Digital marketing plan for a mobile application
Case Memoa

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Abstract

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This is a project-based thesis with an aim to create a digital marketing plan for a flashcard application called Memoa. Memoa is an independent mobile application that is under development. Before the app is released, it is crucial to raise brand awareness and attract potential users. The project provides the commissioning team with practical implementations backed with theory and tools to execute the plan.

Five tasks involved in the thesis project are (1) doing a literature review and other theoretical research, (2) analyzing the current situation and competitors in the market, (3) creating a digital marketing plan based on the knowledge, (4) delivering the finished digital marketing plan to the app creators, and (5) evaluating project management and delivering self-assessment.

The digital marketing plan follows the SOSTAC model whose elements are discussed in the theoretical knowledge. The model is followed by insights into keyword planning, content marketing, social media marketing, search engine optimization, and app store optimization. When the theory is established, the author investigated the current-state situation by interviewing the app developers. Competitor benchmarking is also conducted using desk research method.

After that, different approaches and useful analytics tools for tactics management are presented based on the information obtained. The implementation follows the structure of the theoretical framework mentioned above. Although the thesis product is designed for the flashcard application Memoa, the plan can also be applied for other mobile applications due to the general level of the plan. Besides, it is necessary to keep in mind that this product is not a one-size-fit-all plan that will work for all cases. Start-ups and application creators need to consider the best practices for them.

Besides the tactics discussed in the thesis, the author recommended incorporating paid advertising campaigns to reach a wider range of audience. The commissioning team also needs to ensure the consistency of content across the channels to deliver the best experiences to the audience. Last but not least, the team should regularly update their marketing plan as the digital marketing world evolves over time.

Keywords Digital marketing, mobile app, keyword planning, content marketing, social media marketing, search engine optimization, app store optimization

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1 Introduction

This chapter gives the audience an overview of the paper. The reader will find the context of this project, the objectives, and the project management methods. Besides, the author also included relevant theories that act as the foundation of the paper. Therefore, the key concepts will be explained. This chapter discusses the scope, as well as the project's expected outcome. Furthermore, the reader will understand the international aspects and how this paper is beneficial for stakeholders.

1.1 Background

It has witnessed a stable increase in the number of mobile app downloads between 2016 and 2020. In 2020, there were 218 billion app downloads, which makes a significant gap compared to 140.68 billion downloads in 2016. (Statista 2021). Statista also shows that mobile apps for education are the third most popular category on Apple App Store. (Statista 2020). These figures indicate mobile app's remarkable development and the high demand for apps designed for educational purposes.

According to Statista, there were more than 90,000 Android app releases every month on the Google Play store in 2020. This statistic implies the fact that over 7,500 apps were uploaded every day. (Statista 2021). Therefore, this is a highly competitive market to make an app stand out. Marketing, as a result, becomes more critical for any apps, regardless of their field.

The Manifest asked 301 companies across the US about how they implement marketing for their apps. 98% of them reported having a marketing strategy, and more than a third of them spend 31-50% of their budget on marketing, whereas another fifth dedicates more than 50% to marketing activities. (The Manifest 2018.)

The flashcard app Memoa has not been launched on the market yet. However, the owners realize the need for early marketing to attract potential users. Currently, Memoa is not financially supported by any company or funds to cover complicated marketing campaigns. Therefore, this thesis aims to create a low-cost digital marketing plan that can help spread the word about the upcoming launch.

1.2   Product introduction: Flashcard app Memoa

Memoa is a flashcard app developed by two BIT program students from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. The app uses spaced repetition algorithm and gamification features to improve user's engagement while learning.

Flashcards are two-sided note cards that have questions on one side and corresponding answers on the other side. There are endless applications for flashcards, such as vocabulary, names, signs, flags, or procedures. Learners use flashcards to test their memory through practiced information retrieval. (University of Southern Maine 2021.)

Classic flashcards are made with paper, but digital flashcards and apps are also available for learners to download. Some well-known flashcard software and apps are Anki, Quizlet, Memrise, SuperMemo.

Spaced repetition is the learning method that learners have intervals between their study sessions. Once the information has been memorized, the interval that the information needs to be reviewed will be longer. Assume that the learner successfully remembers the knowledge in all review sessions. The schedule would look as follows:

- Study on Monday: 7 PM
- The first review on Tuesday: 7 PM (24 hours)
- The second review on Thursday: 7 PM (48 hours)
- The third review on Sunday: 7 PM (72 hours)

This method is scientifically proven to help users build long-term memories by recalling sessions every time the learner is about to forget it. A study shows that spaced learning over time increases the learning compared to cramming information in one time. There are software and apps that use spaced repetition to teach foreign languages, such as Anki, Memrise, and Cerego. (Shaples 2019, 20.)

Gamification motivates participants by applying game design elements, game thinking, and game mechanics to non-game activities. Besides education, gamification is also used in other contexts, such as marketing, loyalty programs. More and more organizations are opting for this method to excite their employees and customers.

Gamification features support the learning experience by touching the most human aspects - the ambition to express oneself, compete with others, and achieve a goal. Therefore, the use of gamification in education can bring about a better learning experience and an improved learning environment. (Al-Azawi, Al-Faliti & Al-Blushi 2016, 133-135.)

1.3   Project Objective

This thesis aims to develop a digital marketing plan for the soft launch of a flashcard app called Memoa. Although a particular market (Vietnam) is examined in this case, the project also uses various methods and approaches that can be applied to other markets. The finished paper is expected to include crucial elements of a marketing plan that inexpensively promote the Memoa app. App owners use this project as a case study and a guide for their products regardless of nations.

The project tasks are determined according to the project objective cited above:

Project task (PT) 1
Preparing the theoretical framework for a digital marketing plan. The task involves studying content marketing, social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and App store optimization (ASO).

Project task 2
Having a solid understanding of the target audience and potential customers by interviewing the app owners. The task includes analyzing the current situation and competition to gain knowledge of the market and prepare suitable practices.

Project task 3
Developing a digital marketing plan for the flashcard Memoa app. The plan will be built based on previous tasks' outcomes and constant feedback from the app owners.

Project task 4
Presenting the completed marketing plan to the app owners and proposing some suggestions for future use.

Project task 5
Evaluating the success of the project and learning outcome based on the project management process.

Table 1 below demonstrates the project management with the theoretical framework, project management methods, and outcomes for each project task.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Project Task	Theoretical Framework	Project Management Methods	Outcomes
PT 1. Theoretical research for a digital marketing plan	Content marketing Social media marketing SEO ASO	Desk research	Components of a digital marketing plan Definitions and impacts of content marketing, social media marketing, SEO, ASO on marketing
PT 2. Analyzing the current situation analysis, competitive situation	The outcomes of PT 1	Desk research Interview with app owners	Understanding of the market Competitors as case studies
PT 3. Creating a digital marketing plan	The outcomes of PT 1 and PT 2	Desk research	A complete digital marketing plan
PT 4. Delivering the finished digital marketing plan to the app owners	The outcomes of PT 3	Presentation	Explanation of the marketing plan Suggestions
PT 5. Evaluating project management, outcomes, and success	The outcome of PT 1, 2, 3, 4	Self-evaluation	Reflection on the learning process and project result

1.4   Project Scope

There are quite a few digital marketing channels that businesses need to consider – email marketing, affiliate marketing, paid advertising, to name a few. However, this project only focuses on content marketing, social media marketing, SEO (Search engine optimization), and ASO (App store optimization). They are the most popular methods that are inexpensive to implement and easy for daily maintenance. Therefore, they can be good choices for app owners as non-professional marketers to start.

However, the project does not provide detailed information about other marketing channels because the author preferred to keep the plan concise and actionable. This digital marketing plan can be further developed according to the future need of the flashcard app

Memoa. Furthermore, as the app has not been launched yet, the return on investment remains unknown. Thus, it is better to start with low-cost platforms rather than high-priced ones.

1.5 International Aspect

The flashcard app Memoa is designed for the global market. The app owners want to promote it in the Vietnamese market to validate the product before entering the international field. The global use of gamification in education is estimated to increase significantly from 2016 to 2023, from USD 450 million to USD 1,800 million. (Markets and Market 2020.) This figure indicates the potential of the high demand for the flashcard app Memoa.

1.6 Benefits

This study will benefit the owners of the flashcard app Memoa. The digital marketing plan helps them get ready for the soft launch. Memoa team can use the tactics and tools included in the paper as the foundation to develop their marketing plan in the future.

Independent app creators can also benefit from this project. Since the mobile app market is highly competitive, a good marketing plan will be the key to attract potential customers. This study should not be complicated, and the methodology used can also be applied to various cases.

This project helped the author with her career development. During the project, the author gained a deeper understanding of digital marketing and project management. The thesis outcome may act as proof of her capability that will support her future job opportunities.

1.7 Key Concepts

ASO (App Store optimization) can also be recognized as "App Store SEO". This method includes courses of action to optimize an application or a game so that it will rank higher in the stores. ASO allows an application to be explored when users search or browse, which boosts the volume of organic traffic and downloads. (The Tool 2021.)

Content marketing, also known as branded content, is a set of content created by a company on their website or microsite. The goals are to provide information, improve their visibility on search engines, and increase brand awareness. (Clow & Baack 2018, 253-254.) There are limitless possibilities for content. They can be blogs, videos, infographics, and ebooks. (Hubspot 2020.)

Mobile application (also known as an app or mobile app) is a software program designed for mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets. In this thesis project, a mobile application is referred to as an app or a mobile app.

SEO (Search engine optimization) is a chain of actions that improve the site's performance in organic search results. This technique can be done by adjusting a website's elements to optimize the user experience. SEO aims to help search engines understand the content and display it. (Search Console Help 2020.)

Social media marketing (SMM) is a collection of marketing activities utilizing social media, social networks, or both. Successful SMM can help maintain customer engagement, improve brand visibility, and widen customer reach. (Bansal, Masood & Dadhich 2014, 1-2.)

Soft launch is chosen when companies want to launch a product without having many activities to gain extensive awareness. This method works well for start-ups as it does not require a lot of financial and marketing resources. The soft launch also allows app creators to get feedback from users to improve the product further. (Lawley & Schure 2017, 231-232.)

2 Theoretical knowledge to create a digital marketing plan

This chapter provides the readers with critical theoretical knowledge that supports the project. There are quite a few models used to develop a digital marketing plan for the flashcard app Memoa. The author will explain further how these theories act as the foundation of the project and why they have vital impacts on the outcome.

Figure 1 below demonstrates the core theories of this study. The framework shows how the key concepts are correlated with each other to come up with a complete digital marketing plan.
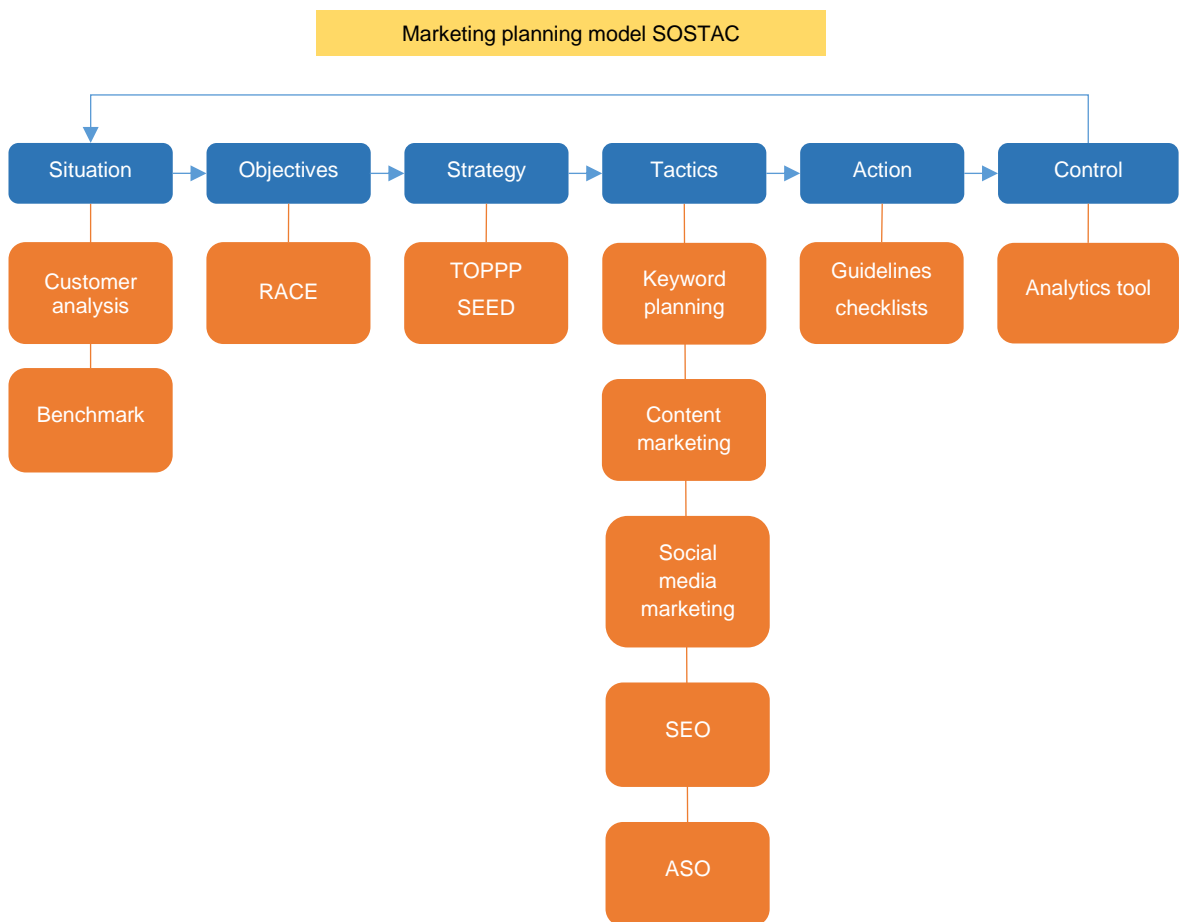

Figure 1. Thesis structure with SOSTAC model as the framework of the project and other models as the supports in different steps

2.1 SOSTAC model – Situation, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, Action, Control

SOSTAC, also known as PR Smith's SOSTAC Plan, has been a popular business planning tool for an organization (or an aspect of an organization). The steps involved in this model are Situation analysis (S), Objectives (O), Strategy (S), Tactics (T), Action (A), and Control (C) (Smith 2011, 4). The SOSTAC model can be visualized as below.
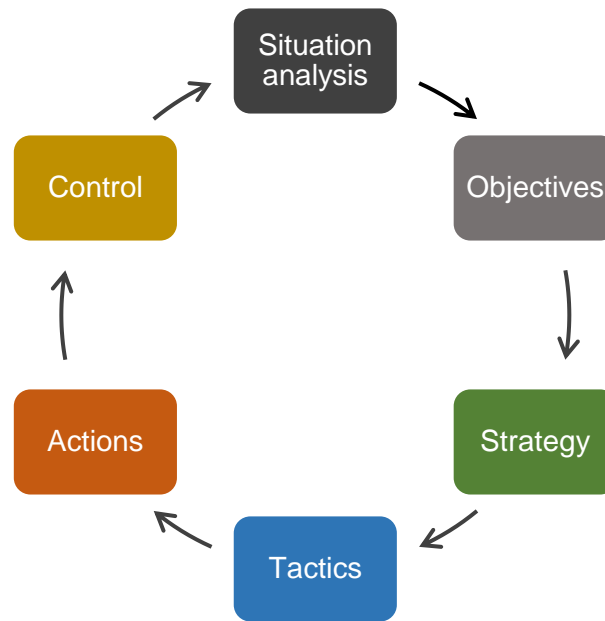
Figure 2. SOSTAC model (adapted from Smith)

2.1.1 Situation analysis

A good situation analysis needs to cover customers, competitors, partners, performance or results, market trends, and competencies, (Smith 2020, 23.)

Customer analysis answers three big questions – Who, Why, and How. Smith (2020, 26) points out that "Who" indicates the types of customers businesses should spend resources on. Four common customer segmentation categories are geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral. (Fuel Cycle 2021.) Understanding "Why" customers behave in specific ways helps marketers offer the right value to customers. There are various ways to collect the data, such as pop-up surveys, keyword research, social listening, or customer reviews. (Brand Watch 2016.) "How" shows what action customers take to achieve the desired tasks. Analytics tools are marketer's best friend to optimize the interaction between customers and the brand. (Smith 2020, 24-86.)

Competitor analysis, also known as competitive analysis, allows companies to identify leading competitors and how they run their business. Running a competitive analysis is an effective method to analyze a business' value proposition and learn from its competitors' advantages and drawbacks. (Hub Spot 2021.) A popular framework used for this purpose is the SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis looks into the internal and external factors that help companies realize a potential competitive advantage. By understanding the weaknesses, firms can anticipate the threats they may face; and take advantage of opportunities with their strengths. (MindTools 2021.)

Partnership analysis is necessary for any organization to have strong alliances. According to Chaffey (2017), Partnership can be considered the eighth P in the marketing mix. Partnering can be beneficial for both company parties in terms of marketing activities. Having that said, it requires resources and skilled management to identify, recruit and nurture partnerships successfully. Partnership evaluation template can be found attached in Attachment. It depends on the business' needs that different types of partners are chosen. For instance, Influencers work more effectively on blogging and social media platforms; Link partners will help the most with SEO, and Affiliates promote products on their sites. Considering the pros and cons and the benefits these partners can contribute to the business' project.

Performance analysis plays a vital role in deciding whether a business wants to stay in a market. Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is a set of measurable values of progress to achieve a pre-defined goal. (KPI 2021.) Companies also need to compare their number with other competitors to realize a trend, if any. This information can account for changes in sales or marketing activities. For example, Zoom's revenue in Q4 2020 is nearly twice as much as in Q4 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. (Statista 2020.)

Market trends analysis helps businesses realize the opportunities they can exploit and the threats they may want to consider. Smith (2020) suggests using the PEST model to identify macro-environmental factors that can affect the business. PEST stands for Political, Economic, Social, and Technological. Organizations with a large scale usually benefit the most from this framework because they are more likely to be influenced by major global events. (Investopedia 2020.)

Competencies analysis can reveal a business' strengths and weaknesses. Chaffey (2019) adapted Capability Maturity Model Integration to create the Digital Marketing Analysis. The framework looks at seven aspects with a scoring system from 1 (initial) to 5 (optimized). Reaching stage 5 demands a lot of skills and technology. However, it is necessary to understand the business' current situation for further improvement (Figure 3).

