

Social Media Marketing Campaign Plan for the Case Company: Global Trade and Exhibition Oy

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<p>This is a product-based bachelor's thesis to develop a social media marketing campaign plan for the case company to attract clients and establish a brand image in the Russian-speaking countries. Social media is a powerful tool to market products, attract clients and build a brand. The world situation in 2021 has pushed companies even more towards activity and marketing through social media.</p> <p>The purpose of the thesis was to create a content plan for the relatively young B2B commissioning company to grow its awareness. The thesis begins with an introductory chapter, followed by theory, interviews with the case company and a potential customer, insights from the interviews, general recommendations for the commissioning company and the content plan itself. It ends with the conclusions.</p> <p>The basic marketing principles created by Kotler are well-known in the traditional marketing world and widely used. The principles of identifying customer needs and satisfying them through creating customer value. However, with the development of digitalization these principles require a new approach. Thesis helps to understand the importance of using social media marketing in modern business world. The use of social media marketing in the business strategy is no longer optional, but essential.</p> <p>The case company interview was held to identify company's values, skills, and points of difference. The company is relatively new therefore answering interview questions has helped the company to clarify some points for itself, and for the researcher as well.</p> <p>The final content plan and ideas for topics were created based on the interviews, with the potential client and the company, international fair trade exhibitions' online portals' desktop research, and competitor research.</p> <p>The case company was satisfied with the process of the research, questions of the interview, insights from the customer interview and the content plan itself. Company employees are contented to apply content plan ideas in the marketing strategy.</p> <p>The thesis conclusion includes the project's key findings and suggestions for further research of the commissioning company. Additionally, it also has a project's evaluation chapter based on the author's self-evaluation and company's feedback. Finally, the author reflects on her learning regarding the project.</p>	
Keywords Social media marketing, B2B, content plan, business strategy, brand image.	

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1 Introduction

This is a product-type thesis for a commissioning company Global Trade and Exhibition Oy. Finnish company in fair trade industry. In the following chapter the background, project objective, commissioning company, project scope, international aspects, risks, benefits, and key concepts will be introduced.

1.1 Background

Over 3 billion people around the world use online services for various reasons. Consumer behavior and companies' marketing activities to both consumers and businesses have changed completely. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 5.)

Social media is transforming the way companies do business and leading to a new era of communication. The appearance of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn has brought a significant change how businesses interact with their stakeholders. The use of social media allows companies to reach customers worldwide which is crucial for businesses who operate internationally. (Kailani & Kumar 2011, 76.)

Today's social media marketing is not only about advertising products and services but rather about different types of audience interactions (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 5).

The digitalization era has made a shift in marketing activities from offline to online media and a growth for search, content, and social media marketing. The purpose of the communications is still to engage buyers, but also other stakeholders. (Brennan, Canning & McDowell 2014, 169-170.)

The case company Global Trade and Exhibition Oy is relatively new company that operates in the event industry and requires a marketing campaign plan to raise its awareness. The case company is an official representative of the largest expo and convention center in Finland, which called Messukeskus, in the Russian-speaking markets. The case company works in the B2B market.

The Messukeskus hosts around 50 exhibitions a year and has a turnover of € 59.3 m. There are around 1 million visitors a year. The exhibition industry has

a great economic impact on the country and influences positively on the employment rate. (Messukeskus annual report, 2019.)

1.2 Project Objective

The objective of this thesis is to create a social media marketing campaign plan to market international fairs trades in Helsinki Messukeskus, that were postponed until the year 2022. Six task projects have been determined to achieve the project objective and are displayed in the overlay matrix below. (Table 1.)

The project objective is divided into six project tasks (PT) which are the following:

PT 1. To prepare the theoretical framework.

PT 2. To determine mission, vision, values, and goals of the campaign and to determine the target audience.

PT 3. To conduct social media analysis, company, and customer interviews.

PT 4: To prepare KPIs and metrics.

PT 5: To write the plan itself, obtaining feedback from the company, finalizing the plan.

PT 6: To evaluate project management and project outcomes.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Project Task	Theoretical Framework*	Project management methods	Outcomes
1. To prepare the theoretical framework	Business-to-business market, mission, vision, values, business goals, social media platforms, KPIs and metrics	Literature review	Theoretical framework, key concepts, buyer persona template, customer journey template (Chapter 2)
2. To determine mission, vision, values, and goals of the campaign and to determine target audience	See PT 1	Interview with co-founders of the commissioning company	Goals of the campaign, ideal target audience (Chapter 3)

3. To conduct social media analysis, company, and customer interview	See PT 1	Analytics of the social media platforms, qualitative interviews with the potential client	Buyer persona, customer journey map
4. To prepare KPIs and metrics	See PT 1	Theoretical framework, interview with the company	KPIs, goals of the campaign
5. To prepare content suited for the Russian BtoB clientele, to obtain the feedback from the company	See PT 1 – PT 4	Excel	Content plan
6. To evaluate project management and project outcomes	-	Feedback and self-evaluation	Suggestions, recommendations

1.3 Project Management Design

Project task 1 theoretical framework is presented in chapter two. Theoretical framework covers business-to-business market nature, business strategy, customer journey map and buyer persona, social media marketing, content plan, KPIs and metrics.

Project task 2 starts the empirical part of the project. Qualitative interview with the case company cofounders. Based on the interview, mission, vision, values will be formed by the author. An ideal target audience will be also identified and described.

During the project task 3 social media analysis will be conducted to understand the current situation of social media activity. This will be done by interviewing the SMM manager of the case company and research of the competitors. Also, interview with the potential customer will be conducted to describe a customer journey map which will highlight the pain points of the customers and identify a decision maker(s) in B2B selling process.

During project task 4, KPIs, metrics and goals of the campaign will be determined. This will be done with the help of the theory and interview with the case company employees.

During project task 5, content plan will be created in Excel file.

During project task 6 the plan will be returned to the company to obtain a feedback, will be corrected if needed. The project will be evaluated through the feedback attained from the commissioning company as well as through the thesis author's own self-evaluation of the project.

