manager
Gruoskitalonin
Nyytiäntie 10
33532 Tampere, Finland
www.tonisco.com

TONISCO B30
DN25-DN100 Hot Tapping with VEXVE ball valves

TONISCO B30
DN25-DN100 Hot Tapping with VEXVE ball valves

Item	Product Name	Item No.	Qty
1	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
2	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
3	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
4	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
5	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
6	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
7	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
8	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
9	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
10	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
11	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
12	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
13	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
14	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
15	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
16	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
17	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
18	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
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20	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
21	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
22	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
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97	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
98	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
99	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1
100	TONISCO B30	1400.2000	1

TONISCO UNIVERSITY
TONISCO UNIVERSITY
PRODUCT USER MANUAL VIDEOS



Photographic Style

Even the type of photos you include in the design should have a visual style. Creating a consistent feel and mood for images can connect a user to your brand with just a glance. They also use consistent sizing and text treatments on every image.

Tonisco's photographic style is real and raw but also good quality and meaningful. The framing of the photos is so that the main parts are visible and nothing is cut off. Depending on where the photo is going it could be fitted differently. Square, rectangle, triangle. Color usage on photos should be somewhat monotone, but that happens in the business anyways there are not many colors which are not on theme. Welding photos and other photos with sparks are great to use to catch the audience's attention. Photos should be used as a guide for the audience so that they can use them as reference and to catch their attention. On the website the photos should be relevant and up to date.

On Social Media photos should have the Tonisco logo in any of the 4 corners, if the Tonisco logo is not clearly seen in the photo. On Instagram stories the Tonisco GIFs should be used when needed and the filter 'New York' should be used to get the same feel to all the stories. Stories should be categorized in the highlights section according to what they represent, this allows for the audience to look back at old stories.

Photos should **not** be:

- Bad quality
- Unedited
- Over saturated
- Boring
- Never use a photo with a pre-applied filter

Website

The background color of the website is going to be white and black and yellow as the accent colors.

Homepage

The homepage should in the first few seconds want to make the customer stay. Therefore, it is important to have the main aspects right on the homepage.

Buttons

The buttons should be black background with yellow text or vice versa.

Contact

Read more

Services



Navigations

The navigations for the website should be clear from the background. Depending on the color of the background/if it is an image – black / Tonisco yellow

Forms

The forms should have the same color scheme of black and yellow.

Name

Company

Email

Phone number

Message

Links

Links should be in the Tonisco yellow color, depending on the background need to make sure that they stand out from the background.



Tonisco products are
 TÜV-approved

Hover Effects

Hover effects on the buttons – grow and change color to vice versa colors. From yellow background and black text to black background and yellow text.



Digital Elements

The digital elements

Social Media

In Social Media these hashtags should always be used when applicable:

#tonisco #toniscofamily #hottapping #linestopping #toniscoservice #leakdetection #pipecutting
#welding #insulation #leakrepair #underpressure #energiarakentaminen #sensorinstallation
#infrarakentaminen #toniscosystem #toniscoprodukt

Tonisco Social Media - Profile image



The Tonisco profile image can be changed to fit themes of holidays or e.g. special events



SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

SEO should always be used on all photos uploaded on the internet. The photos should be named accordingly and using hyphens. Example:



tonisco-system-PS2000



Examples of Brand Style