Digital Capability	ONE. Initial	TWO. Managed	THREE. Defined	FOUR. Quantified	FIVE. Optimised
A. Strategic Approach	No strategy	Outline plan with prioritised marketing activities	Defined vision and strategy for Digital Transformation	Business-aligned strategy and roadmap	Agile strategic approach
B. Performance Improvement Process	No KPIs	Volume-based KPIs No dashboards	Quality-based KPIs 'Last click' attribution Business dashboards	Value-based KPIs Weighted attribution Ad hoc tests / CRO	Lifetime-value KPIs Structured experiment programme
C. Management Buy-in	Limited	Verbal support, but inadequate resourcing	Sponsorship and increased investment for Digital Transformation	Active championing and approriate investment	Digital is an integral part of strategy development
D. Resourcing and Structure	No specific digital skills	Core skills centralised or agencies	Centralised hub and spoke Dedicated resources	Decentralisation and reskilling	Balanced blend of marketing skills
E. Data, Martech and Infrastructure	No or limited customer database	Separate marketing technology, limited data integration	Partial integrated Martech stack and data quality controls	Integrated systems and 360° view data sources in Martech stack	Latest innovations, e.g. AI and Machine Learning can be integrated
F. Integrated Customer Communications	Not integrated	Core push activities synchronised	Integrated inbound approach. Last-click evaluation.	Integrated, Personalised, Paid-Owned-Earned media attribution	Media optimised for ROI and to maximise CLV
G. Integrated Customer Experience	Static brochureware website	Desktop and mobile support, not personalized. Landing pages in place.	Partially personalized desktop and mobile experience	Integrated, Personalized web, mobile, email and social media	Full contextual personalized experiences and recommendations
	"Laggard"	"Developing capability"	"Competent average capability"	"Above-sector average capability"	"Market leading capability"

Figure 3. Digital marketing capability analysis adapted by Chaffey (2019)

2.1.2 Objectives

The objectives aim to answer the question "Where do we want to be?". There are various approaches to establish objectives for marketing. RACE framework follows customer cycle funnel with each step being able to work as an objective. This model includes four stages – Reach, Act, Convert, and Engage, which are the major digital marketing activities. (Smart Insights 2020.) Table 2 shows the relationship between the RACE framework and the customer buying process.

Table 2. The RACE framework (adapted from Smart Insights)

Objectives	Buyer stage	Method	Key measures
Reach Grow the audience using paid, owned, and earned media	Exploration	- Organic and paid search - Social media - PR - Display - Influencer marketing	- Audience volume - Audience quality - Audience value and cost
Act Prompt interactions, subscribers, and leads	Decision making	- Use persona customer journey - Relevant and useful content	- Lead conversion rate - Time on site - Subscribers, likes, shares
Convert Achieve sales online or offline	Purchase	- Conversion rate optimization - Marketing automation - Retargeting	- Sales - Revenue/Profit - Conversion and order value
Engage Encourage repeat business	Advocacy	- Social proof - Referral - Research customer loyalty drivers	- Repeat purchase (Lifetime value) - Brand satisfaction and loyalty - Advocacy

Organizations should follow the SMART framework when setting an objective. According to Hollensen, Kotler & Opresnik (2019), a good goal should have a specific area to target (Specific); an indicator to measure the progress (Measurable); a link to the corporate goal (Achievable); realistic resources, and opportunities to attain the objective (Realistic); and the time expected to accomplish (Time-related).

For example, a business wants to reach its potential customers using organic social media. The objective could be "We will share photos that communicate the difference between our product and others (Specific). We will make seven posts for every other day

(Achievable) in two weeks (Time-related). At the end of each week, our posts will reach at least 3000 people, 200 likes, and 40 comments (Measurable).

2.1.3 Strategy

The strategy looks at the question "How do we get there?". Smith (2020) proposes two critical strategic components that businesses should focus on in a digital marketing plan – Target markets and Positioning. Target market is the action of defining the right segment to target from a big market. The more detailed businesses know about their targeted customer profiles, the easier it will be to reach them. Positioning is how companies want them to be perceived by the target market. The idea of positioning is that brands identify and gain a niche that creates unique impressions in the consumer's mind to stay distinct from other competitors.

Nine components that organizations should consider when establishing a digital marketing plan (TOPPP SEED) are Target market, Objectives, Positioning, Processes, Partnership, Sequence, Experience, Engagement, and Data. Not all businesses have nine components in their strategy. Companies can choose the ones that are relevant to them the most to build their digital marketing strategy. (Smith & Book 2020, 274.)

Target market and positioning are essential elements for any strategy, as mentioned above. The organizations should ensure that the strategies they follow support the dominant objectives (mission and vision). The processes organizations want to introduce to their marketing (for example, marketing automation) may lead to changes to new team structures or different daily tasks. Therefore, considering the possibility of partnership can be beneficial in some cases.

Organizations also need to prioritize the objectives they want to accomplish to make it a sequence. For example, some companies prefer customer retention before customer acquisition; others put credibility before visibility. Besides, audience engagement is worth taking into consideration to engage customers more efficiently. It depends on the nature of the business that organizations want to have low-level engagement, such as ratings and reviews, or high-level engagement, such as collaboration and co-creation.

Smith (2020) declares that customer experience is the heart of a business. It is essential to define the experience businesses want their customers to have to build the strategy accordingly. By collecting customer's online data, organizations can offer value to target cus-

tomers better. However, integrating and processing data online and offline require thorough understanding and skilled implementation. Insufficient data can be a hole in marketing as they are incomplete and misleading.

2.1.4 Tactics

Tactics answer the question "How actually do we get there?". They tend to be short-term, flexible, and only be developed once the strategy is established (Chaffey 2017). It depends on the customer stage in the buying cycle that businesses decide which tactical tools to use. The tactical matrix introduced in SOSTAC Guide to your perfect digital marketing plan (Smith 2020, 191) provides a quick analysis of different tactics. The matrix divides the buying process into five stages – Awareness, Consideration, Purchase, Post-purchase relationship building, and Post-purchase repeat sales. There are nine criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of each tactic. These criteria are defined as follows:

- Reach – The size of an audience it can reach
- Speed – The quickness the tactical tool can reach the audience
- Time – The length of time to get the tactic created and delivered
- Message size – The space to fit the message in
- Targeting – The precision of the targeting can be
- Personalization – The message personalization possibility of the tool
- Cost – The expense for a Cost per thousand (CPT/CPM)
- Control – The ability to control the message with the tactic
- Credibility – The degree of credibility of the tactic

Tactics Matrix	BENEFIT →	Reach	Speed	Lead Time	Message Size	Targeting	Personal-ization	Cost: CPC/CPM	Control	Credibility (message)
OBJECTIVE ↓	TACTIC/ CHANNEL ↓									
Awareness/ Familiarity	Display Ads	High	Medium	Long / Med	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
	PR	High	Medium	Medium	Large	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
	Sponsorship	High	Low /Med	Long	Small	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
	Social media (content marketing)	Low/Med/ High	Low / Med	Medium	Large	Medium	Med / Low	None	Low / Med	High
Consideration	Search Ads & SEO	Low/Med	Medium	Long/Med	Small	High	Medium	Medium	High	Low / Med
	eMail (AM)	Med	High	Short	Large	High	High	Low	High	Medium
	Web Site Incentives	Low/Med	Low	Medium	Med / Low	Low/Med	High with Auto Marketing	None	High	Medium
	Social Media	Low/Med /High	Low	Short / Med	Large	Medium	Med / Low	None	Low / Med	High
	Sales Pitch	Low	Medium	Short	NA	High	High	High	High	Med / High
Decision	Search Ads & SEO	Med / Low	Medium	Short	Small	High	Medium	Medium	High	Low / Med
	eMail (AM)	Medium	High	Short	Large	High	High	Low	High	Medium
	Web Site Incentives	Low	Low	Medium	Low	N/A	High with Auto Marketing	N/A	High	N/A
	Telesales	Low/ Med	High	Short / Med	Large	High	High	Low	High	Medium
	Sales Pitch	Low	Medium	Short	Low	High	High	High	High	Med / High
	Exhibition	Medium	Medium	Med/Long	Large	High	Low	High	Medium	Med / High
Post Purchase Relationship Building	Direct Mail/email newsletter/ special offers added value	Medium	High	Short (eM) Med (Dmail)	Large	High	High	Low (eMail) High (DM)	High	Medium
	Social Media	Low/High	Low	Short/Med	Large	High	Medium	None	Low / Med	High
Post Purchase Repeat Sales Loyalty...Adv..	Direct Mail/eMail	Medium	High	Med/Short	Large	High	High	High (DM)	High	Medium
	Social Media	Low/High	Med	Short/Med	High	High	Medium	None	Low / Med	High

The Tactics Matrix www.PRSmith.org © PR Smith 2014 v2.1

Figure 4. The tactics matrix

Once the businesses already decided on the tactics, they can use the Gantt chart to manage the details throughout the planned period. The Gantt chart also acts as a document and provides valuable information for later decisions.

2.1.5 Actions

Actions are all about ensuring excellent execution. Each tactic is a mini project which contains a series of actions. Therefore, the actions need to be well-organized and detailed for team members. Actions involve good communication, motivation, comprehensive training sessions with guidelines and checklists. An excellent execution can lead to a business' competitive advantage, so it is critical to spend money and time for the internal teams before getting the project started. Businesses can also have objectives for each tactic so that the actions can be allocated more correctly. Table 3 presents how tactic breaks down into actions.

Table 3. Actions in a tactic plan

Tactic	Objective	Action	Who	When	Budget
Email marketing	Increase the number of existing customers from 15.000 to 25.000 to enroll in the webinar in 2 months	- Sign up for Mail-Chimp campaigns - Select specific customers to target - Write email - Set intervals	Marketing manager	May 2021 to July 2021	30.000 EUR

2.1.6 Control

A digital marketing plan cannot be complete without control systems. The control section allows businesses to know if they meet the defined objectives. This result will be used later to analyze performance and result in the following situation analysis. A popular metric to measure performance is KPI (Key Performance Indicator). It depends on the objectives that businesses will decide which KPI to use. For instance, monitoring a website's performance may include site visits, bounce rate, duration, and comments. Marketers need to decide when to review which metrics – daily, weekly, or quarterly, and by whom.

Chaffey (2017) suggests using the 3M resources (Men, Money, and Minutes). Men represent the human resource, money indicates budget, and minutes implies timescales for an activity. Businesses need to consider how many persons are required to accomplish specific tasks and whether to outsource or not. There is also a possibility of using automated systems and robots for repeated tasks to reduce cost. Therefore, the budget must be considered carefully. Every marketing campaign is expected to benefit the major objectives, so a plan should cover the ROI (Return on investment). The expectation of the outcome should be realistic as the revenue may fail to reach the goal. In this case, marketers have to tweak the plan to rebalance the budget. Timescales usually take up more space in a marketing plan than the other two resources. It is critical to consider whether the schedule allows the business to execute a plan.

2.2 Keyword research

Keywords in digital marketing are words or a short phrase that an internet user types in a search bar to perform a search. Search engines, such as Google, Bing, or DuckDuckGo are places where keywords are used the most. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, or LinkedIn, also provide valuable data from keywords. Keywords are commonly used in SEO and ASO. These topics will be discussed in chapter 4.1.

Keyword research is a process of exploring the terms used by the targeted audience when they conduct online searches. The insights narrow down the target group so that it is easier to offer customers the appropriate value. Furthermore, keyword research provides businesses with a deeper understanding of their potential customers and customer's needs. For instance, a search result will identify the topics that interest the target group the most. Businesses can build content strategies according to the suggestions to engage the audience.

Businesses can also conduct keyword research on their competitors to understand the topics and keywords they rank for to develop better content. When doing keyword research, businesses may discover new terms that their customers use to mention the product. This approach can make a competitive advantage because these businesses will reach the customers before other competitors. (Sprout Social 2019.)

There are two types of keywords – short-tail keywords and long-tail keywords. **Short-tail keywords,** also known as "head terms," are search queries that contain one or two words. Searchers tend to look for general information on a topic and will narrow down the search later. Short-tail keywords generate high competition, high volume, and little user intent. On the other hand**, long-tail keywords** are longer search phrases consisting of three or more words. People are more likely to look for specific information to achieve specific goals. Therefore, long-tail keywords lead to a higher chance of conversion rate because they are better targeted and less competitive. The best way to optimize a website or an app is to combine both. Each type of keyword aims at a different target, so businesses should consider using short-tail keywords and long-tail keywords for their marketing strategy. (North Cut 2021.)

2.3 Content marketing

There are many types of content – blog, infographic, podcast, e-book, presentation, and video, to name a few. Effective content delivery requires a solid understanding of the audience to choose the right content and content channels for the targeted audience. It cannot be denied that content plays an integral part in any marketing activity. Without relevant and engaging content, businesses are likely to fall short of customer's expectations and eventually lose customers.

Content marketing is a marketing technique that plans, produces, publishes, and shares content to generate customer's interest in a brand or product. By offering helpful content to customers, organizations can attract a targeted audience and increase brand awareness, interaction, and sales. (Hubspot 2021). According to Pulizzi (2014, 6), "the essence

of this strategy is the belief that if we, as businesses, deliver consistent, ongoing valuable information to buyers, they ultimately reward us with their business and loyalty."

As a rule, creating content should follow seven principles regardless of channels and content types. (1) The content should satisfy customers' needs and offer a solution to their problems; (2) The aim of the content is to build trust, not to try to sell; (3) Provide customers with free and useful information because reputation and referrals will return; (4) Think about niche market and unique value a business has to offer; (5) Engage customers with a good story; (6) Pay attention to the quality of the content; and (7) Produce authentic and genuine content. (Jefferson & Tanton 2013, 38.)

Chaffey from Smart Insights introduces the Content Marketing Matrix to help marketers with content planning to achieve desired objectives. Four elements of the content are Educate, Convince, Inspire, and Entertain. These elements are organized in terms of Emotional or Rational (the vertical axis) and Awareness or Purchase (the horizontal axis). The two dimensions show how different content assets can facilitate the buying process from audience awareness to purchase decision. (Smart Insights 2020.)
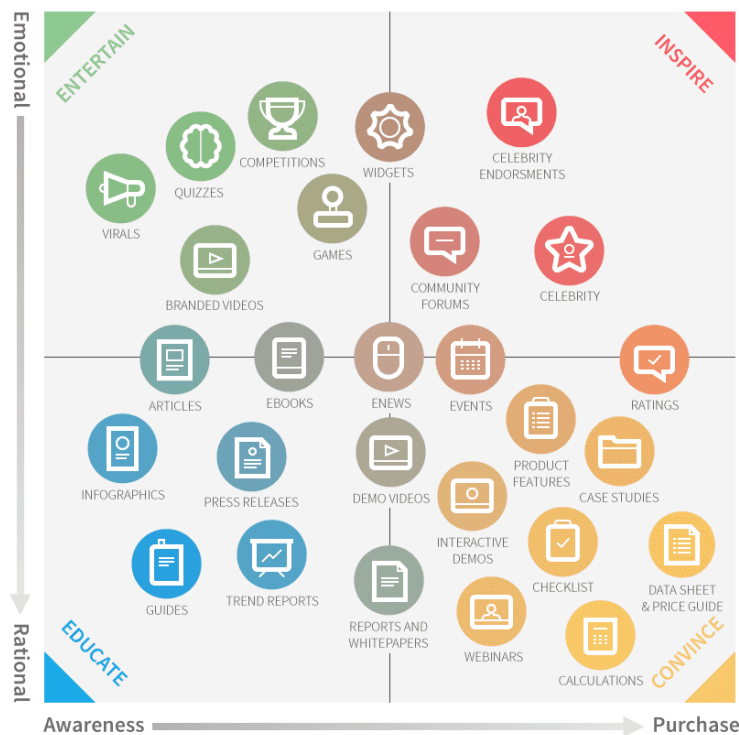
Figure 5. The content marketing matrix

2.4   Social media marketing

Social media can be considered a tool that enables internet users to interact with each other and share content through different channels. Every social media platform involves the formation and development of communities and networks. It also encourages user's active engagement and participation (CIPR 2011). Therefore, social media has been an indispensable part of any digital marketing plan. There are many social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, to name a few. Tuten and Solomon (2013, 103) introduce four social media zones (figure 6) to help marketers focus on each platform's core functions.

– Zone 1. **Social Community** indicates channels that focus on social relationships. This zone features multi-way collaboration, communication, and socialization. Users look for interactions with other people and maintain those networks. Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat are popular examples in the Social Community zone.

– Zone 2. **Social Publishing** sites involve channels that deliver content to an audience. The content can be blogs, news sites, forums (Reddit), photos (Instagram, Pinterest), video (YouTube), and audio (SoundCloud, Spotify).

– Zone 3. The **Social Entertainment** zone includes a variety of channels and vehicles that provide users with entertainment opportunities. Social games (Farm Ville), gaming sites (Twitch), and virtual worlds (Augmented reality) belong to this category.

– Zone 4. **Social Commerce** platforms are a subset of e-commerce, which supports the online buying and selling process of products and services. These channels usually feature reviews and ratings generated from online shoppers to personalize recommended products for each user. Some popular channels are Amazon, Facebook, Uber, and Airbnb. (Hollensen & al 2019, 58-162.)
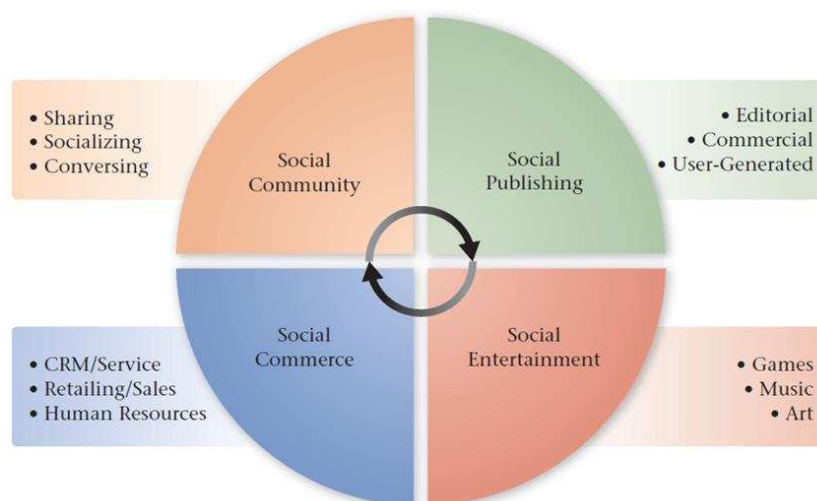

Figure 6. The four zones of social media by Tuten and Solomon (2013, 103)

There are quite a few differences between B2B and B2C businesses in choosing social media platforms (figure 7). The commonly used platforms for both business models are

Facebook and Instagram. The gap is more significant when it comes to LinkedIn – B2B companies tend to have more online presence on this platform than B2C companies (Statista 2020). Therefore, it depends on the business's nature that organizations will choose the appropriate social media channels.
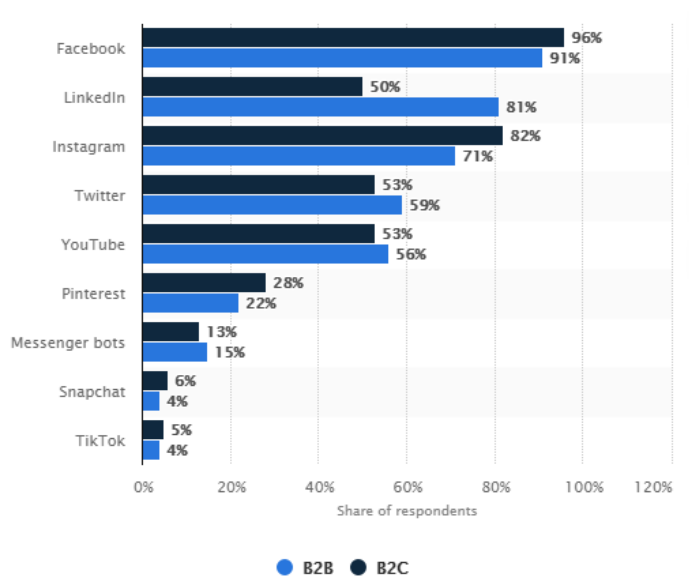

Figure 7. Leading social media platforms used by B2B and B2C marketers worldwide as of January 2020

Facebook (zone 1, 3) is the world's biggest social media platform. The number of people using Facebook has been continuously increasing from 2004 to 2020. At the moment, this social network has nearly 2.8 billion active users (Statista 2021). People between the ages of 25 to 34 are the most influential demographic group on Facebook. Around 69% of U.S. adults use Facebook, which means that seven people have a Facebook account in every group of ten adults (Omnicore 2021).