1.4 Project Scope

The thesis is geographically demarcated. The research is aimed at potential B2B Russian-speaking clients primary from the process or construction industries, who would be interested in participating in international trade fairs in Helsinki.

Thesis will not cover SEO (Search engine optimization). The crucial content key words can be identified by the SMM manager if needed later.

The case company regularly posts on Facebook, Vkontakte, Instagram and LinkedIn, though not so active on LinkedIn. Thesis will cover Facebook, Vkontakte, and Instagram. According to the latest update of January 2020, the Linked website is blocked in Russian, and does not have many active users (Tutorialspoint 2020). Marketing campaign is expected to bring traffic to the company's website.

The case company is interested in attracting companies as well as delegations whose goal is to establish international business relations in the EU countries.

To keep the scope manageable, Instagram platform was chosen for the analysis, based on the number of followers and their activeness. Later, the company can decide on its own, on which platform to display the campaign.

1.5 Case Company

Global Trade and Exhibition Oy was established in 2019. Its office located in Helsinki, Finland, not far from the Messukeskus. (Global Trade and Exhibition Oy 2019.)

Now there are 5 employees.

Global Trade and Exhibition Oy is an official representative of Messukeskus in Russian-speaking countries. The company's responsibility is to organize participation of the companies and delegations from Russian-speaking countries. Besides, the case company offers additional services such as translations, preparation of the marketing materials, and organization of meetings. (Global Trade and Exhibition Oy 2019.)

The case company is experiencing challenges with sales due to the COVID-19 situation now.

On the Finnish market there is one competitor. However, the point of difference of the case company is its team players' ability to communicate in Russian and the awareness of the Russian culture.

The means case company uses the most for marketing is direct marketing via emails to the potentially interested companies.

1.6 International Aspect

The thesis distinctively covers an international aspect and fulfils the Globba Program's requirements. The case company's operations and marketing are focused on the Russian-speaking market. The purpose of the activities of the case company is to establish long-term relations between European (Finnish in particularly) and Russian-speaking companies.

1.7 Benefits

All parties would benefit from the research. The commissioning company will receive a marketing campaign plan as a final product, will assess it and will be able to implement it.

The Russian-speaking BtoB companies who will be reached by the campaign would receive information of how to participate in international fairs and to enter European markets.

The research is of a considerable importance to the author for her professional growth and self-development. Author is expecting to gain a practical knowledge in creating a social media marketing campaign plan and receive needed theoretical learning which will contribute to her further studies and career.

The research might give possibilities for expanding a professional network for the author as well.

1.8 Key Concepts

Business-to-business (B2B): is a form of transaction between businesses, when organization is the customer (Brennan, Canning & McDowell 2014, 6).

Marketing Campaign: A marketing campaign is a comprehensive course of action to sell and promote something, i.e., either a product, service, or brand (Market Business News 2020).

“KPIs represent a set of measures focusing on those aspects of organizational performance that are the most critical for the current and future success of the organization” (Parmenter 2010, 4).

International Trade Fair – “A trade fair is an exhibition held so that companies in a specific industry can showcase and demonstrate their products and services, meet with industry partners and customers, study activities of competitors and examine recent market trends and opportunities”. (Salts 20 February 2020.)

Buyer persona – fictional character, based on customer data, who represents various segments of the target audience(s) (Lieb & Szymanski 2017, 24).

Customer Journey Map: Customer journey map is a visual representation of the customer’s interactions with the company (Chapin 2017).

Sales funnel: The sales funnel refers to the buying process that companies lead customers through when purchasing products. (Ginty, Vaccarello & Leake 2012, 13.)

Content Plan: is a technique that will assist manager in setting and programming the information that that will be provided to the target audience (Lieb & Szymanski 2017, 35).