As a result, businesses can reach a broader audience range than other platforms to build their online presence. It is also easier for brands to interact with their customers because not every user will visit a company's website. This approach is helpful to improve customer experience and enhance engagement. Facebook ads are also a powerful tool thanks to fantastic targeting features. Businesses can target a specific customer group regarding gender, age, location, or language.

Therefore, Facebook is a lucrative land for advertisers and marketers. Facebook's revenue stream relies heavily on advertising. Over 98% of the revenues come from displaying ads on Facebook's ecosystem – Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Messenger, and third parties (FourWeekMBA 2021). However, organic reach has witnessed a decline since

2014 to make room for more personal moments (Hubspot 2018). Business accounts will find it more challenging to approach their customers without paying for ads. This news is not exciting for start-ups who are yet financially stable.

Facebook's algorithm and regulations are also updated frequently, making it more challenging for marketers to get an ad approved. Adverts will go through a strict review process to ensure that they follow Facebook's advertising policies before appearing on the platform. (Facebook 2021). However, it cannot be denied that this social platform is still one of the most effective channels to reach potential customers.

YouTube (zone 2) is an online video-sharing platform where people can upload videos and share them with other people. It is the world's second most popular search engine after Google, with over two billion visitors every month (CNBC 2021). With the enormous number of users, businesses are more likely to reach a targeted audience with keywords. Videos on YouTube are also featured on Google search results as Google wants to provide users with the most helpful and relevant information. Therefore, businesses can use YouTube to get found more often when they optimize their YouTube content.

According to Wyzowl (2021), YouTube has been the most popular platform used by video marketers for seven years consecutively. Search Engine Journal (2020) finds out that the YouTube algorithm works based on three elements: relevance, engagement, and quality. Relevance refers to the keywords, metadata, description, and transcription of the video. Engagement indicates how long people watch the video – the longer they stay, the better the engagement rate. Quality is determined by the expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness of a given topic. Therefore, YouTube is a useful tool to generate organic traffic to the company's website. With proper optimization, videos can be found in the suggestions section from other relevant videos.

Besides, YouTube advertising cost is considered relatively lower than traditional Google search. The average cost for YouTube views is $0.06 per click, meanwhile Google search charges around $1 or $2 per click. Moreover, Google has made some changes to YouTube ads to make them more visible to viewers since 2007. The changes lead to more focus on mobile devices and support from Google search history. A YouTube ad will be displayed to those who performed relevant public searches on Google. (Cleverism 2020.)

However, it takes lots of time and hard work to build a YouTube channel. Making captivating content on YouTube also requires more effort than writing posts (for Facebook) or taking photos (for Instagram). The competition on YouTube is tough, so businesses need a clear strategy to survive and rank higher. However, YouTube is still a safe playground for start-ups and businesses who want to create and deliver more value to customers.

TikTok (zone 2) is a new platform that recently gained enormous attention from internet users. This platform is also known as Douyin in China. TikTok merged with Musical.ly and made its way to the international market in 2018. This social network is a place for short-form mobile videos, ranging from 5 to 60 seconds. There are 800 million active users on Tiktok globally, of which 150 million active users are using the Chinese version of the app. This number is an outstanding achievement considering the platform has been in the market for three years. Meanwhile, it took Facebook four years and Instagram nine years to reach the same result. (Orbelo 2020.)

TikTok's target group is the young audience. Hootsuite (2020) points out that 69% of users on TikTok belong to the age range of 13 and 24. This platform is also used more by females than males, which count for 60% and 40%, respectively. Some brands overlook TikTok as they think it is a fad for kids. However, there are many possibilities to use TikTok to raise brand awareness to a younger audience. Besides, videos on TikTok are simple and easy to make and edit. Viewers on YouTube are more concerned about the video quality, while TikTok users appreciate light-hearted content (Forbes 2020).

The social network uses recommendation systems to suggest videos to users. Three factors that affect the system are (1) User interactions - TikTok shows videos based on the user's interaction with the platform, such as the account he follows, the comments he wrote, and his content. (2) Video information, such as captions, sounds, and hashtags. (3) Device and account settings including language preference, country, and device type. (TikTok 2020.) Businesses can take advantage of these features to make videos for the targeted audience.

However, it is essential to consider the demographic group a business is targeting versus that on TikTok. As most users on TikTok are relatively young, they may not be the ideal representative of other age groups. TikTok should not be the primary way of converting sales because it is tricky to link the website to videos on TikTok. Besides, the content on TikTok may not align with the brand identity if the business focuses on serious fields. (Hubspot 2020.)

2.5   Search engine optimization (SEO)

Before jumping into SEO, it is vital to understand how a search engine result page (SERP) is produced. Understanding the ranking theory can help businesses boost their position higher to attract more traffic. According to Chaffey and Smith (2017, 370-371), four steps a SERP is generated are:

1. **Crawling** – Search engines will send out robots to find new and updated content. The robots follow links on web pages, find, and retrieve the discovered URLs for further analysis.
2. **Indexing** – An index is built, and the search engines process information to identify relevant pages having the queries that searchers type.
3. **Ranking or scoring** – The pages with keywords are found, but they are not in order of relevance. The ranking process will assess the most relevant content to show on the SERPs.
4. **Query request and results serving** – Search engines assess a user's IP address to identify their location, and the query is sent to the data center to process. The ranking will be returned in real time as a list of relevant documents on the search result pages.

Search engines, such as Google and Bing, feature organic (without paid) results below Pay-per-click or sponsored links (paid results). SEO aims to reach the highest position in the organic listing by letting search engines know that our content is the most relevant for the given topic. Google is the most popular search engine in the world – it occupies over 92% share of the market. The gap is enormous as Bing only counts for 2.69%, Yahoo! has 1.47%, and other search engines' shares are even lower (Statcounter 2021). Therefore, it is common to understand that we are optimizing for Google when it comes to SEO. According to Ahrefs (2020), there are eight elements that contribute to a strong SEO.

Crawlability is the primary method to get the latest content on a web discovered by Google. As mentioned above, robots will follow links on indexed web pages (already existed in Google's index) to discover new pages and content. Therefore, pages without internal links are less likely to be crawled. If businesses prefer to keep some pages such as policies, terms, and conditions unindexed, they may want to look at No-follow tags, no-indexed meta tags, or blocks in robots.txt.

Mobile friendliness has been an indispensable element as mobile users are constantly growing (Statista 2021). In 2015, Google started "using mobile-friendliness as a ranking signal on mobile searches." Since then, it has released updates that emphasize more on mobile friendliness. (Google Search Central 2016.)

Page speed indicates how long it takes a page to load. Slow pages are more likely to lose visitors, which leads to low conversion and less satisfaction. Google already used page speed as a search ranking criterion for the desktop in 2010 (Google Search Central 2010) and mobile in 2018 (Google Search Central 2018).

Search intent is the goal users want to achieve when performing a search. Choosing the right keywords to rank for is crucial as they need to be relevant to gain quality traffic. As mentioned above in chapter 2.2, keyword research helps in identifying target customers. By analyzing keywords used by searchers and competitors' top pages, businesses can develop their keyword strategy to improve the content.

Backlinks are links from one website or page to another. If a business' website has many backlinks, it is more likely to rank higher for relevant search queries as the website is "approved" by other sites. More backlinks lead to more traffic and discoverability. When a user clicks on a link pointing to a website, that site has referral traffic. There is a higher chance that the user will browse the site for more information. (Ahrefs 2021.)

Authority demonstrates the overall visibility of the website based on link authority and domain authority. Links from high-quality websites have more scores than from low-quality ones. Domain age also plays a role in authority – the older and more relevant it is, the higher it can rank.

Content quality is always a priority as Google wants to offer searchers the best results. Similar to the YouTube ranking mentioned in chapter 2.4, quality is determined by expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness. Besides, a regularly updated page is more accessible and relevant to searchers, which is always loved by search engines.

2.6 App store optimization (ASO)

App store (also known as application store) is an online distribution platform for mobile apps. The two largest app stores are Apple App Store for iOS devices and the Google Play Store for Android users. Amazon App, BlackBerry World, Huawei AppGallery, Samsung Galaxy Store, and Microsoft Stores are some examples of app stores that are still on the market. In this project, the author focuses on Google Play store ranking factors to optimize the flashcard app Memoa.

The goal of ASO is to improve an app's position by ensuring that the app meets app stores' ranking criteria. As app stores are crowded with apps uploaded every day, it is cru-

cial to have an ASO strategy to get the app discovered and generate more organic down-loads. Good ASO execution will help a business save money on paid downloads, lower user acquisition costs, and gain better exposure to users.

According to TheTool (2021), ASO = On-metadata + Off-metadata. **On-metadata** factors are controllable elements of the product page or listing, such as URL/Package, Developer name, App name/Title, description, short description, keywords, icon, category, subtitle, screenshot, promo text, and video. **Off-metadata** factors are external elements that developers cannot control, such as volume and speed of installs, reviews and ratings, and user engagement.

The ASO process involves three stages: (1) Keyword research, (2) Listing optimization and A/B testing, and (3) Result monitoring and modification for optimization. Selecting the right keywords is essential to optimize the listing and help users find the app more easily. Optimizing the product page and A/B testing means working on On-metadata and Off-metadata, which are two main factors that affect the ranking position. Finally, having a set of KPIs to monitor the result is necessary for further improvement. Details of each ranking factor will be discussed in chapter 4.5.

3 Research and planning

The preliminary phase before execution is research and planning. In this chapter, the author provides an understanding of Memoa's situation and its competition. The situation analysis consists of two parts. The first one is to analyze the current-state situation that focuses on the following aspects – customers, competencies, market trends, and partnership. The second one - competitor benchmarking - identifies competitors and compares their digital marketing activities. Additionally, this chapter also mentions the objectives that Memoa aims at and the strategies to achieve the goal.

3.1 Current-state situation

The flashcard app Memoa has not been launched yet, so there is no previously recorded performance result of the app. Hence, performance analysis will not be included when analyzing the current-state situation. An interview was carried out between the author and the app owners to understand the targeted customers and their competence. The commissioning team conducted a market survey from 2020 to 2020. This paper uses the survey's results to identify the targeted audience for the digital marketing plan. Besides, the author relied on desk research to gain information about the market trends and possible partnerships.

As mentioned in chapter 2.2.1, the **Customer analysis** answers the big questions "Who, Why, and How." The information was collected during the interview with the app owners. Table 4 below demonstrates the "Who, Why, and How" of Memoa's potential customers.

Table 4. Customer analysis

Who	Gender	Female and male
	Age	From 18 to 27 years old
	Mobile phone	Android
	Nationality	Vietnam
	Daily time spent on educational apps	Less than 30 minutes
Why	Purpose	Memorizing vocabulary Studying school subjects
How	Self-made vs. ready-made	More people prefer using ready-made flashcards to making flashcards themselves

When it comes to **Competence analysis**, the Digital marketing capability analysis (Chaffey 2019) shows that Memoa's marketing is at stage one (Initial). The app owners

have not prepared for marketing activities yet because they prefer to finish the product be-fore the soft launch. Besides, the Memoa team is not supported by external financial re-sources, so the marketing budget is relatively tight. The app owners' professional back-grounds are not marketing-related, which leads to the necessity of having a clear guide-line for them to follow.

On the other hand, the Memoa team has considerable expertise in technology and design. These competencies are essential for building a website, optimizing codes (for SEO), and establishing the brand image. Once they understand the basics of marketing, it will be easier to execute and maintain marketing activities.

The **Market trends** of education have witnessed a significant change due to the impact of COVID-19. The number of educational app downloads has increased 30% since the be-ginning of the pandemic. According to the statistics, there was a constant growth in 2017 and 2018 (17% and 18%). However, the difference between the first quarter of 2019 and 2020 is much more noticeable. (Storyly 2021.) Therefore, there is an opportunity for an educational app to create values for learners.

Unicef (2020) finds that 93% of 129 UNICEF program countries integrate remote learning to respond to the COVID-19. The most common methods include TV programs and gov-ernment-supported online platforms. Besides, advanced technology also encourages apps to evolve and prove to be more helpful.

However, the competition in the educational app market is extremely high. Well-known apps have more competitive advantages and financial resources to compete with smaller apps. New technologies are integrated with educational apps, which leads to the need for regular updates and innovative techniques. It is challenging for Memoa to survive in the market without a clear strategy. Besides, users have more power to influence the apps with ratings and reviews. Hence, it is imperative to provide users with outstanding values.

The SWOT model below summarizes the internal and external factors that can affect Memoa's marketing strategy.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Capability of technology - Solid expertise in design - High level of flexibility	- Lack of marketing experience - Little budget for marketing - No previous marketing activities – completely new
Opportunities	Threats
- Educational app downloads have increased - Governments support home-based learning - Technology resources	- High competition - High power of users - Demand for more innovative technologies

Figure 8. SWOT model summarizing Competency analysis and Market trends

3.2 Competitor benchmarking

Competitor benchmarking is the process of examining and comparing an organization's metrics against its competitors'. This practice helps the business gain digital marketing insights from competitors to strengthen its marketing strategies and tactics. (Semrush 2020.) The competitor benchmarking will provide Memoa with a helicopter view of what other businesses are doing well and what to avoid. It is essential to understand the competition before entering the market.

In this chapter, the author investigated the digital marketing aspects of competitor companies. One of the analysis focuses is social media channels, which includes Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Although not all businesses are active on TikTok, it is worth delving into this platform to explore relevant trends and potential competitors. Besides, the author also examined the companies' websites and their SEO elements. The tools and methods used in the analysis are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Tools and methods used in competitor benchmarking

Channel	Tool or method
Facebook	Fanpage Karma
Youtube	vidIQ Vision for YouTube
TikTok	Manually
Website	SEMrush

Memoa's competitors are identified based on their core businesses, which are self-made flashcard apps. As mentioned earlier, the project focuses on Android devices, so the competitor apps should be released on Google Play Store. Most of the flashcard apps target the international market, but they can be used as references to target the Vietnamese market with some modifications.

3.2.1   Quizlet

Quizlet is one of the most popular flashcard websites. The company also develops the Quizlet app on Android and iOS platforms. This application allows learners to create flashcards and study numerous topics with gamification features (Quizlet 2021). Learners can share their flashcard decks, making the Quizlet's database more diverse than any other flashcard platform.

Quizlet's **website** (quizlet.com) is well-built with high security (the locker icon) and a consistent design. The website scores 74 points out of 100 points for authority, which is relatively high. The authority score may vary according to the tool being used. Other analytic websites, such as ahrefs.com or moz.com, may provide different results. In chapter 2.5, the author discussed the relationship between backlinks and ranking position. Quizlet gains a tremendous number of backlinks (27.3 million) from other high-quality domains, making it a relevant and trustful source on search result pages. Therefore, the website is more likely to rank high and generate more organic traffic. Quizlet's SEO is effective as their paid search traffic count for a fraction compared to the traffic attained by the organic search.

Quizlet's activities on **Facebook** from February 17, 2021 to March 16, 2021 were analyzed by using Fanpage Karma, a social media analytics tool. Quizlet has over 101.000 followers on Facebook, but the social engagement is not performing with flying colors. During the last 28 days, only 0.6 posts were uploaded per day on average. Irregular posts may lead to the decline in Quizlet's exposure to its followers because Facebook always

prioritizes highly engaging content. In this period, the follower growth witnessed an increase of 609 followers (0.61%). However, the interaction rate is considerably low – 0.0087%.

Quizlet has gained over 11,000 subscribers on **YouTube** since it joined the platform in 2014. The company has a total of 127 videos and nearly 1.8 million video views on the channel. In the last 30 days (from February 16, 2021 to March 18, 2021), Quizlet has uploaded six videos, attracted 200 more subscribers and over 43,500 views. According to vidIQ Vision for YouTube, the popular keywords this channel uses are education-related terms. Most of the keywords are short-tail keywords, such as "quizlet," "flashcards," "studying," "memorize," "remote learning," "quizlet tutorials." The long-tail keywords imply more search intent, but they are still on a general level, such as "how to study," "college tips for students," "remote teaching tips," and "how to use quizlet live."

Quizlet possesses three official **TikTok** accounts – quizlet_scholar, quizlet_iq, and quizlet_languages. In this case, the author chose the account with the most followers, which is quizlet_scholar. Quizlet has been on TikTok since 2020 and gained 704 followers. The company also partnered with TikTok to provide a better learning experience by enabling users to add Quizlet links to TikTok videos. (TikTok 2021.) However, Quizlet does not frequently upload new content on this platform, as the last video was found posted on October 14, 2020. Quizlet could have benefited more from TikTok by taking advantage of user-generated content. The hashtag #quizlet results in over 29 million views and countless reactions. (Appendix 1).

3.2.2 Lexilize Flashcards

Lexilize Flashcards was released in 2016 and gained over 500,000 downloads on Google Play Store. The app focuses on learning information based on spaced repetition techniques. Lexilize distinguishes itself from other flashcard apps by providing users with customizable functions at a low-to-no cost. Besides, learners can import flashcards from Excel files and use the app without the internet.

At first glance, Lexlize's **website** (lexilize.com) is not secure (without the locker icon). The design is simple and easy to read, yet there is not much content on this site. Lexilize's overall authority score is 22, which is relatively low. The website has nearly 450 backlinks, most of which are from websites with low-to-medium domain authority. As a result, lexilize.com is not likely to rank high on SERPs due to the low backlink volume and lack of high-quality content. Indeed, the primary purpose of Lexilize's website is to provide its

customers with essential information and tutorials that are not available on Google Play Store. (Appendix 2.)

Lexilize has 206 followers on their **Facebook**, which is surprisingly low regarding that it joined this platform in 2017. The analysis was carried out by Fanpage Karma from February 17, 2021 to March 16, 2021. During this period, Lexilize's online presence on Facebook was minimal, with only one post created. The post gained six likes, which counts for 3.3% in terms of post-interaction. Most of the content on the fanpage is photos with some texts. Lexilize seems to use Facebook only to announce updates, so its frequency of Facebook activity is relatively low – around one post per month.

YouTube is another channel that Lexilize has been working on. However, Lexilize does not actively upload new content on YouTube despite its online presence since 2017. In the last four years, Lexilize has gained 110 subscribers and over 16.000 views. Between February 16, 2021 and March 18, 2021, the channel did not publish any new videos. Therefore, the total number of views and subscribers has decreased by 25% and 65%. Besides, most of the videos are in Russian, which targets Russian-speaking customers rather than international ones. Having that said, Lexilize can improve user experience by adding English subtitles to the tutorial videos.

Lexilize does not miss the newly emerging social network **TikTok.** Like the other two channels, its TikTok account does not have a specific strategy. Lexilize has only one video published on February 11, 2021, and no followers on this platform. Most of the hashtags used on TikTok are in Russian except for the hashtags #lexilize and #lexilizeflashcards. By searching the two hashtags, the author found that Lexilize has not been mentioned by any users. (Appendix 2)

3.3   Objectives

Memoa's team wants to provide users with the most valuable information rather than merely posting promotion announcements and ads. Due to the tight budget, they prefer to keep the soft launch small to gather feedback. Therefore, it is not necessary to use Facebook Ads or Google AdWords at this point. This marketing plan aims to attract potential users to visit Memoa's website and accept to be beta testers (who test the app when it is launched). According to the RACE model mentioned in chapter 2.1.2, three main objectives that Memoa focuses on are (1) Reach potential users and gain organic traffic; (2) Increase visitor's time on site; and (3) Increase followers and subscribers on social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok)

The project should start two to three months before the soft launch to raise awareness and build trust with potential users. As the number of education app users has been growing, this goal is reasonable. Hence, Memoa needs to promote its online presence on search engines and different social platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. The more valuable content Memoa offers the potential customers, the higher chance they will agree to try the app when it is released.

3.4 Strategy

The target customers are specified in table 4. Customer analysis. Memoa's ideal customers are Vietnamese males and females from 18 to 27 years old. As the Memoa team is developing the app on Android, mobile devices using this operating system will be considered. Based on the gathered information, two market segments are defined as follows:

– Students aged 18-24. These customers use flashcard apps mainly for studying school subjects and memorizing vocabulary for exams. People in this group belong to Gen Z. They tend to love free apps and constantly search for new apps with new features. Moreover, Vietnamese Gen Z is highly active on social media and reliant on mobile phones (Vietcetera 2017), so sharing and connecting are their daily habits.

– Working people, aged 23-27. People in this group use flashcard apps for memorizing vocabulary, teaching, and personal interests. They do not have much time to spend on educational apps every day, so they are more willing to pay for features that help them save time. Some people in this age range may consider pursuing higher education, so they have to balance their daytime job and prepare for exams (SAT, GMAT, for instance).

Memoa differentiates itself from other flashcard apps by providing customers with quality content to improve their learning experience. For those who are looking for an effective tool and a trustworthy source of study-related information, Memoa wants to fulfill their needs and inspire them to keep learning and stay motivated on that journey.

According to the TOPPP SEED model mentioned in chapter 2.1.3 Strategy, there are nine strategic components that contribute to digital marketing strategies. As Memoa's objective is to raise awareness of the app release, it is essential to build trust with potential users. Therefore, Memoa focuses on **Customer Experience** and **Engagement**. Customer experience will be supported by free digital content on the website and social media platforms. Different types of content on various channels also help to encourage engagement via discussions and comments.

4 Execution

This chapter covers the implementation of keyword planning, content marketing, social media marketing, Search Engine Optimization, and App Store Optimization. Besides, tools and websites supporting the execution of those digital marketing aspects will be discussed.

4.1 Keyword planning

As mentioned in chapter 2.2, keyword research and planning need to be well-prepared to reach the right audience. In this chapter, the author goes through the process of planning keywords for Memoa. Two tools used to identify keywords are the Google search bar and Google Keyword Planner. Other recommended tools for keyword suggestions are Ahrefs (ahrefs.com), Moz (moz.com), SimilarWeb (similarweb.com), and AnswerThePublic (answerthepublic.com).

Google search bar is an effective tool to explore keyword ideas. Google will show relevant suggestions when users type a keyword or a phrase in the search bar, as illustrated in Figure 9. However, it is critical to note that the "autosuggest" queries and search results vary depending on the region. Therefore, changing the region and language setting before performing the search will result in more correct keyword suggestions. The setting can be found at the bottom of Google's default page.
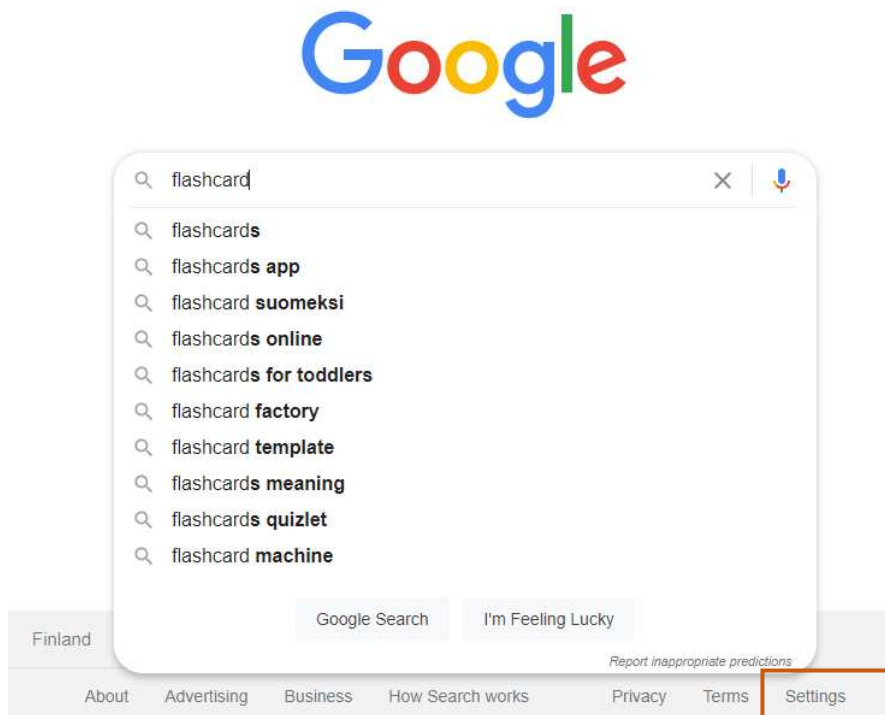
Figure 9. Use Google search bar as a tool to explore keywords

Google Keyword Planner (formerly known as Google Keyword Tool) is a free tool to do keyword research for any advertising search campaign. The tool allows users to discover the keywords related to their businesses and the average cost of each keyword. At the moment, Keyword Planner is integrated with Google Ads, but it is not compulsory to run an active campaign to use this feature. Setting up a Google Ad account and choosing the "expert mode" is all it takes to start using Keyword Planner.

Despite being a powerful tool to identify new keyword ideas, the main drawback that hinders marketers from using Keyword planner is the lack of exact search volumes. Instead of showing a specific number, Google decides that it only provides users with a "range estimation," such as 10-100 or 10k-100k. However, it is still a good start for businesses with no previous keyword planning. The procedure of doing research using the Keyword Planner tool is as follows:

Step 1: Set up a Google AdWords account

- Go to ads.google.com. Click "Start now." Sign in with your Google account.
- Ignore the advertising goal. Choose "Switch to Expert Mode." You cannot access Keyword Planner with "Smart mode."
- The author recommends skipping the campaign page by selecting "Create an account without a campaign." Try refreshing the page if you do not find that button. You will be directed to the main dashboard of Google Adwords.
- Choose "Tools & setting" at the top menu bar, select "Keyword Planner."

Step 2: Customize the location, language

- The author recommends choosing "Discover new keywords" to gain an overview of the keywords related to the business.
- Choose your target audience's location and language. You can change the setting later during the keyword research.

Step 3: Discover new keywords

- Start with keywords that are related to your business. The keywords should not be too specific or too general. For instance, "flashcard app" will return more accurate results than "app" in Memoa's case.
- You will find the average monthly searches and competition rating of the keywords you provided. Google Keyword Planner also suggests related keywords with detailed information of advertising cost.
- The new feature "Refine keywords" helps you focus on specific keywords by filtering keywords in terms of brand, non-brand, and other criteria.
- The filter is a powerful feature as you can configure the result page according to your preferences, such as low competition or keywords containing specific text.

Figure 10. A screenshot of Google Keyword Planner

4.2 Content marketing

In this chapter, the author focuses on creating content on a website. Content marketing shares some common characteristics with social media marketing - they both deliver quality content to the targeted audience. However, the center of gravity for content marketing is the brand's website rather than its presence on social networks. (Marketing Solved 2017.) Therefore, sharing blogs to Facebook or Twitter does not necessarily make it social media marketing as those platforms are acting as the distributors of links back to the brand's website.

The content should serve a specific customer's buying stage – Awareness, Consideration, and Decision. The content marketing matrix mentioned in chapter 2.3 is also a good source of content ideas in response to the buyer's journey. The author chooses blog as the start for content creation on Memoa's website due to the following reasons:

- Blogs increase a brand's visibility. By using the right keywords and SEO techniques, businesses can reach the targeted audience via search engines and drive more traffic to their website without massive spending on ads.
- Blogs help build trust with potential customers by providing them with helpful information and clearing their confusion. The more value prospects get, the higher chance they turn into customers.

Content ideas come from the keyword research mentioned in chapter 4.1. During the planning process, marketers will explore the trending topics that can be included in the blog posts. Once you have produced a good number of posts, analytics tools will tell what type of content is loved the most by the targeted audience. Busche (2017, 161) suggests

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combining topics and structure formulas to develop more content ideas. Topics are the content aspects that capture and generate the prospects'/customers' attention. In Memoa case, they can be flashcards, study methods, or music for study. Structural formulas are methods of conveying the content to the audience, for example, listicles, complete guides, or challenges. Table 6 illustrates how to incorporate topics and structural formulas.

Table 6. Examples of getting content ideas by combining topics and structural formulas

	Flashcard	Study method	Music for study
Listicles	Ten flashcard apps that make your student life easier	Study less, learn more: 5 proven study methods	20 websites with the best music for study
Complete guide	The complete guide to making flashcards	Remember forever: The complete guide to the Leitner system	The complete guide to choosing study music that works for you
30-day challenge	Learning ten flashcards a day: The 30-day challenge	Make studying an enjoyable journey: The 30-day challenge	A playlist for your study every day: The 30 day-challenge

Headlines are the primary element that hooks the audience and invites them to read more. Busche (2017, 129) proposes four desires that encourage people to be highly engaged in the content:

- To express their current activities – learning, improving, or quitting. For instance, a blog shares SEO hacks with the headline "6 SEO hacks that immediately improve your ranking."
- To prove that they are up to date. The headlines aim to create hype, such as "Forget Keto diet, this new diet is 40% more effective."
- To speak their beliefs, values, inspirations, and opinions on controversial topics. The headlines tend to stimulate emotions, for instance, "The truth: women are better at coding than men."
- To show that they are competent and knowledgeable. A sample headline can be "Five signals of a successful person you need to know."

A headline should include the focus keyword as it helps readers recognize the content. MonsterInsight (2021) suggests using power words to make the headline more compelling. Power words can stimulate a psychological or emotional response, such as "giveaway," "the best," or "discount." Besides, it is recommended to keep the title within sixty characters to fir the result page. MonsterInsights also provides a free headline analyzer with an extensive explanation and suggestion to improve the headline (figure 11).
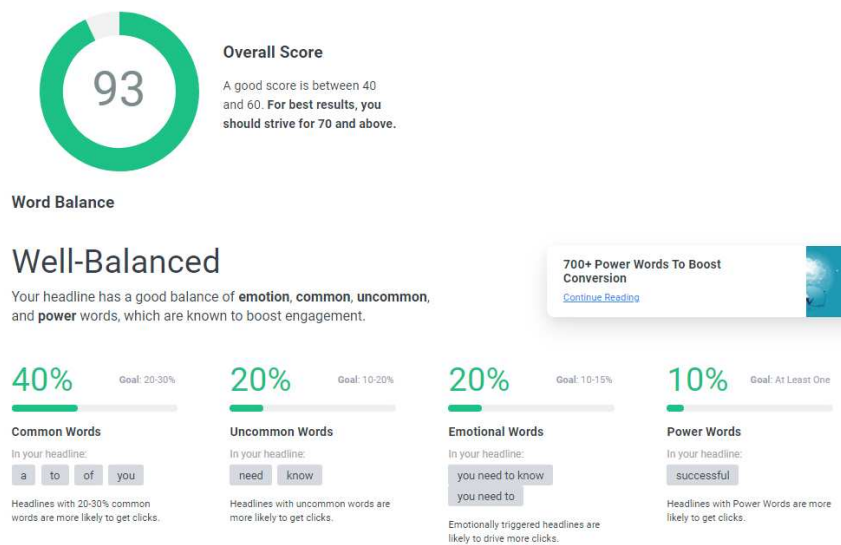
Figure 11. MonsterInsight's headline analyzer

Text structure plays a crucial role in improving readability and enhancing SEO as readers tend to stay longer on easy-to-read posts. Similar topics should be bundled together and ordered in a logical way. According to Yoast (2020), four order types are Thematic – ordered on topic, Chronological – old to new, Didactic – easy to hard, and Problem-solution. Headings can reveal the structure of the texts as they cover the content of the paragraphs below. It is still open to question whether headings affect SEO, but good headings will improve the reader's experience on the post. Besides, it is vital to consider the coherence and structure of the text when creating paragraphs. Keeping short paragraphs (less than six or seven sentences) facilitates the reading as it is more difficult to read from a screen. Yoast is an effective tool to keep track of the post readability if the website is built on WordPress (Figure 12).
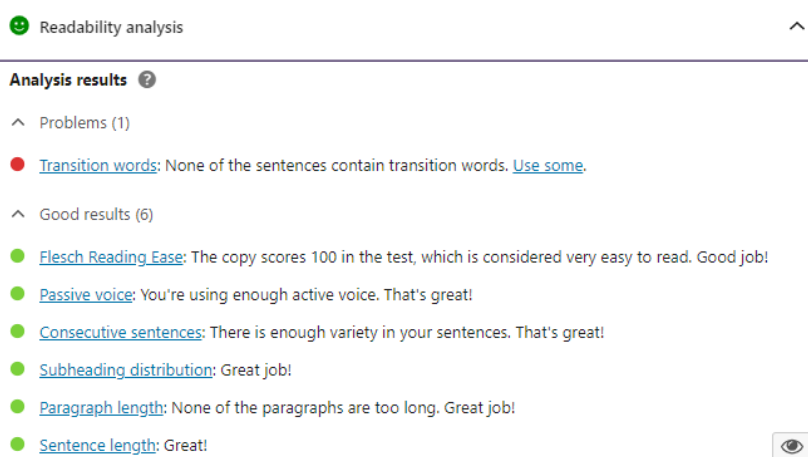
Figure 12. A screenshot of Yoast's readability analysis

SEO for a blog is too important to ignore. Keyword research can reveal search intent, making the content more accessible to the audience. According to Champion (2018), the keywords should be placed across the blog – in the page title, URL, post title, image alt-text, headings, and body text. However, it is not recommended to "spam" the keywords in the hope that search engines will rank the post higher. The disruption of the text flow may prevent the readers from enjoying the post, leading to a higher bounce rate. Instead, you can use synonyms or variations of the keywords as search engines are smart enough to understand the content. Figure 13 recaps the essential placements of keywords.

Internal and external links help the post get discovered by search engines. As mentioned in chapter 2.5, a post can be found and indexed faster thanks to relevant links from indexed posts. Additionally, links within a website encourage viewers to stay longer and improve the audience's engagement. Links to outside web pages add more value to your content by offering the viewers quality sources. Hence, external links help to enhance the credibility of your websites. Yoast SEO for WordPress is a great tool to ensure a blog post meets SEO criteria.

Figure 13. Keyword placements in a blog post (Champion 2018)

4.3 Social media marketing

Social media platforms make it easier for branded content to reach a wide range of audiences. As mentioned in chapter 2.4, three social networks used in this project are Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Due to the limited human resource spent on marketing, it is crucial to establish a sequence that facilitates the content creation process. Busche (2017) suggests mapping the content channels with blogs as the root. Other channels work as extended legs – they provide different types of information to encourage more engagement and enhance user's experience.

Therefore, the author chooses blog (mentioned in chapter 4.2 Content marketing) as the central content hub as it presents selected content for the target group. The content will be produced in different formats to serve each social channel, for instance, a short post on Facebook or a 30-second video on TikTok. There is no use in sharing the same content across all channels since people are no longer motivated to learn what they already know.

Five steps to planning content on social media are:

1. Decide the social channels where your content will reach your audience.
2. Understand the best types of content that work well on each social platform.
3. Think about some possible pieces of content on your website. For instance, "Remember forever: The complete guide to the Leitner system."
4. Think about the reason why users want to learn more (go to the blog). In other words, answer the question "Why users want to go there."
5. Decide the types of content that respond to the user's question in step 4.