1.9 Project Management Methods and Report Structure

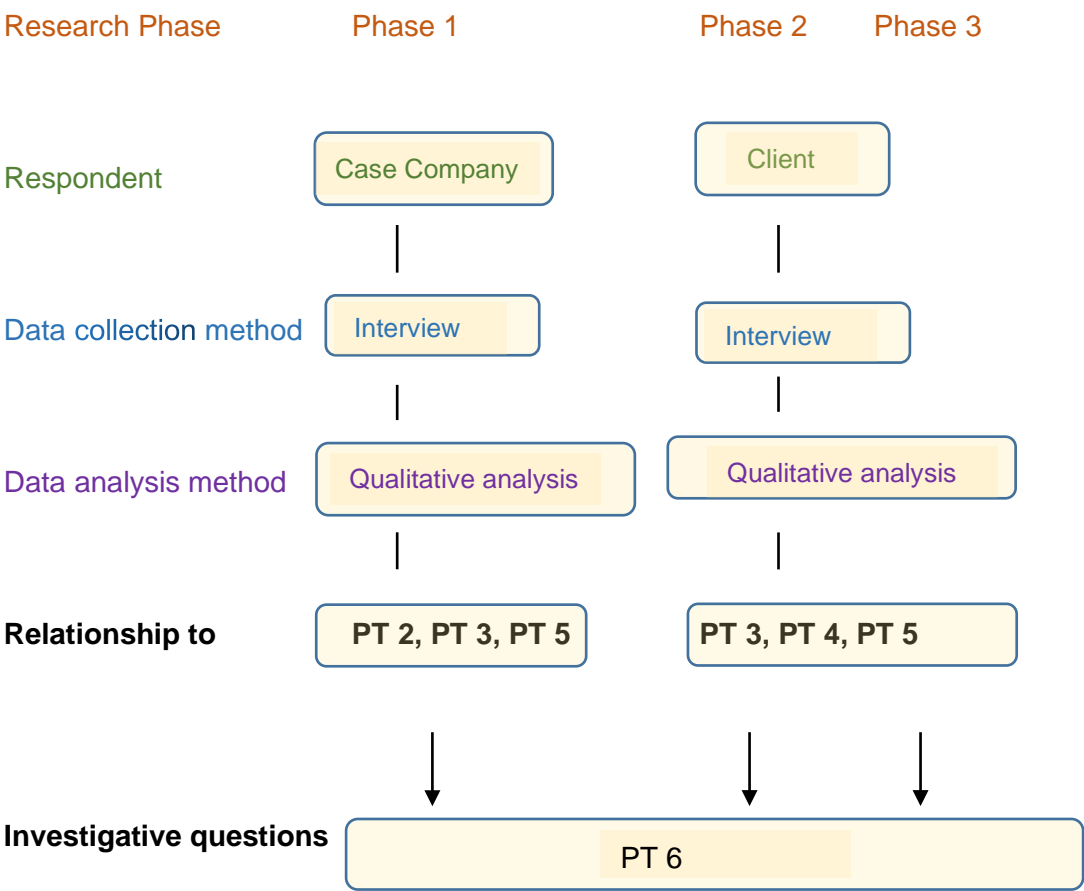


Figure 1. Research methods.

2 Components of Successful Marketing Campaign

This chapter will describe the theory behind the successful marketing campaign. First, the nature of B2B selling markets will be covered. Before starting a marketing campaign, company should be clear with its goals, company should understand its mission, vision, and values. Key elements of the campaign are the target audience and buyer persona, and customer's pain points. The situation of current social media activities and situation is a starting point. The importance of customer engagement and how to increase engagement; KPIs of the campaign and how to measure the success will be discussed.

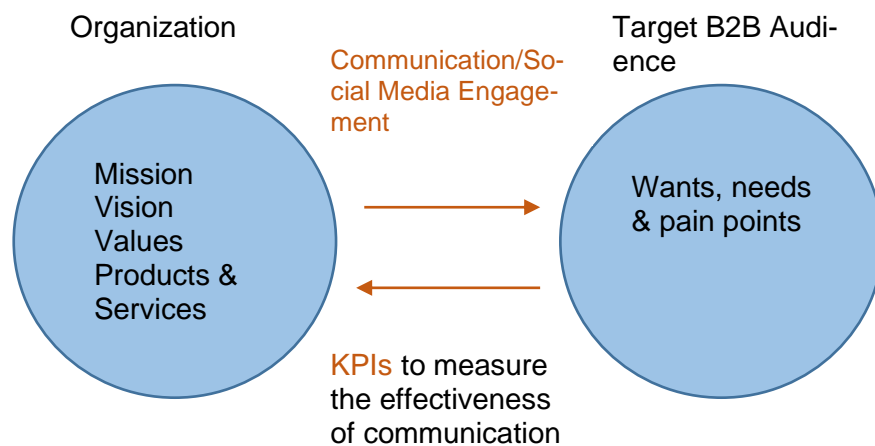


Figure 2. Visual representation of the key points in the theory for successful marketing campaign

2.1 B2B market nature

The key difference of a business-to-business market is that the customer is an organization rather than an individual consumer. However, purchasing decisions are taken by human beings. B2B marketing targets individuals who make purchases on behalf of the organization rather than for themselves. (Brennan, Canning & McDowell 2014, 6, 27.)

B2B markets are usually smaller and require targeted messaging compare to mass market and massive advertising when selling to individuals. On the other side, the sales lifecycle in B2B is usually longer. (Ginty, Vaccarello & Leake 2012, 18-19.)

The purchase process in B2B sales is slow and logical rather than instant and emotional. It usually goes through several stages. The process starts with the

need recognition. Organization recognizes the need or problem that can be solved by purchasing a good or service. Secondly, the buyer identifies what specifications a product should have to solve the problem. Then, supplier and product research are done. After that, evaluation of proposals and selections of suppliers. Then goes negotiation of order and payment process, and lastly the performance feedback and evaluation. (Brennan & al. 2014, 37.)

The seller company in its turn should anticipate and recognize the potential problem of the buyer company to convey the message in social media of being an expert and capable of solving the problem (Brennan & al. 2014, 37).

To minimize the risks, B2B buying decision are usually made by small-to-medium sized groups, rather than by a solo individual. These groups vary from four to ten people usually and consist of users and nonusers of the buying product or service. Members of the group usually have equal weight in the decision, and in some cases the nonusers are the decision makers. To influence purchase decisions successfully the business marketer needs to know the key members of the team and what their concerns and requirements are. This enables the marketer to formulate solutions to satisfy the individual needs. (Brennan & al. 2014, 42-44; Ginty & al. 2012, 5.)

At the core of the business decision is trust. Online marketing is a great way to establish that level of trust with the buyers, starting at the top of the funnel throughout the purchase path to lifetime value. (Ginty & al. 2012, 8.)

The stages in the buying-process can be switched or omitted; and the time and effort invested in completing the various stages may vary. A cause of this variation is the degree of risk associated with the purchase decision. (Brennan & al. 2014, 39.) The level of stress and responsibility is high in B2B sales. According to Harvard Business Review (2017), despite the amount of data provided on the internet regarding different suppliers, the buyers usually feel "uncertain and stressed". More information generates even more uncertainty and prolong the decision-making process. At the same time the number of people involved in the decision-making process has increased from 5,4 to 6,8 begetting difficulties to agree on one option. Thus, the selling company should aim to ease the buying process as much as possible and demonstrate its expertise and build trust with their customers to overcome the feeling of risk.

Companies who arrive to the trade fairs cannot be all classified by the same industry and business nature. Companies can be product or service oriented, manufacturing or engineering industry. Their goals of participation in the fair also vary, whether they would be interested in finding the supplier or buyer, establish relations with other companies or any other. Also, companies' values and business goals, as well as purchasing motivations are different. Purchasing motivations can be to get the best deal and save money or to increase productivity and quality. It is important for the case company to recognize those difference and motivations of the target companies to create the most powerful marketing messages. (Brennan & al. 2014, 27.)