Figure 14 illustrates how content can be produced on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok with the blog as the major source.
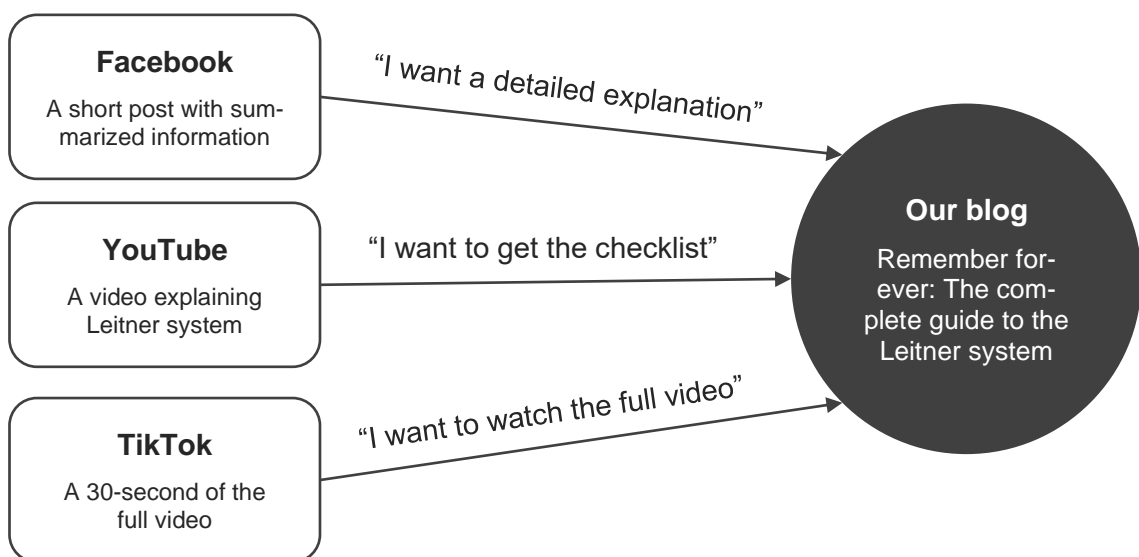
Figure 14. An example of content strategy on social media platforms

4.3.1 Facebook

A Facebook Page for Business can be created free of charge. The analytics tool is also automatically integrated into the system, allowing you to track your marketing activities. Three factors to consider before setting up a Facebook page are (1) the business information (name, category), (2) a profile photo and cover photo, and (3) the call to action. A brief description in the About section helps people understand your business and what

they should expect from your products or services. Below is an example of Memoa's description on the Facebook page. As the target customers are Vietnamese speakers, the official description will be translated into Vietnamese.
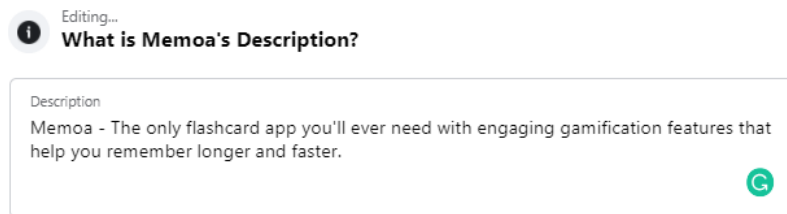
Figure 15. An example of a Facebook page's description
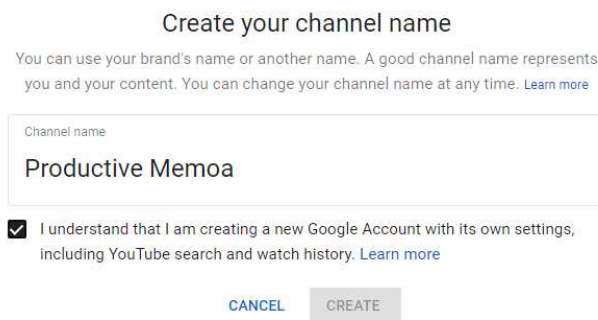
It is recommended that you create a Facebook profile picture at the highest resolution, 2048x2048 pixels, for the photo's best quality. Facebook will automatically resize the image to 170x170 pixels on desktop screens and 128x128 pixels on mobile devices. Besides, you need to ensure that the focal point does not fall in the cropped area as the image will be cropped to a circular shape. The cover photo can be uploaded at the maximum size of 1958x745 pixels. However, the image will be displayed with different ratios on different devices – 2.6:1 on desktop and 1.78:1 on smartphones. Therefore, it is crucial to place text and important content in the center to have them featured on all devices. (Facebook 2021.)

Facebook offers various content formats on this platform. According to Hootsuite (2020), seven types of Facebook posts are (1) text (2) photo, (3) video, (4) live video, (5) linked content, (6) stories, and (7) watch party. It is possible to include different formats in a post, for instance, text with a photo and a video, text with linked content, or stories with linked content. The use of these pieces of content is versatile depending on the core content on the website.

Promoting the business' products is not the ultimate goal of Facebook marketing. Constantly bragging about products' benefits and advantages may scare the prospects away since you appear to be too pushy. In that case, the "80-20 rule" is beneficial for marketers to determine the balance between promotion and regular content. Most of your posts (80%) should provide the audience with valuable information to build trust and relationships, which usually takes time. Once your audience is ready to learn more about the business, the other 20% of promotional posts will help convert leads.

4.3.2 YouTube

Setting up a YouTube channel takes a few more steps than establishing a Facebook business page. It is recommended to create a Google account instead of signing in to YouTube with the company's email, thereby making it easier to share the account with other team members. Once you have logged in to YouTube, click on your account module > Create a channel > Use the default name or choose a custom name. It is possible to change the name later, so the business can update it if needed. The author suggests using "Productive Memoa" to help the brand appear to be more human-like.

Figure 16. An example of Memoa's channel name

The recommended size for profile pictures is 800x800 pixels. Like Facebook, YouTube crops the photo to a circle, so it is worth ensuring that important content is not cut out. A banner image is optional, but it plays a vital role in promoting the brand by displaying links that direct users to other brand's channels. The banner photo should follow the ratio of 16:9 and the minimum dimension of 2048x1152 pixels. Text, logo, or other pieces of content should be placed within the area of 1235x338 pixels to avoid being cut on specific devices. (YouTube Help 2021.)

Channel description in the "About" section helps the audience understand what content they should expect from the channel. The author suggests incorporating keywords related to the business in the introduction to boost YouTube SEO. Although the description might look unnoticeable, it is actually featured on YouTube and Google search result pages. Besides, the description acts as a short pitch to capture visitor's attention, so it is worth updating it when there are any changes. A good tip from Wave.video (2021) is to focus on the first 125 characters as they will be displayed on the search result pages. It makes sense to place the most important information first to hook the readers before they drop out of the page.
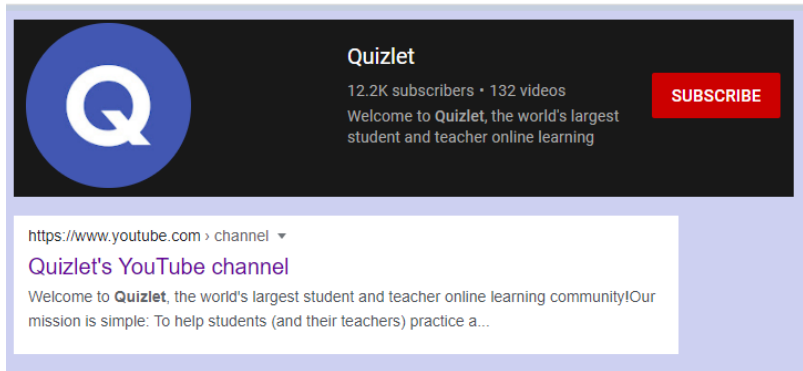
Figure 17. An example of YouTube channel description featured on YouTube and Google result pages

Video editing is another crucial element to gain the audience's interest. It is possible to do the editing on a PC or even on a mobile device with free or paid software. Adobe Premiere Pro and Apple Final Cut Pro X are the most popular video editors on the market at an affordable price. The author suggests VSDC as the free option for Windows users and Apple's iMovie for Mac owners. Although they are not the best for particularly long projects, these editors are budget-friendly for starters.

4.3.3   TikTok

TikTok has two types of accounts – Personal TikTok and TikTok Pro. The latter option provides users with detailed analytics of the videos, which is helpful to monitor marketing activities on this channel. The easiest way to set up a TikTok account for business is to create a personal account and switch to the Pro mode later. Users can either select "Creator" or "Business" to complete the setup. Although it is possible to manage an account on TikTok's website, the platform offers more control on mobile devices. Table 7 below compares the two Pro accounts.

Table 7. Comparison between two Pro accounts, "Creator" and "Business"

Creator account	Business account
- Free to create - Provide analytics metrics and audience insights - Can be switched between two accounts at anytime	
- Best for public figures, content producers, artists, and influencers - An upgrade of the previous Pro account - A custom link can be added to the profile when the account reaches 1000 followers - Can apply for the Creator Fund when the account meets specific requirements	- Best for retailers, brands, organizations, and service providers - The sound is limited due to commercial license - A custom link can be added to the profile right away

The author suggests choosing a "Business" account for a new TikTok channel as it can drive traffic to the brand's website via a link. Besides, it is possible to switch back to the "Creator" mode if there are any changes in sound strategy. You can add a good image or video for the profile picture by going to Me > Edit profile > Change photo or change video. The recommended dimension for a TikTok profile photo is 20x20 pixels. Below is an example of Memoa's TikTok channel.
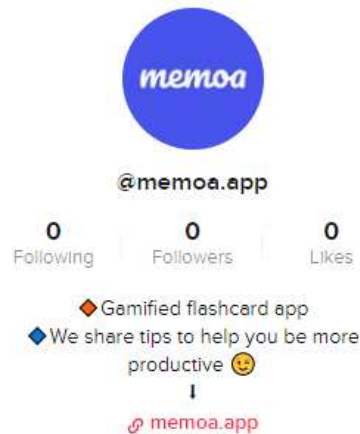

Figure 18. An example of Memoa's TikTok account

The bio should be a clear statement to describe your channel, thereby emphasizing the type of videos the audience should expect. You may want to consider using emojis to express the brand's personality. An emoji can also work as a call to action without extra words, for instance, an arrow pointing at "Learn more." TikTok only allows 80 characters for the bio, so the introduction must be well planned. (Hubspot 2020.) Memoa uses a Business account as a link to the website will be featured on the bio to attract visitors.

4.4 Search engine optimization (SEO)

In this chapter, the author suggests a few popular methods to test and optimize the crawlability, mobile friendliness, page speed, and backlinks. These topics were first introduced in chapter 2.5 Search engine optimization (SEO). Search intent is covered in chapter 4.1 Keyword planning, and Content quality is mentioned in chapter 4.2 Content marketing. It is crucial to note that these SEO practices are implemented on WordPress.

Crawlability can be optimized using XML sitemaps, internal linking, and robots.txt (Neil Patel 2021). Three approaches are presented as follows:

(1) Submit XML sitemaps to Google Search Console. XML sitemaps contain crucial URLs on a website that help search engines find and crawl them more easily. Yoast SEO is a handy tool to generate XML sitemaps for WordPress websites. When the plugin has been installed, go to SEO > General > tab "Feature" > Enable XML sitemaps. Once the sitemaps are generated, submit the links to Google Search Console by going to "Sitemaps" > Paste the sitemaps link (for instance, https://memoa.app/sitemap_index.xml) to the field "Add a new sitemap."
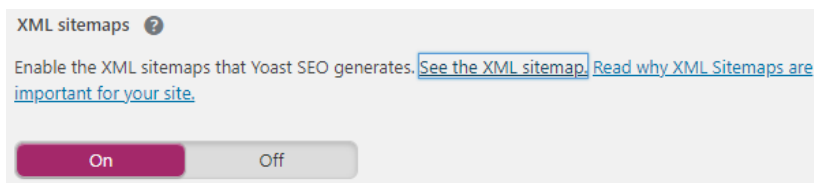
Figure 19. Generating XML sitemaps with Yoast SEO

(2) Utilize internal linking. As mentioned earlier, links within a website act as a map for bots to follow and travel from page to page. According to Yoast (2020), it is crucial to design a well-structured website as it will reflect the relationships among web pages. Hierarchical pages should be linked together – from parent pages to their child pages and vice versa. Also, links between relevant topics need to be included in the blogs to help search engines understand the site's structure better.

(3) Create a robots.txt file. A robots.txt file allows search engines to know which web pages the crawler can access and which ones they cannot. WordPress generates a robots.txt file by default, as demonstrated below. The robots.txt file can be found by adding /robots.txt to the end of the URL (for example, https://memoa.app/robots.txt).

```
User-agent: *
Disallow: /wp-admin/
Allow: /wp-admin/admin-ajax.php
```

The "User-agent" indicates the robots, such as Googlebot or Bingbot. The "Disallow" informs bots what page they cannot visit (for example, the Thank-you page, Confirmation page). Likewise, the "Allow" can be used to override the "Disallow," enabling a specific part of the disallowed directory to be crawled (Google Search Central 2021). You can modify a robots.txt file on WordPress with Yoast SEO by clicking on SEO > Tool > File editor (Figure 20).
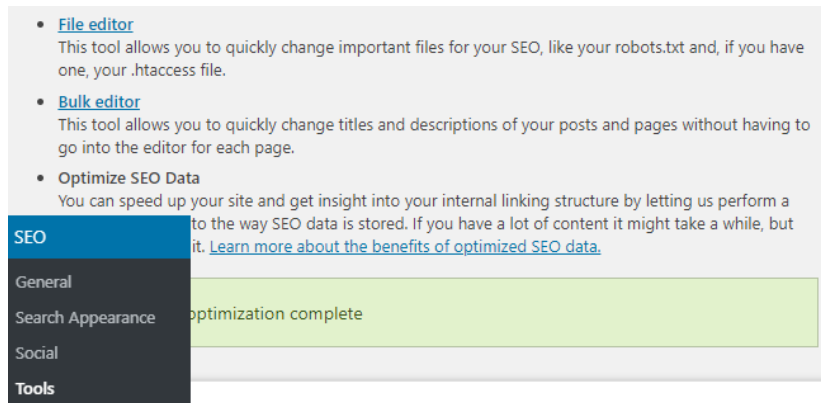
Figure 20. Creating a robots.txt file with Yoast SEO

The **Mobile-friendliness** of a web page can be examined using Mobile-Friendly Test. This site provides a quick and straightforward tool to know whether the website is responsive on mobile devices or not (figure 21). Fortunately, WordPress theme plugins usually include mobile-friendly features in their products, which makes the optimization process more manageable.
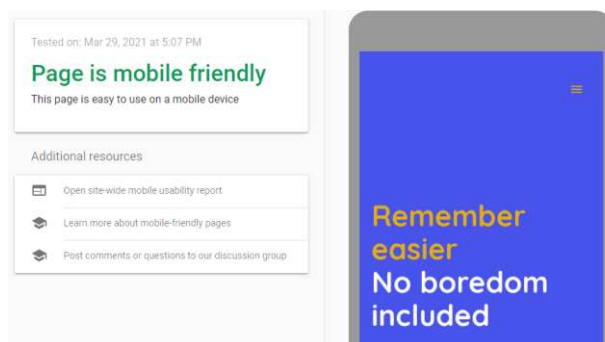

Figure 21. A screenshot of Mobile-Friendly Test (29 March 2021)

Pagespeed is another critical factor when it comes to SEO. The author used the Pingdom Website speed test to analyze the website's speed. Another tool that offers a similar service is PageSpeed Insights. According to WPBeginner (2021), a poorly-configured web hosting, large-sized images, and bad plugins are attributed to a slow WordPress website. Therefore, choosing a hosting provider with a reputation (such as Bluehost or Siteground) is essential for website performance.

Another way to optimize the speed is to compress images using image editing programs (such as Photoshop, Lightroom) before uploading them to WordPress. Alternatively, installing image compression plugins, such as ShortPixel Image Optimizer and WP Smush, will automatically reduce images' size. These plugins can be upgraded to unlock their full potential, but they also offer free plans for beginners.

Caching can help speed up the website by storing data in temporary storage. Without caching, the computer will spend more time sending requests to the server every time a piece of information is needed. Hence, caching boosts the website's loading speed and improves customer's experience. WP Rocket, W3 Total Cache, and WP Super Cache are the most recommended caching plugins for WordPress websites.
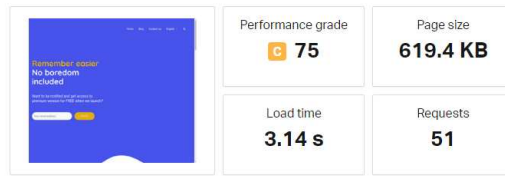
Figure 22. A screenshot of Pingdom Website speed test (29 March 2021)

Backlinks are essential to improve the website's ranking position on SERPs. Creating high-quality content is the first and foremost requirement to get the posts mentioned on other websites. SEMrush (2020) suggests looking at websites that link to your competitors and developing a content strategy that will capture their interests. The author used SEMrush Backlink Analytics to explore pages pointing to Quizlet's website (Figure 23). Besides, you can identify broken links that have similar content as yours and present your article as an alternative source. A free and easy-to-use broken link checker provided by Ahrefs can help you do the trick.

Figure 23. Analyzing backlinks to Quizlet's website using SEMrush analytics tool (April 1, 2021)

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4.5   App store optimization (ASO)

The flashcard app Memoa is designed for Android devices, so this chapter will focus on ASO on Google Play Store. Although ASO consists of two main parts (On-metadata and Off-metadata as mentioned in chapter 2.6), only On-metadata elements will be discussed below. Off-metadata involves uncontrollable factors, such as reviews and ratings, which can be considered once the app has been launched. Eight On-metadata factors for Google Play Store optimization are:

(1) A compelling **title** helps capture the audience's attention. Google Play Store allows a maximum of 50 characters in the title, so it is crucial to optimize the space with important keywords. "Brand name + Keywords" is a widely used "formula" that many educational apps (as presented below) adopt to improve their visibility on Google Play Store's search results. Three keywords the author chose are Memoa, flashcards, and games. Besides, language learning will be included to reach the target audience defined in the customer analysis (chapter 3.1).

Figure 24. Examples of flashcard apps with a similar title structure

(2) An **icon** does not affect the search results, but it plays a vital role in the click-through rate. People are more impressed with visual elements than plain text, so an icon helps to invite users to learn more about the app. Google published in-depth icon design specifications for Google Play Store. (Developers 2021.) Six critical attributes to a qualified icon artwork are presented as follows:

1.   Artwork dimension: 512x512 pixels
2.   Format: 32-bit PNG with a transparent background.
3.   Color space: sRGB
4.   Maximum file size: 1024KB
5.   Shape: Full square. The rounded mask will be applied by Google Play.
6.   Shadow: None. Google Play will include shadow once the artwork is uploaded.

(3) The **URL/package** can be optimized to improve app discovery and search ranking on Google Play Store by including one or two keywords in the link. An app's URL (Quizlet in this case) is displayed as follows:

```
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.quizlet.quizletandroid
```

The application ID is placed in the URL after the part "?id=". The unique ID is created for every Android app to identify the app in Google Play Store. Once the URL is published, you should not modify the ID under any circumstances as Google Play Store will regard the app with the new changes as a different app. (Developers 2021.)

(4) A **short description** can be found in the "About this app" section on Google Play Store. Not only does it influence search results but also the conversion rate. The field is limited to a maximum of 80 characters, which is a bit tricky to include keywords while delivering a powerful message. The author suggests checking competitors' short descriptions to find unique takeaways that distinguish the brand from other similar apps. A short description for the Memoa app can be "Learn any language faster with flashcards, spaced repetition & games - for free!"
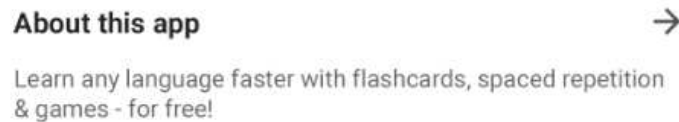

Figure 25. An example of the Memoa app's short description

(5) A **long description** needs to include as many keywords as possible to help bots discover and find the app. However, stuffing the same words may negatively impact the search ranking as Google treats the text as spam content. The author suggests adding synonyms in addition to the main keywords. A trustworthy website to find synonyms free of charge is Thesaurus (thesaurus.com).

Google Play Store allows up to 4.000 characters for the description field, which is beneficial to compose a powerful pitch that convinces users to download. The description should be broken into smaller paragraphs to facilitate readability on screens. Each paragraph should highlight a particular topic, such as the main features of the app. The author suggests diving into the target user's need to provide the corresponding solutions, thereby making the call-to-action more convincing.

(6) **Screenshots** are visual on-metadata factors that have a substantial impact on the user's decision. The Tool (2021) recommends featuring the app's best features on the first two screenshots to impress users. When designing screenshots, it is crucial to meet Google's four requirements as follows:

1. Format: JPEG or 24-but PNG with a transparent background
2. The minimum length of any side: 320 pixels
3. The maximum length of any side: 3840 pixels
4. The ratio of the minimum dimension and the maximum one is no more than 1:2.3. For instance, if a screenshot's width is 320 pixels (which is the required minimum size), the height cannot exceed 736 pixels to keep the ratio 1:2.3. (Play Console Help 2021.)

It is possible to use image-editing programs such as Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator for beautiful designs. Besides, the author suggests a website called Previewed (pre-viewed.app) to create screenshots for Google Play Store. Previewed offers one free export per week without a watermark, which makes a good deal for non-designers. Below is an example of Memoa's 2D snapshot using ready-made elements on Previewed.
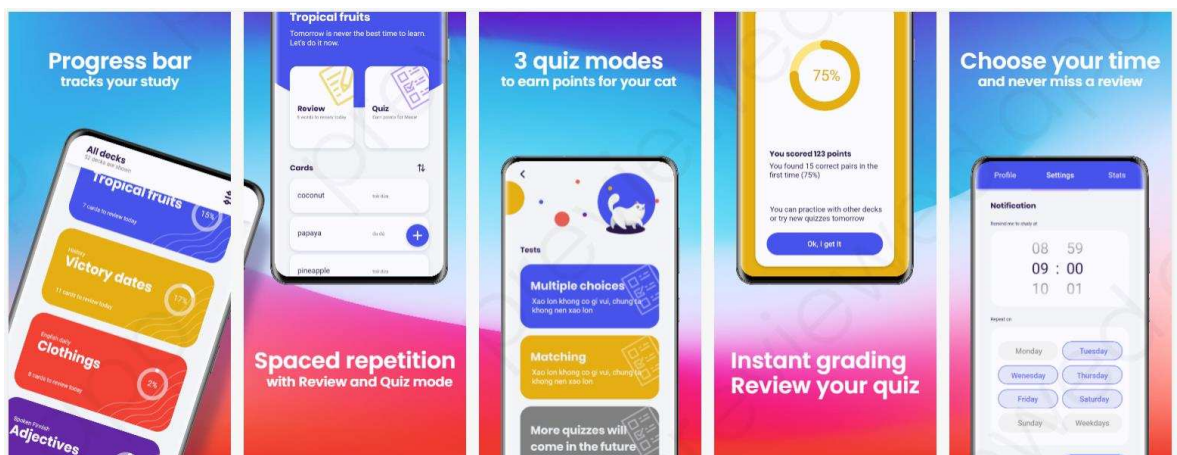

Figure 26. An example of Memoa app's screenshots on Google Play Store

(7) The **Developer name** should contain one or two keywords as it is an influential factor in Google Play Store's ranking position. There is a possibility that the Memoa team will release more educational apps in the future, so the author preferred to keep the developer's name simple – memoa.app.

(8) **Category** does not directly affect Google Play Store's search results, but it helps an app be discovered in the Explore section. Google uses the information to identify similar apps to feature Recommended apps. If the app belongs to various categories, you can work on some experiments to find the best one that works for the app's visibility.

Below is a demonstration of how the flashcard app Memoa will look when published on the Play Store. As the app has not been released yet, some minor modifications can be made to the ASO On-metadata elements such as the title, description, and screenshot.
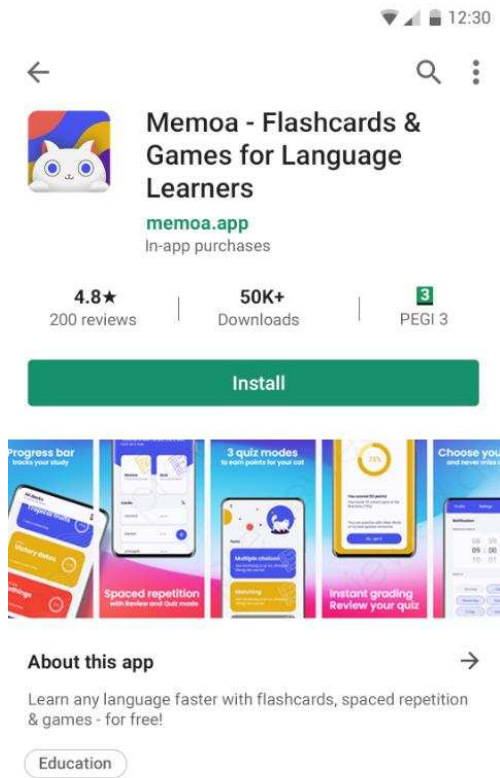
Figure 27. An example of Memoa app's ASO On-metadata factors on Google Play Store

The author used Adobe Photoshop to create a mock-up of the flashcard app Memoa on Google Play Store. The readers can find the PSD file attached in the Appendix. The mock-up may not be the latest update of the Play Store, yet it is still helpful to provide the app owners with a relatively realistic look of the app before publishing it.

5   Control

In this chapter, analytics tools and metrics will be discussed. Control is the last step in the SOSTAC framework that allows marketers to keep track of marketing performance. Monitoring results is essential to examine the success of the strategy and tactics established in the previous chapters. A well-constructed control system also helps determine the feasibility of the objectives defined, thereby making needed adjustments.

5.1   Content marketing

Google Analytics is a free tool for extracting blog insights. The tool allows marketers to understand the audience better with a detailed analysis of their behaviors on the website. Besides, Google helps businesses know which types of content perform well to create more blogs that the audience loves.

Connecting a Google Analytics account to a website requires some extra steps with Google Tag Manager and Google Search Console. However, you will get access to all features and information free of charge once the setup is complete. It is possible to integrate Google Analytics into a WordPress website using a plugin called Google Analytics for WordPress by MonsterInsights. The plugin offers a free version with basic information, such as page views, on-page duration, and bounce rate, as demonstrated in Figure 28 below.

Figure 28. The interface of the plugin Google Analytics for WordPress by MonsterInsights

Five analytics elements that need to be considered when monitoring a blog's performance are Search presence, Traffic performance, Authority, and Readership engagement (Hubspot 2020). Table 8. presents blog analytics metrics that contribute to the success of content marketing. These metrics can be set up and tracked by using Google Analytics.

Table 8. Essential metrics to monitor content performance (Hubspot 2020)

Search presence	Organic search impressions
	Organic clicks
	Organic click-through rate
Traffic performance	Total views
	Each post performance
	Traffic referral source
Authority	Inbound links (links from other websites)
Readership engagement	Time on page
	Bounce rate
	Shares and comments
Lead generation	Subscriber growth
	CTA click-through rate
	Goal conversion rate

5.2   Social media marketing

Facebook allows businesses to track their performance and advertising activities on Facebook via Facebook Page Insights, which is free to use. The tool provides marketers with the big picture of your Facebook Business Page, including Page Views, Likes, Comments, Post reach, Engagement, and Followers. However, Facebook Analytics will be removed after June 30, 2021, as it will be integrated into Facebook Business Suite. The new platform helps you manage Facebook and Instagram business accounts with more helpful tools and in-depth insights about the target audience. (Business Help Center 2021.)

YouTube Studio provides creators with an all-rounded analytics tool that allows marketers to measure every figure on the YouTube channel. While the basic mode gives you a bird's-eye view of the channel performance, the Advanced mode offers more detailed video analytics in terms of traffic source, viewer's demography, and geography. Besides, YouTube Studio allows businesses to compare period-over-period growth, videos with videos, and groups with groups.

TikTok also offers an analytics tool for Business accounts with two main focuses being on video and follower. Besides the total views, marketers can find detailed measurements of individual post statistics and trending videos in the Content Tab. TikTok analytics tool also reveals insights of the followers such as gender, country, active times, and the videos they watched. However, TikTok is still an emerging social platform that needs time to develop a

complete analytics system. Table 9 below demonstrates metrics used to measure brand awareness, engagement, and conversion on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok.

Table 9. Metrics used for monitoring performance on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok (Hootsuite 2020)

	Facebook	**YouTube**	**TikTok**
Awareness	Impressions Reach Follower growth	Impressions Views Subscriber growth	Video views Profile views Follower growth
Engagement	Likes Comment Share	Likes and dislikes Comment Share Audience retention	Likes Comment Share Average watch time
Conversion	Click-through rate	Referrals tracked by Google analytics	N/A

5.3   Search engine optimization (SEO)

Google Search Console (previously known as Google Webmaster Tools) is a powerful tool to check technical issues and the SEO performance of a website for free. As mentioned in chapter 4.4, submitting an XMP sitemap to Google Search Console helps bots discover and crawl the website more easily. In addition, the tool allows marketers to inspect errors and indexing issues by using the coverage report.

There are plenty of metrics to monitor SEO performance. It is crucial to select the most relevant metrics based on the pre-defined objectives. In Memoa's case, the goal is to increase organic traffic to raise brand awareness. To achieve this goal, the author chose three indicators to evaluate the success of SEO as follows:

1. Organic traffic: It measures the number of clicks to the link on an organic search result page that leads to a brand's website. In Search Console, organic traffic is displayed as Total clicks. It is possible to identify pages that generate the most traffic by clicking Performance > Pages.
2. SERP visibility: This indicator shows how many times the brand's domain appears on search result pages with relevant search queries. In Google Search Console, the data can be found in the section "Total impressions."
3. Organic Click-through rate: The result can be calculated by dividing the total number of clicks by the total of impressions (CTR= clicks ÷ impressions). This metric indicates the percentage of people visiting the brand's website through organic search results.
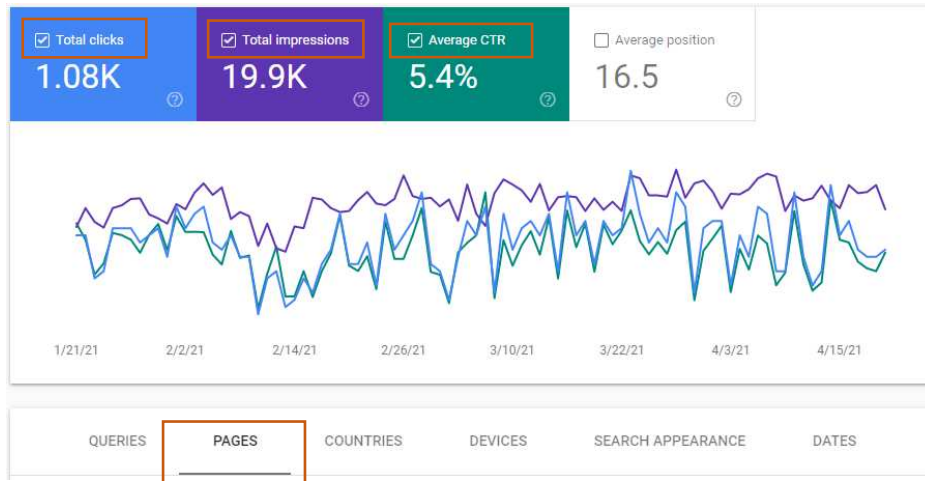
Figure 29. The interface of Google Search Console

5.4   App store optimization (ASO)

As mentioned in chapter 4.5, keywords are crucial for any ASO as they show up every-where in the store listing. Two suggested tools for app keyword research and monitor are App Annie and Sensor Tower. While App Annie provides users with ASO keywords in-sights of specific apps, Sensor Tower examines the details and suggests similar key-words. Although the free versions somewhat satisfy the basic needs of keyword planning, businesses can subscribe to premium packages for more features to maintain the ASO better.

Search Term	Traffic	Phone Difficulty	Phone Apps	Phone Rank	Density
flashcards	4.0	7.6	240+	2	1.8%
quizzez	2.3	7.5	240+	4	0.0%
language learning	5.3	9.2	240+	21	0.0%
memorize	3.3	7.1	240+	42	0.4%
school app	2.2	7.8	240+	-	0.0%

Figure 30. An example of keyword analysis conducted on Sensor Tower (24 April 2021)

Google Play Console is not only a platform to upload an Android app but also a tool that helps app developers manage and grow their apps. It requires a one-time payment of 25 U.S dollars to create an account and have complete control over all features. The tool al-lows businesses to do A/B testing for pre-launch campaigns to optimize the store listing. It will take some time to experiment and apply the result to improve the ASO. (Play Console Help.) Besides, the Play Console offers various kinds of metrics such as store listing visi-tors, installs, uninstalls, and user engagement statistics.

6   Conclusion and self-reflection

This chapter focuses on discussing the outcomes and assessing the thesis process. It is essential to evaluate the success of the project to prepare for future marketing activities. Besides, the author will propose further recommendations for the flashcard app Memoa. Finally, the author's self-reflection on learning during the thesis project will be presented at the end of the chapter.

6.1   Key outcomes

Before coming to the project results, the author will re-present the objectives of the thesis to provide a helicopter view of the process. The purpose of this project is to develop a digital marketing plan for a flashcard app called Memoa. The plan covers various essential aspects of digital marketing, including keyword planning, social media, content, SEO, and ASO. Additionally, suggested tools and actionable checklists can be found in the Appendix.

Keyword planning is crucial for any business as it helps the organization understand the targeted customers and improve the brand's communication. Besides, spying on competitors' keyword strategy allows a business to develop its marketing strategy to reach a higher position on search engine result pages. SEO is not the only marketing aspect that benefits from keywords. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok, provide invaluable keywords that the target group is using. While doing keyword research, marketers need to pay attention to both short-tail keywords and long-tail keywords.

Content marketing focuses on developing content strategy and creating content on a brand's website. Blogs are the most common format for written content as it helps to improve the brand's visibility on search engines. Besides, blogs show the brand's expertise by providing the customers with helpful solutions. In Memoa's case, blogs are published on WordPress, one of the world's largest content management systems. Four essential elements for a successful blog are content ideas, headlines, text structure, and SEO.

Social media channels facilitate the interaction between customers and brands. Determining the channels for a brand's online presence is crucial as different platforms engage different users. Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube are chosen channels for the project as they have been widely used by young people, who are Memoa's target audience. The author suggests using blogs on the website as the primary content source to produce different

formats on social media channels. Not only does the method save time for marketers in the planning phase, but also it provides the audience with various choices.

SEO is the short form of Search Engine Optimization. The technique helps a brand's website rank higher on search engine result pages, such as Google and Bing. Eight factors that have substantial impacts on SEO are Crawlability, Mobile-friendliness, Page speed, Search intent, Backlinks, Authority, and Content quality. SEO may require significant technical skills and solid understandings of websites and search engines, making it hard for beginners. Instead, the author recommends using WordPress to facilitate the maintenance process as this platform offers several easy-to-use SEO plugins.

App Store Optimization, also known as ASO, is a technique that improves an app's ranking position in app stores. As the flashcard app Memoa will be released on Google Play Store, the project focuses on this platform. ASO consists of two main factors – On-metadata and Off-metadata elements. The author focused on On-metadata aspects as they are controllable components, such as app title, descriptions, and screenshots. ASO requires constant experiments to find the best practices that work for the app.

6.2   Project assessment

The flashcard app Memoa is developed by an independent team without any external funding, so budget is a critical issue that needs to be considered. As a result, the thesis mainly focuses on low-to-no budget marketing activities that do not require monetary investments. However, the effort to put in the execution can be substantial, especially when the Memoa team does not have previous marketing experiences. By simplifying the process and providing necessary tools and theory, the project can be carried out more smoothly.

The project was delayed for a period due to the lack of focus. A digital marketing plan contains many other aspects that the author could not cover in this thesis, such as email marketing and influencer marketing. It is challenging to develop a low-cost marketing plan for an unknown brand as the instant method to attract customers is to run advertising campaigns. This digital marketing plan follows a more sustainable development path, making it less approachable to the target audience yet more likely to convert a lead. Moreover, this marketing approach does not create a buzz, which is suitable for the Memoa team in case of any needed adjustments.

The author is relatively satisfied with the outcomes as the thesis covers the essential marketing factors that can help boost a brand's online visibility. During the research process,

the author tried to use the most updated sources to provide the commissioning team with up-to-date and actionable approaches. The author also applied her own work experiences in blogging and SEO to add more value to the plan. Therefore, the Memoa team and app owners may use this paper as a practical guide for a digital marketing plan.

6.3 Recommendations

The content planning and execution may look easy on paper, but they require a substantial amount of time and skills. Maintaining the consistency and quality of the content is another tricky issue that the Memoa team needs to consider providing customers with the best experiences. It is also necessary to align the brand's core value with the content rather than separating them. Users are smart enough to understand whether a brand is genuine or not.

The information provided in the plan is the most updated, but it is beneficial to check the latest news and practices to optimize marketing activities. SEO practices and social media platforms' algorithms are changing every day along with technology development. Therefore, digital marketing is an ongoing process that requires constant learning rather than a single event.

Besides, the author suggests running paid campaigns to reach a broader range of customers once the app is ready. Google Adwords and Facebook Ads are the most efficient tools to get the app promoted to the target audience. A well-planned advertising campaign not only helps businesses save money but also attracts new prospects and potentially boosts the conversion rate.

6.4 Self-reflection on learning

The author has widened her knowledge of digital marketing during the thesis project. Marketing courses at Haaga-Helia have also helped her prepare a solid foundation before diving into details. She also realized the need to regularly update new information and sharpen one's skills as the evolution of the marketing world is phenomenal. For instance, Apple's new updates can substantially impact Facebook advertising, which influences small businesses, marketing agencies, and advertisers.

Besides, the author improved her research skills as the thesis project requires a large amount of authoritative information. The theoretical framework is backed by trustworthy marketing books and online research articles. Meanwhile, the empirical part is supported

by official announcements from digital platforms for SEO (Google) and social media channels (Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok).

The thesis project has been invaluable to the author as this is the first time she works on a digital marketing plan for a mobile application. It was a pleasure to cooperate with the Memoa team and accompany them on the future marketing journey. The project provided the author with opportunities to experiment and learn from mistakes, thereby enhancing her skills for future marketing projects.

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Appendices

## Appendix 1. Competitor benchmarking – Quizlet

1. **SEO analysis** provides information about the overall authority, backlinks, organic search traffic, and paid search traffic. The analysis was conducted on February 16, 2021. The author used SEMrush, an SEO analytic tool to perform the analysis.