While it is thought that B2B purchases are driven by logic, the research conducted by Google, CEB and Motista in 2013, has shown even bigger emotional commitment to the B2B brands than when marketing to the individuals. B2B purchases involve huge amount of risk and responsibility. The business consumer will not buy unless the emotional connection overcome the feeling/level of risk. The research has shown that business buyers are looking forward for professional and personal growth. People desire to feel confidence and pride regarding their purchases. Whenever decision is made, emotional and interpersonal forces are involved. (Nathan & Schmidt 2013.)

2.2 Overall business strategy - company mission, vision, and values

M. Porter in his article written in March 2001 has criticized companies for lacking goal setting while developing online marketing strategies. He emphasized the importance of the online marketing being consistent and aligned with clearly defined business goals which usually signifies economic sustainability for the company. (Harvard Business Review March 2001.)

To create a powerful social media marketing campaign that enhances the organization's goal, it is fundamental to understand the organization itself. Vision of the company separated from the social media communication limits the full potential of the latter. Social media strategy should be born out of the company's mission and values. If the company wants to be successful in the long run and achieve growth, it is important to understand why it exists and where it is heading to. However, the customer should be placed in the core of its business existence, and the purpose should be clear for all the company's stakeholders. Mission helps lead company's reputation and image. (Kim 2016, 23)

Kotler, Armstrong, Harris & Piercy (2017, 39) recommend the company answering the following questions to identify its mission:

- *What is our business?*
- *Who is our customer?*
- *What do customers value?*
- *What should our business be?*

A mission statement guides people in the organization. It should be market oriented and defined in terms of satisfying customer needs. A mission statement then begets business goals which an online marketing strategy should be aligned with. Generally, business exists to generate profit, which is usually a primary goal. However, company should formulate multiple objectives to justify its existence. Examples of business objectives: to generate profit, to increase its market share, to develop customer database, to improve the quality of service. (Kotler & al. 2017, 38-39; Jackson 2020.)

The vision states what the organization want to be by a certain timeframe, what is the desired result of the company's efforts. The vision statement, unlike the mission one, is future oriented. The vision is the motivation for the employees and can be also communicated through marketing messages. It should inspire people and motivate them to want to be part of and contribute to the organization. (Parmenter 2010, 38; Peek 2020.)

The values are guiding principles, what the company stands for. Values help employees to move towards the same direction and ensure their satisfaction. As the result, happy employees create happy customers. (Parmenter 2010, 38; Mittal 2020.)

All these statements should be implemented into the online marketing strategy and communicated clearly to the company's stakeholders. By implementing and communicating these messages through marketing channels, company help to answer questions of the customer why they should buy from it, and to investors why they should invest, what is so unique about the company. (Wolfe 2019.)

2.3 Defining the Target Market

After formulating mission, vision and values, the next step is to identify the target audience, to whom the company will offer its products and services. Since the company cannot and should not aim to satisfy all the customers. Target

market consists of buyers who share common needs or characteristics that company decides to serve. (Kotler & al. 2017, 48.)

There are four major consumer market segment characteristics, but they can be applied to the B2B markets as well. Geographic segmentation divide market by their geographical location: country, region, city. Demographic segmentation is based on industry or company size for example. Psychographic segmentation divides market based on social class, personality characteristics. Behavioral segmentation can be based on the user status, user loyalty etc. Business marketers can use some additional variables, such as purchasing approaches and organizational structures (how purchasing decisions are made). A market segment consists of consumers who respond in a similar way to the marketing activities and share same needs. A company can choose to target one or several segments at the same time. At this stage a company should identify how it is differentiated from the competitors and ideally formulate a statement it would like to place in the consumers mind (Kotler & al. 2017, 48-49, 194-201.)

The audience can be current users or potential buyers, those who make buying decisions or who influence them. The target audience will shape the message of the marketer on what will be said, how it will be said, when and where, and who will say it. (Kotler & al. 2017, 414.)

2.3.1 Decision-Makers in the Selling Process

In 1992 Straus and Howe, sociologists, have suggested generational segmentation by grouping population into generational groups approximately 20 years birth years each. The theory assumes that each generation's behavior and attitudes are affected by technology and key events. The theory can be applied when the decision maker of the buyer company is identified or by whom the targeted segment is represented (Atherton 2020, 55.)

The baby boomers born 1946 – 1964, the post-World War II generation. The youngest baby boomers are now in their fifties and the oldest - in their sixties, continue to represent lucrative market for some business industries. The generation of Baby Boomers has some characteristic traits: optimism, collectivism, independence. They are interested in personal growth and learning new things. They grew up in a period of prosperity and optimistic views, supported by the feeling that their generation was special and able to change the world.

Generation values the most work ethics, self-respect and following strong moral principles in the workplace. They are oriented to efficient teamwork (Yang & Guy 2006, 276). They measure their success in material things and are therefore interested in rewards. This generation dislikes laziness and values stability, they believe that one must work hard – and for a long time – to achieve success (Volkova & Chiker 2016, 85; Kotler & al. 2017, 75.)

Generation X born 1965 – 1976, smaller than baby boomers. Very result-oriented and focus on the outcome above the process. They seek success, though less materialistic than the other groups; they value experience. They do the research about the product before acquisition, prefer quality to quantity. Russian studies say that this generation is ready for change, practical, technically competent, and appreciates the possibility to choose from multiple options. Their families and private life are one of the greatest values to them, meaning that they would be unlikely to sacrifice their leisure time to go to work. (Gurova & Evdokimova, 2016, p. 157; Kotler & al. 2017, 75.)

Generation Y (Millennials) born 1977 – 2000. They represent a larger segment than the baby boomers. Mostly faced unemployment but grew up with the technology. Generation Y is rather individualistic, its representatives want to stand out as individuals and are determined to reach their goals. Some Russian studies state that people in Generation Y are ready for change and have a flexible way of thinking, they prefer variety in everything but are easily influenced by fashion and brands. They value the work-life balance but prefer their leisure time to be diverse and intense (Gurova & Evdokimova 2016, 155; Kotler & al. 2017, 76.)

Generation Z – born after 2000. Young consumers who represent the tomorrow's market. Even more comfortable with the digital technology than Gen Y. They tend to blend online and offline worlds, prefer shopping online. Generation Z wishes for comfort and simplicity, they are practical but also care about their emotional, physical, and financial safety. They are more self-oriented than the representatives of Generation Y. One of the foreign studies has shown that social environment is important to Generation Z. They are self-confident and would like to guarantee themselves a happy future. They know that work plays an important role in the fulfillment of their dreams. (Kotler & al. 2017, 76.)

2.4 Customer Journey Map Key Elements

Customer journey map is a visual representation of the customer's interactions with the company. It is made from the user perspective describing what happens at each stage of interaction, what obstacles, experiences, thoughts, and emotions the user has. It is important that customer journey can start before the customer is aware of the company's existence. Customer journey map help identify the Moments of Truth that influence the most on the buyer's decision. (Chapin 2017.) Components of the customer journey map are:

Buyer persona

Determine the company goals and hopes regarding the development of the customer journey map. Beyond company's own aims, it is important to determine what the customers' goals are. What do they want to achieve at the end of the buying process? These fictional personas will be based on research that includes surveying the real, existing customers, and will establish the unique desires of the ideal clients. (Yarbrough 2020.)

Phases

A finite amount of time (e.g., 1 week or 1 year) or variable phases (e.g., consideration, evaluation, purchase, post purchase phase) (Grocki 2014).

Channels and touchpoints

There are many occasions when a potential customer might interact with the brand, both online and in person. These interactions are known as touchpoints. When creating a customer journey map, marketer must list all the most likely places that customers might meet the brand. This data can be found by polling existing customers, using analytics tools, or by doing searches for the brand online. While working on this phase, a marketer can map out any potential touchpoints the company wants to build into the process in the future. By careful determining of these points of contact, emotions, thoughts, concerns customer face can be revealed. (Yarbrough 2020.)

Emotions

This is the most important, help to identify buyer's thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions when moving through the journey. Detailed description of the touchpoints can show when customers are getting lost or mislead, as well as missing areas when you can interact with the audience. Identifying those issues company can impact them, for example simplify the process or implement some marketing activities. (Yarbrough 2020.)

2.4.1 Target Market Segment

A buyer persona is an ideal representation of the customer segment. This is a fictional character who embodies characteristics of the target buyers. Recognizing buyer personal allow marketer to formulate messages and content just for those people. It is possible that there would be several buyer personas as different people buy different products and services from one business. (Newberry 2020.)

There two ways to create a buyer persona in online marketing. A company can start from identifying their ideal customer from the market research, identify their motivations and needs, conduct interview. Also, a business marketer should analyze followers in social media channels and create a buyer persona(s) based on the online audience, analyze their behavior. (Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Mayer & Johnston 2009, 239-40.)

Social listening is analysis of social activity on social media channels by the followers. Social listening can be conducted with the use of analytics of social media platforms to help understand audience's behavior and motivations. Social listening can provide information about the content audience loves. Whether it is videos, images, posts, stories depending also on the social media platform. The time of the day when the audience is the most active and through what device. Also, the most interesting topics and issues of the audience. (Atherton 2020, 64-67.)

Analytics can provide information of what the audience think of the company. This is called a sentiment analysis. The analysis is done by analyzing the comments about the brand whether the comments are positive, negative, or neutral. (Atherton 2020, 71.)

Table 1 represents a template for a buyer persona creation. Demographic information should be included such as a fictional name, age, interest, job title,

as well as goals, pain points and buying patterns and motivation. (Newberry 2020.)

Table 1. Buyer persona framework (adapted from Atherton 2020, 77)

Segment differentiation/geo-demographic information	Segment description/ Behavioral and psychographic information	Social media segment description/ Emotional, contextual connected information
Who they are? – age, income, gender, generation, job position. Where they live? – town, country, region.	What are their fears? – worries at work and family What are their challenges? – what obstacles they have in reaching their goals. What are their life-style/dreams/motivation/values? – their hobbies, professional goals, personal goals. What problems do customers want to solve with the product?	What content do they love? – topics, types of media, brands they follow. Who do they care about? – influencers, competitors. How they engage? – device, channel, time, place. What they feel about the company? – sentiments, comments, opinion.

2.4.2 Customer Journey Map

Now in the era of digital technology consumers interact with companies in a more complex way than it used to be before. Traditional sales funnel assumes that customers start with a big variety of brands in mind and then narrow down until the decision making. Today consumers interact with brands chaotically, they might expand the pool of brands before narrowing it down. Digital Interaction continues after consumer has acquired the product or service. Consumers still want to buy a value when buy a product. What has changed is when—at what touch points—they are most open to influence, and how you can interact with them at those points. After a purchase these consumers may remain happy or unsatisfied, publicly promoting or criticizing the company, contributing to the brands' development. (Edelman 2010.)

Edelman D. (2010) has described a “consumer decision journey”, adopted for the digital marketing. Stages described by him will be used when creating a map.

Digital customer journey involves four stages: consider, evaluate, buy, and enjoy, advocate, bond.

Consider. Initially potential buyers are thinking about buying the product or service. They might have seen some advertising, recommended by a friend or have a problem to solve. According to the traditional sales funnel, this stage would include the largest number of brands but, it can start with just one brand in mind. (Atherton 2020, 17.)

Evaluate. At this stage customer start to notice other brands and can add and subtract brands from the consideration set. In the digital journey customer is one click away from the competitor. (Atherton 2020, 17.)

Usually for B2B customers this process will require time and several persuasion approaches. (Atherton 2020,15.)

Buy. In the traditional funnel this is the most important stage, brand has reached its goal. The purchase does mean success for the company but not necessarily for the customer. Customers can feel unsecure of they have the right choice. (Atherton 2020, 17.)