Authority Score ⓘ	Organic Search Traffic ⓘ	Paid Search Traffic ⓘ	Backlinks ⓘ	Display Advertising ⓘ
77	**25.7M** +1.7%	**8.2K** +7%	**27.3M**	**5.3K**
SEMrush Domain Rank 192 ↑	Keywords 12.44M ↑	Keywords 168 ↑	Referring Domains 64.84K	Publishers 6.5K

| Engagement Metrics ⓘ February 2021			
	Pages/Visits 1.96 ↓	Avg. Visit Duration 08:11 ↓	Bounce Rate 73.45% ↓ Show all
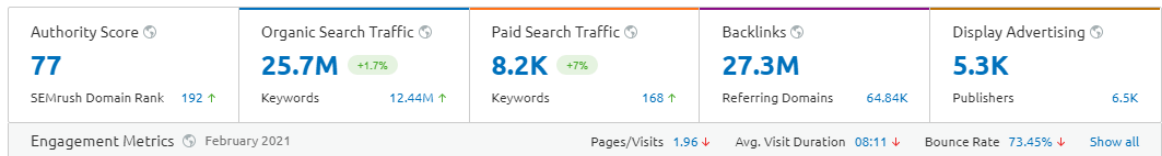
2. **Facebook analysis** is conducted by using Fanpage Karma, a social media analytic tool. The screenshot shows Quizlet's fanpage performance from February 17, 2021 to March 16, 2021.

	TOTAL REACTIONS, COMMENTS, SHARES	NUMBER OF COMMENTS (TOTAL)	POST INTERACTION	POSTS PER DAY	FOLLOWER GROWTH (ABSOLUTE)
Quizlet @quizlet	149	31	0.0087%	0.6	609

	FOLLOWER GROWTH (IN %)	FOLLOWER GROWTH AVERAGE WEEKLY (IN %)	NUMBER OF POSTS	ENGAGEMENT	NUMBER OF LIKES
	0.61%	0.15%	17	0.0053%	87

3. **YouTube analysis** looks into the Quizlet's YouTube channel within 30 days (from February 16, 2021 to March 18, 2021). VidIQ Vision for YouTube was used to explore Quizlet's keywords, frequency of video uploads, and the growth of subscribers.
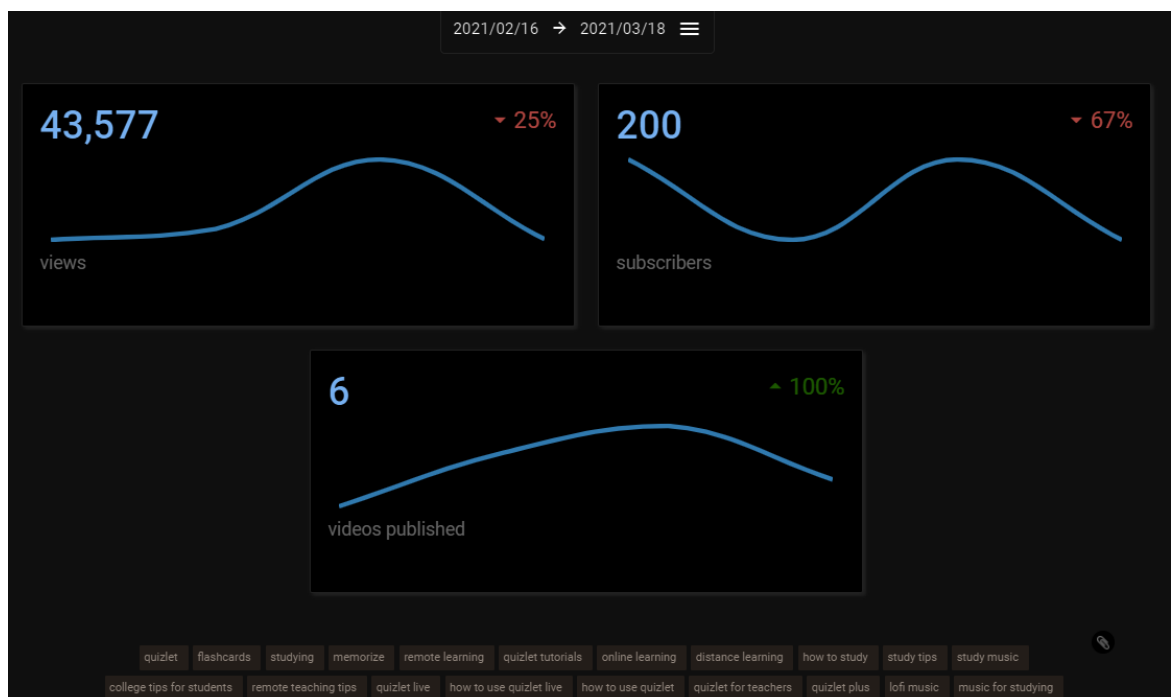
4. **TikTok analysis** examines the number of mentions of Quizlet. The investigation was conducted on 18 March 2020 by following the link https://www.tiktok.com/tag/quizlet .
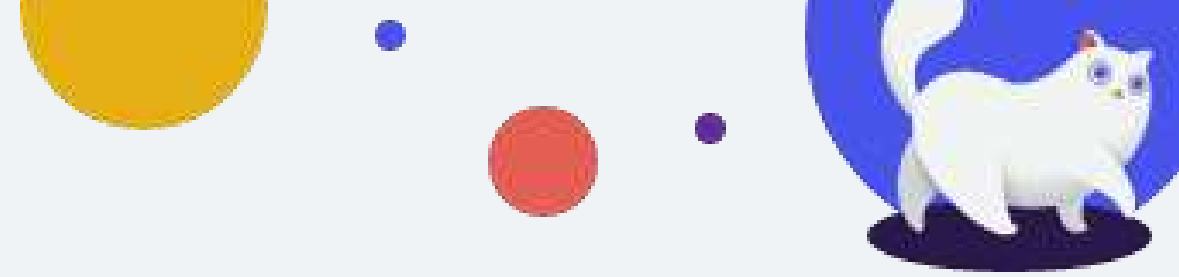
Appendix 2. Competitor benchmarking – Lexilize

1. **SEO analysis** provides information about the overall authority, backlinks, organic search traffic, and paid search traffic. The analysis was conducted on February 16, 2021. The author used SEMrush, an SEO analytic tool to perform the analysis.

Authority Score ⓘ	Organic Search Traffic ⓘ	Paid Search Traffic ⓘ	Backlinks ⓘ	Display Advertising ⓘ
22	**48** -2%	Data was not found. If this is your domain, you can get all the necessary data on its keyword rankings.	**449**	**0**
SEMrush Domain ... 26.71M ↑	Keywords 838 ↑	Go to Position Tracking	Referring Domains 60	Publishers 0

2. **Facebook analysis** is conducted by using Fanpage Karma, a social media analytic tool. The screenshot shows Quizlet's fanpage performance from February 17, 2021 to March 16, 2021.

	TOTAL REACTIONS, COMMENTS, SHARES	NUMBER OF COMMENTS (TOTAL)	POST INTERACTION	POSTS PER DAY	FOLLOWER GROWTH (ABSOLUTE)
Lexilize Flashcards. Improve your vocabulary. @lexilizeflashcards	6	0	3.3%	0.04	⊖
	FOLLOWER GROWTH (IN %)	FOLLOWER GROWTH AVERAGE WEEKLY (IN %)	NUMBER OF POSTS	ENGAGEMENT	NUMBER OF LIKES
	⊖	⊖	1	0.12%	6
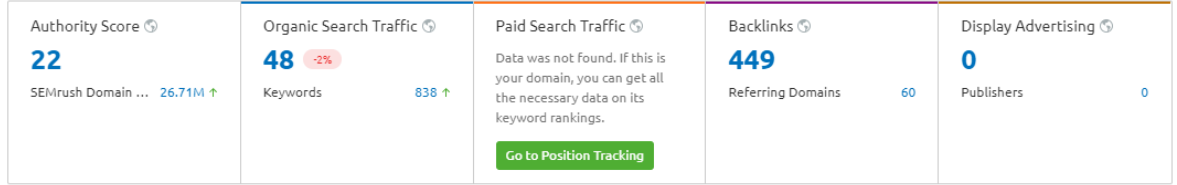
3. **YouTube analysis** looks into the Lexilize's YouTube channel within 30 days (from February 16, 2021 to March 18, 2021). VidIQ Vision for YouTube was used to explore Quizlet's keywords, frequency of video uploads, and the growth of subscribers.
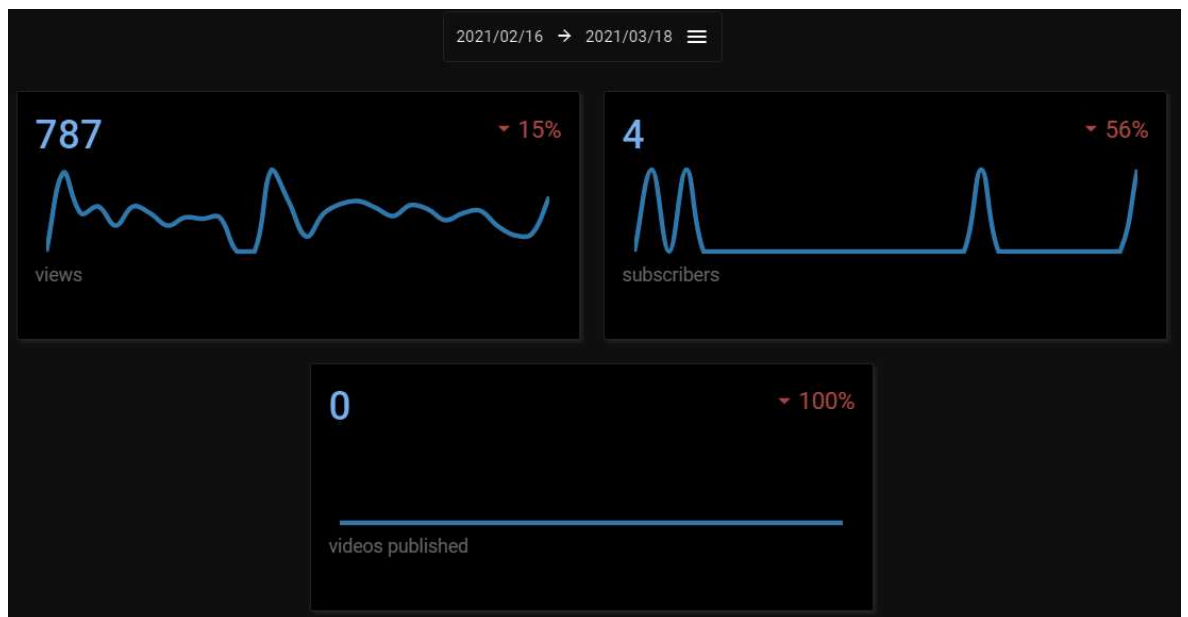
4. **TikTok analysis** examines the number of mentions of Lexilize. The investigation was conducted on 18 March 2020 by following the link https://www.tiktok.com/tag/lexilize and https://www.tiktok.com/tag/lexilizeflashcards .
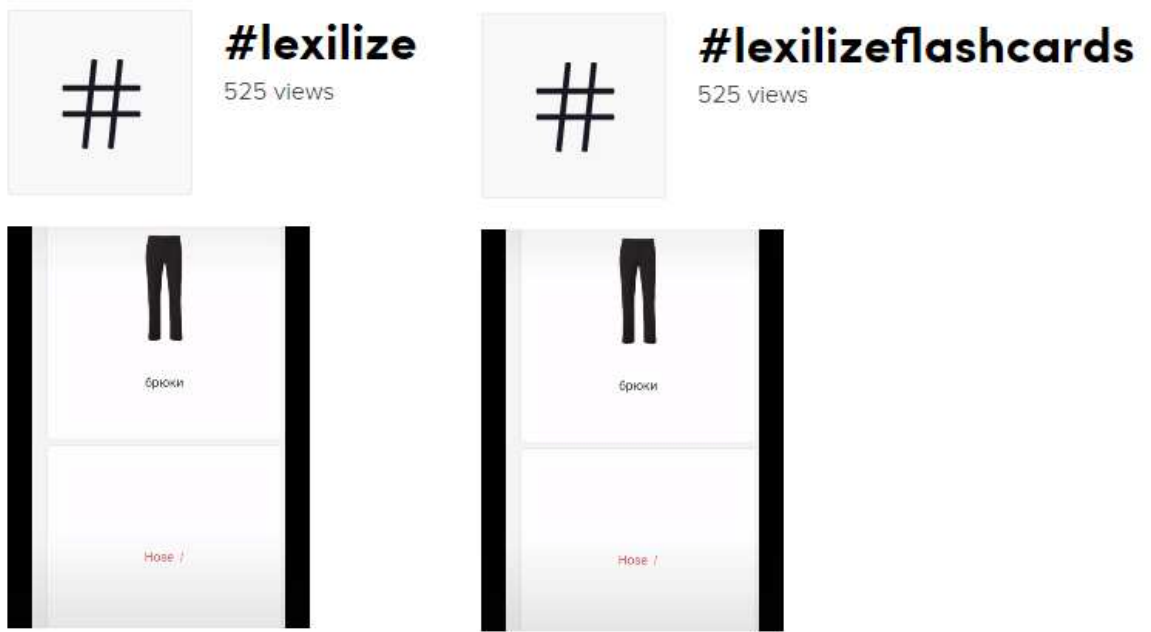
Digital Marketing Tools for Memoa

Table of Contents

Analysis Tools and Templates

Marketing competencies analysis

Digital Capability	ONE. Initial	TWO. Managed	THREE. Defined	FOUR. Quantified	FIVE. Optimised
A. Strategic Approach	No strategy	Outline plan with prioritised marketing activities	Defined vision and strategy for Digital Transformation	Business-aligned strategy and roadmap	Agile strategic approach
B. Performance Improvement Process	No KPIs	Volume-based KPIs No dashboards	Quality-based KPIs 'Last click' attribution Business dashboards	Value-based KPIs Weighted attribution Ad hoc tests / CRO	Lifetime-value KPIs Structured experiment programme
C. Management Buy-in	Limited	Verbal support, but inadequate resourcing	Sponsorship and increased investment for Digital Transformation	Active championing and approriate investment	Digital is an integral part of strategy development
D. Resourcing and Structure	No specific digital skills	Core skills centralised or agencies	Centralised hub and spoke Dedicated resources	Decentralisation and reskilling	Balanced blend of marketing skills
E. Data, Martech and Infrastructure	No or limited customer database	Separate marketing technology, limited data integration	Partial integrated Martech stack and data quality controls	Integrated systems and 360° view data sources in Martech stack	Latest innovations, e.g. AI and Machine Learning can be integrated
F. Integrated Customer Communications	Not integrated	Core push activities synchronised	Integrated inbound approach. Last-click evaluation.	Integrated, Personalised, Paid-Owned-Earned media attribution	Media optimised for ROI and to maximise CLV
G. Integrated Customer Experience	Static brochureware website	Desktop and mobile support, not personalized. Landing pages in place.	Partially personalized desktop and mobile experience	Integrated, Personalized web, mobile, email and social media	Full contexual personalized experiences and recommendations
	"Laggard"	"Developing capability"	"Competent average capability"	"Above-sector average capability"	"Market leading capability"

Partnership marketing evaluation

Criteria	Weight	Partner option A	Partner option B	Partner option C	Note
Eg. Strategic - Add text here - Add text here	**20 %**	7	8	6	Add text here
Eg. Buy-in - Add text here - Add text here	**20 %**	2	9	7	Add text here
Eg. Branding - Add text here - Add text here	**15 %**	3	5	8	Add text here
Eg. Customers - Add text here - Add text here	**15 %**	7	3	4	Add text here
Eg. Resources - Add text here - Add text here	**20 %**	8	5	6	Add text here

Low (0-5)   Mid (6-7)   High (8-10)

Competitor benchmark tools

Facebook: Fanpage Karma

YouTube: vidIQ Vision for YouTube

Website: SEMrush

Overview: SimilarWeb

Content Marketing

Keyword planning tools

- Google Search bar
- [Google Keyword Planner](#)

Other tools:

- [Ahrefs](#)
- [Ubersuggests](#)
- [AnswerThePublic](#)
- [Moz](#)
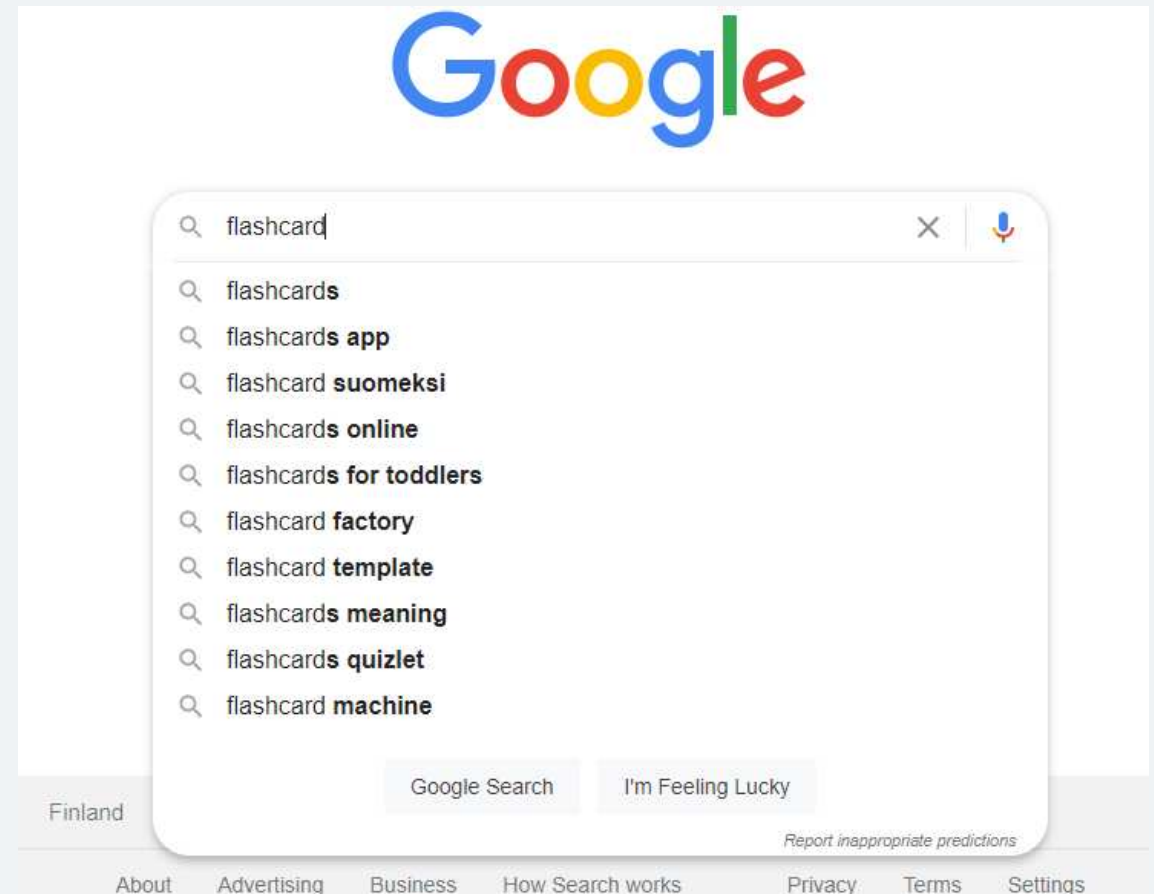
Content headline analyzer