Enjoy, advocate, bond. After purchasing a product, consumer experiences it. It is time to validate the reasons why the product was bought from the brand. Companies should provide support oh how to use and enjoy the product or service. If consumer enjoys the product, he or she can increase brand awareness by the word of mouth and reviews. Bond ideally should be the ultimate goal of the brand. Making sure that customer becomes loyal and comes back. (Atherton 2020, 19.)

Usually, customer does not have a goal to buy a product but rather solve the problem, satisfy the need. Customer journey does not stop when customer purchases the product. Company's goal should be to concentrate on the enjoyment and experience of the customer, and to convert customers to loyal ones. (Atherton 2020, 19.)

Digital customer journey should be done by identifying the campaign goal, recognizing the relevant stages of the journey and then choosing the appropriate content. For example, if marketing campaign goal would be to sell product or

service, first three stages should be examined, their touchpoints and ways to influence them.

2.5 Social Media Marketing

This subchapter will describe social media platforms, how to use them, including the paid advertisements. Also, KPIs be covered, why and how to use and measure them.

Nowadays when people spend a lot of time in virtual world, social media presence of the company is crucial. Social media allows the company to build a strong brand online which is critical success factor in increasingly competitive markets. (Kotler & Pfoertsch 2010, 3.)

The beauty of social media marketing is that anything can be measured. Manager can measure the cost of each ad, the emotional appeal of the audience etc as well as tracking, testing. Allows to detect patterns and triggers to refine the content and advertising. Social media can create a great value for the company if used correctly. (Ginty & al. 2012, 4).

The main purpose of social media is to support long-term value of strong relationship with key audience. (Kim 2016, 81)

Channel selection criteria: (Atherton 2020, 108)

- Audience volume opportunity
- Audience quality profile match
- Audience behavior match
- Audience engagement rates
- Available advertising opportunities

It is important to understand how the audience behaves in each channel the company is considering using and to match the usage to the behavior of the audience.

Analyze each channel for what it is used. Choose primary and secondary channels. (Atherton 131).

2.5.1 Facebook for business

Facebook has 1.56 billion active users a day. Globally the average user spends almost 1 hour per day on Facebook. A Facebook page is a public

presence like a personal profile. A company can raise awareness, track advertising, collect audience insights, sell its products and services and chat with its followers. There are 70 million Facebook business pages worldwide. Pages are equivalent of business profiles. (Conley 2019.)

In 2018 Mark Zuckerberg has announced a switch in Facebook newsfeed algorithm to prioritize “meaningful social interaction” over “relevant content”. The social media platform will de-prioritize videos, photos, and posts shared by businesses and media outlets, so called “public content”, in favor of content produced by a user’s friends and family to “making sure that time spent on Facebook is time well spent”. But the impact of this switch varies depending on the type of content and how the audience interacts with it. (Wong 2018.) The Facebook algorithm chooses posts to be displayed on a user’s News Feed based on how likely it is that user will have a positive reaction to the post and be “good for people’s well-being.” Organic content that promotes comments and conversations are considered as valuable for the algorithm. (Wong 2018; Mullery 2021) For the video content it is recommended to have videos at least 1 minute long, though Facebook recommends 3 minutes long videos, to encourage longer viewer duration to capture attention (Mullery 2021).

Facebook algorithm also uses relevancy score to measure the likelihood of the user to respond positively on the piece of content. This score can be measured by the SMM manager in the testing phase while creating an ad. Score range from 1 to 10. By increasing the relevance score manager can improve the performance of the ad and reduce ad costs. (Atherton 2020, 141.)

Facebook tools allow company to create an “authentic relationship” with its followers. Post high-quality content, being helpful for ones who are seeking customer service. Adding profile and cover photos give the first impression about the organization and should be chosen correctly. These photos are visual representation of a company. Adding a short but succinct description about the company is also necessary. (Conley 2019.)

Nearly two billion people on Facebook could potentially see the company’s business page. When user like or comment on the page, their friends see the company’s name in the newsfeed, so the viral effect work well. (Coles 2018, 34.)

There is an option for the users, which can be turned off, to be allowed to post on the wall of the brand page. Organization would decide whether it wants to allow this kind of activity for its followers. If the company is worried of negative posts, it can be seen as an opportunity to learn from the customers. Otherwise, it is a great way to raise interaction and engagement. (Coles 2018, 43.)

Using Facebook live is a great tool for broadcasting events or setting webinars for the flowers and creating interaction in the moment (Coles 2018, 46).

2.5.2 V Kontakte – Russian Facebook

Vkontakte (Vk) is a social media platform widely used among Eastern Europe and Russian-speaking users. Though, it has smaller number of users, Vk is often called the Russian Facebook. It is created for users to communicate with each other, share digital content, and intended for businesses and brands to use as a means of promotion and marketing. Structure and design of Vk is like Facebook, such as Groups, Pages, and personal profiles. 97 million of active users a day. (Cleverish 2019.)

Atherton 2002, 122. V Kontakte can become a priority channel for Russian-speaking audience.

2.5.3 Instagram for business

Over 2 million businesses connect with people on Instagram. It has an even split of male and female users. There are 400 million daily active users. Instagram is the best image-sharing application, enable adding creating filters both to photos and videos, owned by Facebook. Now brands are encouraging their customers to post pictures of themselves with the brand product or while using the service. A company can create a special hashtag for users to post on it, and then use the pictures for the marketing purposes. Instagram tools that have proven to be popular are Stories and Live. (Coles 2018, 123.)

2.5.4 Paid ads on Social Media Platforms

Due to the algorithms of social media platforms, only some of the content can be seen by the users depending on their interaction with the brand account or page. This is called an organic social – content that is posted for free. Ads (non-organic social content) can be used for raising awareness, driving traffic to the website or conversion. (Coles 2018, 46-48.)

Using paid advertising on social media platforms depend on the campaign goals and social media audience. After analysis of the social media audience company can realize that it does not correspond to the target audience of the organization. In this case paid advertising will be important to attract the target audience. If company choses to work with the existing audience, then it can succeed reaching its goals with the organic content. The best way is the combination of both organic and paid content. Paid ads can be targeted directly to the decision makers in B2B selling. (O'Neill 2020.)

According to the latest survey, 58% of consumers visit a brand's social pages before visiting their website. For the organic content company should minimize promotional and sales talks and focus on delivering valuable content for its followers (relevant topics can be found out from customer journey map for example). Also, company should aim to reinforce its brand through communicating its values, mission, and goals. (O'Neill 2020.)

If company choses to use paid social media, they are some rules to follow to succeed:

- Target the right audience
- Cleary express “call to action”, what a customer needs to do.
- Short and consistent message, which resonates with the target audience/Promote best organic content.
- Testing ads, amending them.

Facebook allows the company to choose the target audience exactly by its location, interests, age etc. Depending on the objectives manager can choose to: drive traffic to the website, collect emails for customer database, to get more fans for the FB page. A small company can have a budget of 50 \$ a week. (Coles 2018, 46-48.)

On Instagram the most popular are Stories and Stories ads have proven to be efficient, run through Facebook Ad Manager. Again, business can choose the goal it is pursuing. (Miles 2019, 180.) Instagram Story Ad is recommended to be up to 15 seconds. It has a “Call to action button” to choose from: subscribe, go to the website, learn more, add link etc. (Sherrad 2020.)

Paid ads on VK platform are like Facebook (Vk 2020).

2.5.5 Current Social Media Analysis

Before starting to design the campaign, it is important to analyze the current social media situation: the audience, content they are interested, level of their activity. Analytical tools of the social media platforms can provide this information.

Analyzing the audience. Comparing the geographic region of the platforms' online audience with the general audience analysis from the organization. Analyze users who come to the website from social media platforms. Determine typical needs of the users such as what pages they were going to and what content was available, and behavior of the users such as did they say on the page, did they share the content, did they convert. Through audience analysis, identify which people from the general audience of the organization are using social media, what they are using it for, and what actions or behaviors they take because of that interaction. (Kim 2016, 37).

Content analysis by applying analytical tools filters.

Content and engagement analysis by applying analytical tools filters. Different types of engagement generate different "value". Analyze how the audience is interacting with the brand: like, shares, comments, saves, website clicks. (Kim 2016, 39.)

Analysis of competitors, industry leaders with who to make a benchmarking. Areas to note what platforms are mostly used, the type of audience engagement. Also, design and content they provide. (Kim 2016, 45.)

2.5.6 How to Increase Customer Engagement

Successful communication is a two-way dialogic communication. This means interaction between organization and the audience – not just a pushing of content from the company. (Kim 2016, 81.) Companies that can encourage communication not only organization and consumer but also between consumer and consumer, will benefit the most (Kerpen 2019, 84.) According to the Facebook algorithms described in the subchapter above, content that generate positive engagement, is considered valuable and therefore increase awareness and, in turn higher sales (Kerpen 2019, 62).

An organization is engaged with its customers when it truly interests in what they have to say, how they feel about product or service or any feedback they would like to share (Kerpen 2019, 85.) Marketing should not be solely about the brand, company's products or features. Company should inspire their audience to talk or to get involved in already ongoing conversations. Messages should be about the customers, their hopes, dreams and wants. Being authentically interested in customers and truly concerned what they say and feel certainly contribute to creating long-lasting connections through social media. To create an atmosphere where all comments and opinions are respected, and dialogue is welcomed and encouraged. (Kerpen 2019, 63.)

Another engagement for a company is to be transparent and honest with its customers in person and publicly in social media. Being transparent means to share information about the company that was hidden before, that allows customers to make the most informed decision. Organization can speak openly about its financial situations, hiring processes, introduce employees. Transparency also applies in a dialogue with the customers, comments, and company's beliefs. Through transparency company may receive customer's feedback, insights about their pain points and concerns. (Kerpen 2019, 137-138.)

People are more engaged when they receive information in the form of stories rather than pure facts. "When a person listens to a story, both sides of the brain are working. The left brain is processing the words, while the right one is filling the gaps". It is easier for people to digest information visually and become more emotionally engaged. (Rose 2005, 21). Every company has at least one story to tell about how it got started. The company can share a story of how it survived through the hard times, funny moments happened to the employees, what key customers did it have. (Kerpen 2019, 174.)

Another important keystone to successful engagement is company's' readiness to respond to the comments of the audience, both positive and negative. The marketer should accept the fact that he or she cannot control the online posting of negative comments. Instead of deleting or ignoring critical comments, it is more efficient to formulate a plan how to react on them. Solution: respond quickly publicly, then handle the issue privately. Kerpen 2019, 95-99.) At the same time, thank and welcome happy customers to share more.

(Kerpen 2019, 107). Company should be opened to continue conversation after responding to the first comment if customer is intended to. The ongoing-going conversation might lead to something more. (Kerpen 2019, 113).

2.5.7 Content Plan and Distribution

In the previous subchapter the importance of customer engagement was discussed. Here the author will describe content marketing, types, tools and how to create a content plan.

As discussed previously, content should be relevant, helpful and valuable to the audience. Content that addresses customers’ needs and pain points. Focus on “conversation” instead of “broadcast.” (Kim 2016,

Customer needs through content marketing. According to Chaffey (2019, 374), there are four types of customer needs that must be satisfied with content. Atherton has added two more types.