[Headline analyzer](#)
(MonsterInsights)
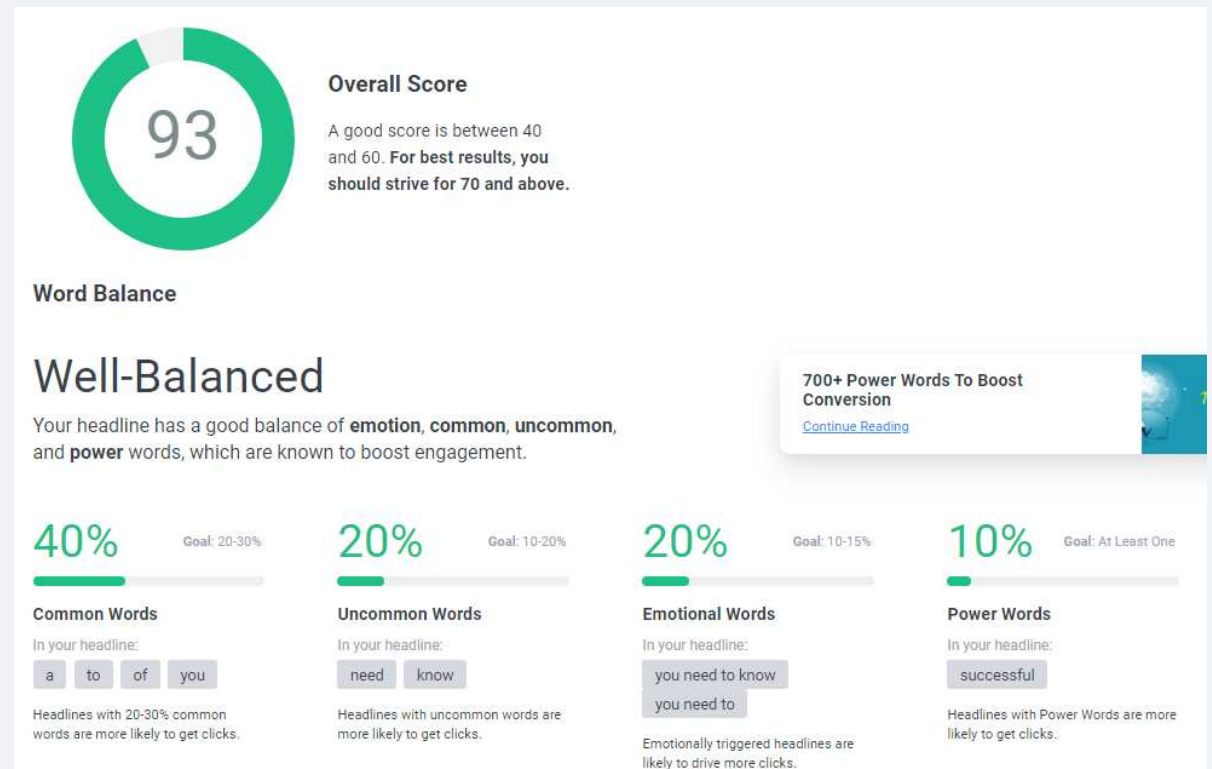
Content structure and readability

[Yoast SEO](#) plugin

for WordPress websites

😊 Readability analysis   ︿

Analysis results ❓

︿ Problems (1)

🔴 Transition words: None of the sentences contain transition words. Use some.

︿ Good results (6)

🟢 Flesch Reading Ease: The copy scores 100 in the test, which is considered very easy to read. Good job!

🟢 Passive voice: You're using enough active voice. That's great!

🟢 Consecutive sentences: There is enough variety in your sentences. That's great!

🟢 Subheading distribution: Great job!

🟢 Paragraph length: None of the paragraphs are too long. Great job!

🟢 Sentence length: Great!

Content strategy

Facebook
A short post with summarized information

"I want a detailed explanation"

YouTube
A video explaining Leitner system

"I want to get the checklist"

TikTok
A 30-second of the full video

"I want to watch the full video"

Our blog
Remember forever: The complete guide to the Leitner system
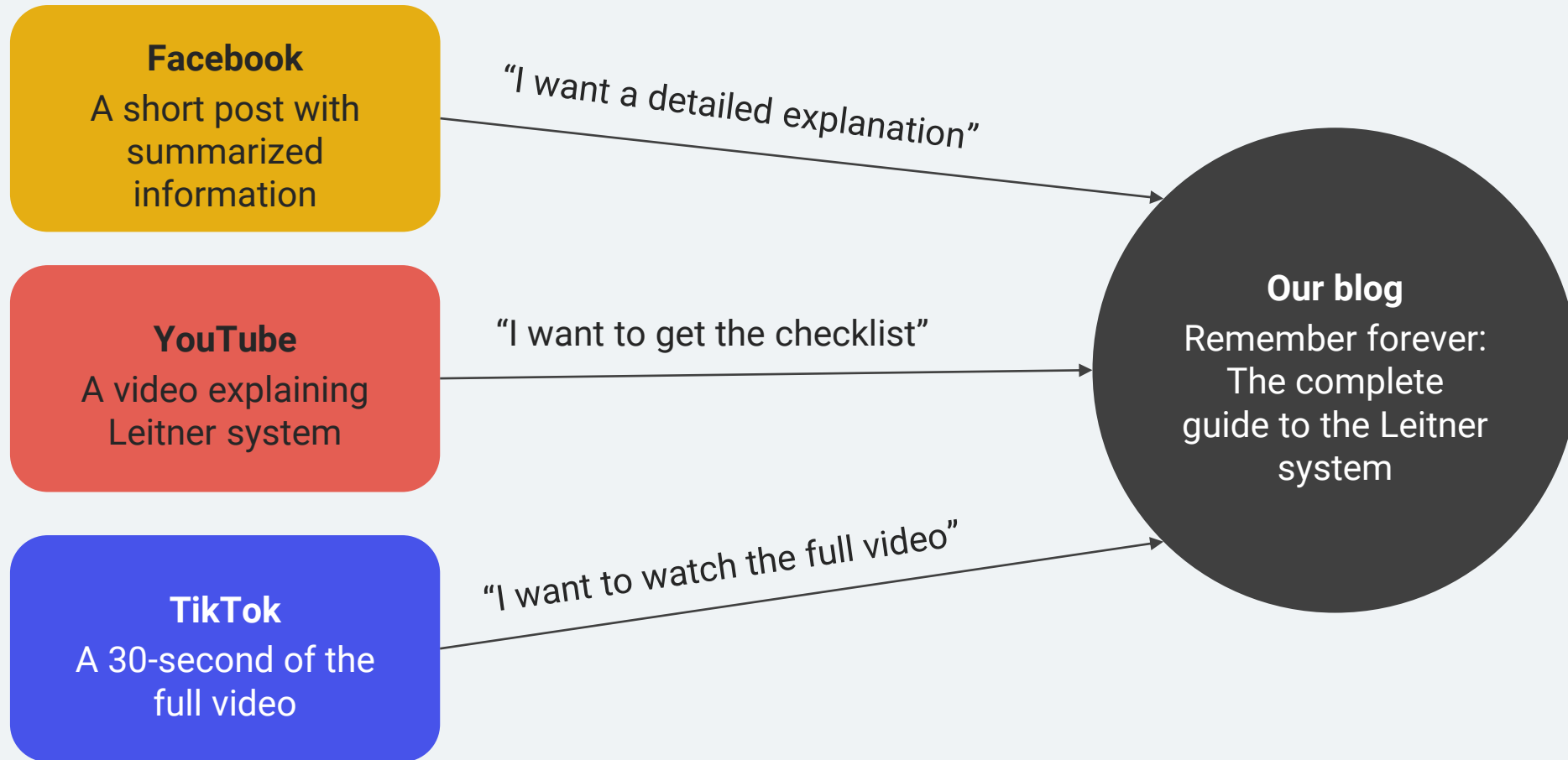
Content monitor tool

[Google Analytics](#)

[Google Analytics for WordPress by MonsterInsights](#) plugin
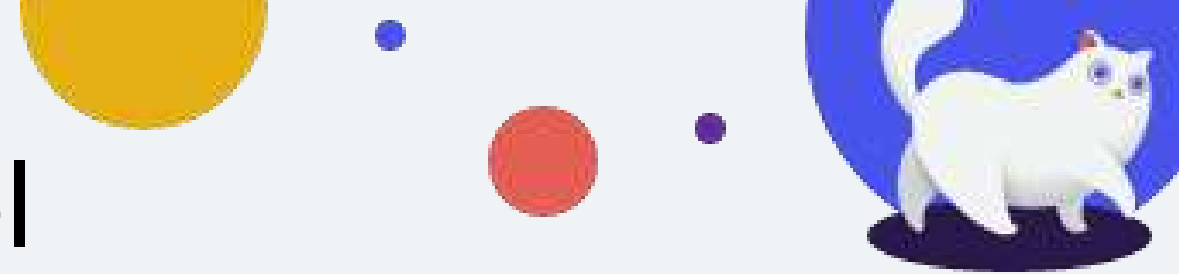
Social Media Marketing

Social media monitor tool

Facebook Page Insights/ Facebook Business Suite

YouTube Studio

TikTok analytics

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Mobile friendliness check

[Mobile-Firendly Test](#)

Tested on: Mar 29, 2021 at 5:07 PM

Page is mobile friendly

This page is easy to use on a mobile device
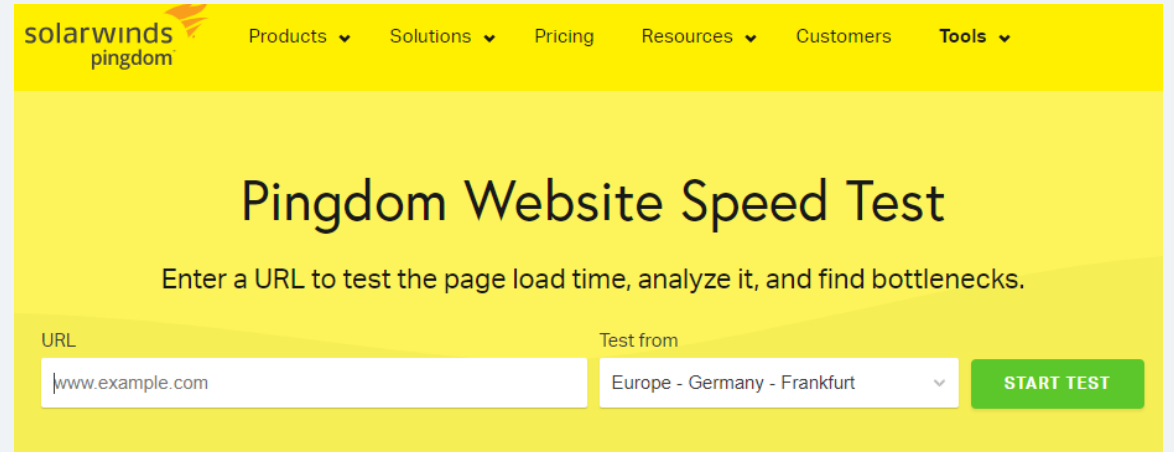
Additional resources

Open site-wide mobile usability report

Learn more about mobile-friendly pages

Post comments or questions to our discussion group

Remember easier
No boredom included

Pagespeed check

[Pingdom Website check](#)
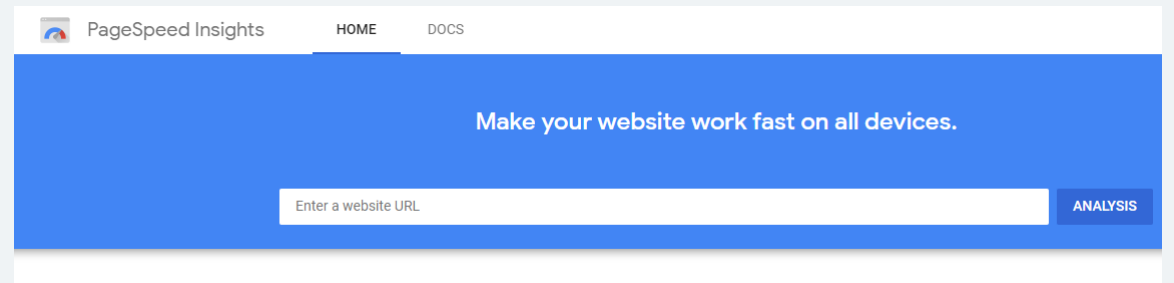
[PageSpeed Insights](#)

SEO monitor tool

Google Search Console

Other tools:
- Ahrefs
- SEMrush
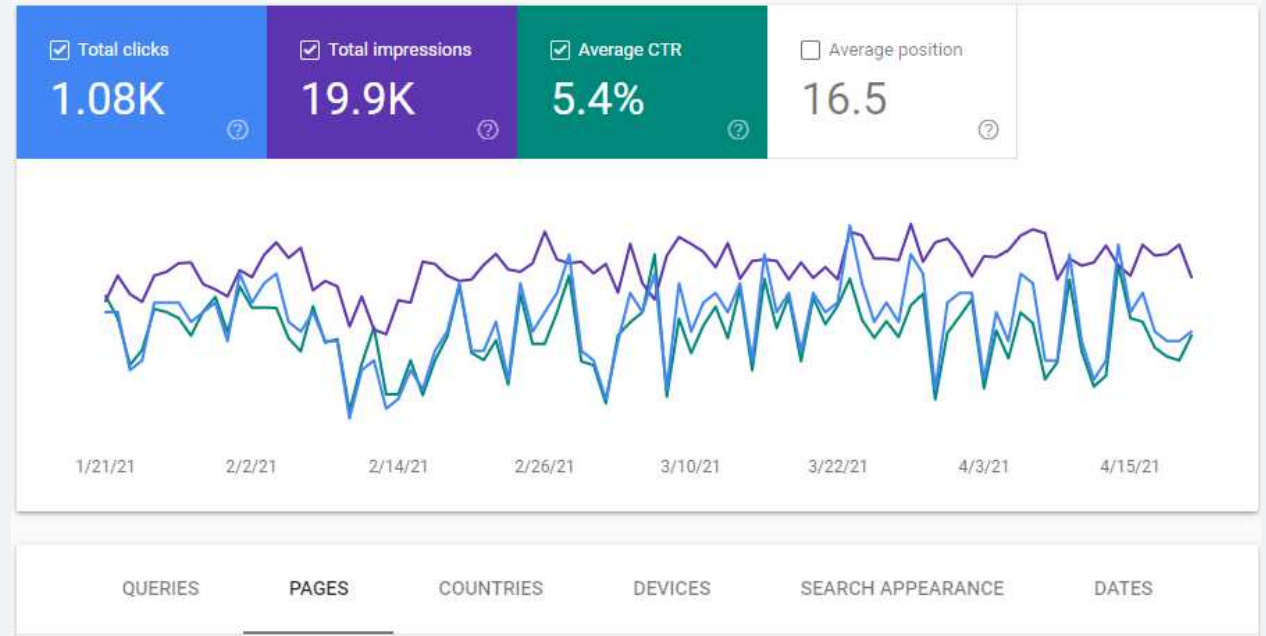
App Store Optimization (ASO)

2D and 3D Screenshot mockup

[Previewed](#)

2D and 3D Screenshot mockup

[Photoshop PSD file](#)
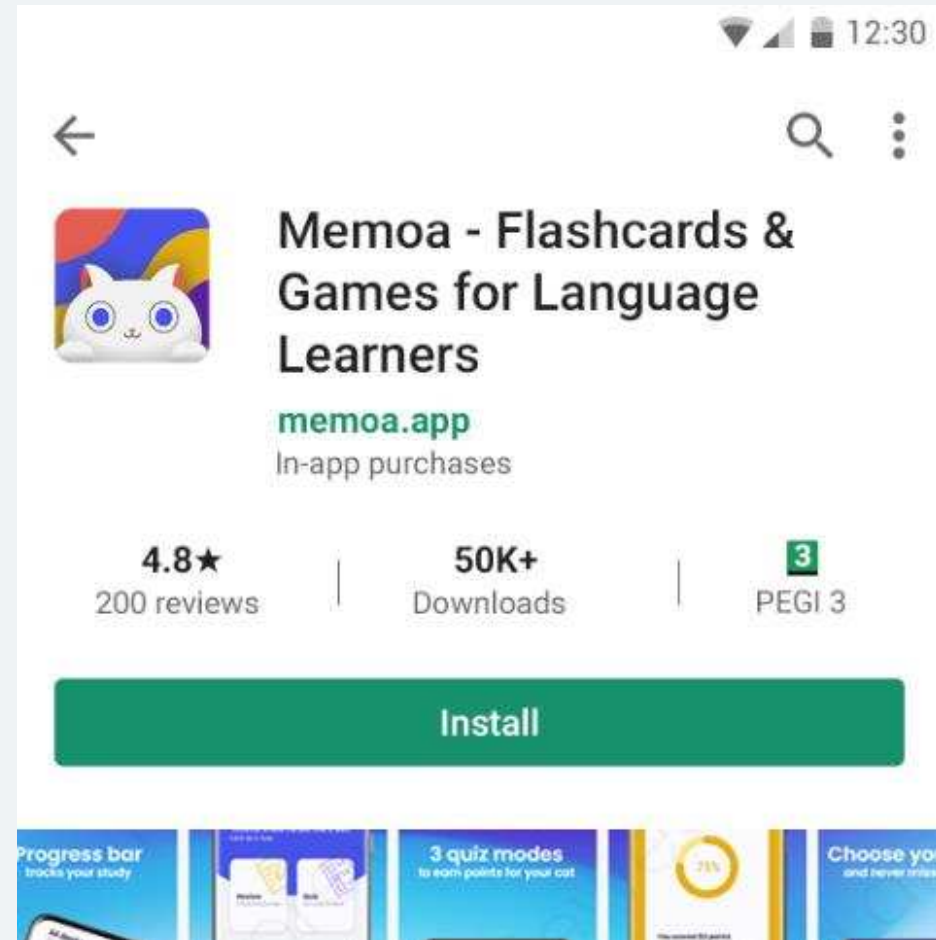
ASO keyword monitor tool

[App Annie](#)

[Sensor Tower](#)

ASO monitor tool

[Google Play Console](#)

Google Analytics