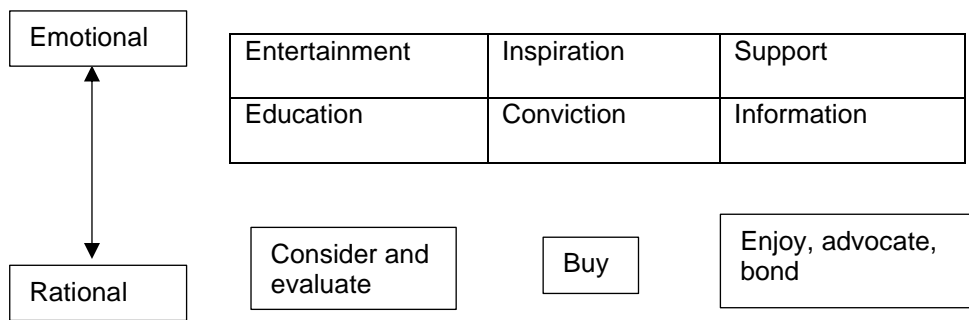


Figure 3. A development of the Chaffey Content Marketing Matrix to Enable It to be Mapped to the Edelman Digital Customer Journey (adapted from Atherton 2020, 90)

According to Chaffey and Atherton, there are six types of need-based content. There are two types of content suitable for each stage of the customer journey. Entertaining and educational content is useful for the awareness stage (consider and evaluate), inspiration and conviction drives buying decisions. Support and information are important at post-buying stage when customer enjoys and evaluated the product, service, or experience. Depending on the customer journey pain points and campaign goals, company can choose on

what need-based content to concentrate. Also, company can vary whether to trigger emotional or rational approach.

Tool that can be used for content creation is content pillar. Content pillar is a piece of content on the specific topic or theme that can be broken into smaller pieces and distributed in different forms of information (posts, videos, images, stories). Company manager can brainstorm 4-5 different content pillars targeted at different personas, as an example. (Barnhart 30 September 2018.)

In his article, Ellering (2017) describes different types of content:

- Posts
- Videos
- Infographics
- Presentation (webinars and conferences)
- How-to-guides
- Case studies
- Templates and checklists
- Photos

Aboulhosn (2020) recommends including the following features when creating a content plan:

- Publish date/Time
- Post topic/Content pillar
- Notes
- Content type
- Platform
- Content goal

2.5.8 KPIs and KPIs Metrics

KPIs are vital instruments to understand how successful the process is. Carefully chosen indicators will show the overall performance and areas needed to be improved. (Marr 2012, 4.)

Parmenter (2010, 6-8) describes characteristics of KPIs as follows: KPIs are not financial (otherwise they would become result indicators), KPIs are measured frequently (daily/weekly), change in the KPIs directly and instantly influences the performance of the company. KPIs require specific actions from all team members followed by the result.

Social media metrics can be divided into two types of measures: volume measures and sentiment measures. Volume measures are quantitative by its nature such as number of posts, like, shares. Sentiment measures try to esti-

mate the balance of positive and negative engagements, and seen is a qualitative data, however, produces in the numerical form. The measurement evaluates emotional expressions by relying on computer algorithms. (Dahl 2018, 204-205.)

According to the figure 3, KPI metrics are aligned with the B2B sales process funnel. The figure illustrates what KPIs are needed to be measured on each stage to measure the effectiveness of the campaign.

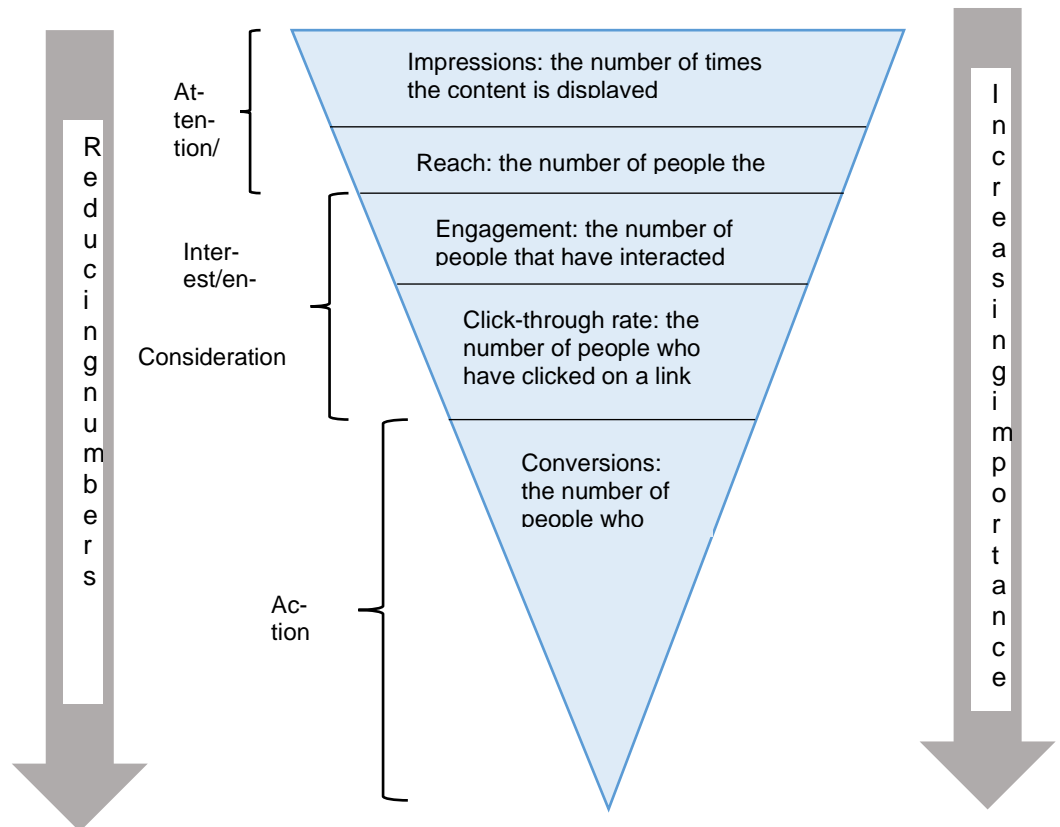


Figure 4. A Development of Key Social Media Metrics Aligned with Traditional Sales Funnel (adopted from Atherton 2020, 139)

Different social media platforms can be used for different purposes. For example, if LinkedIn is used to drive traffic to the website, then click-through rates would be measured. If Instagram is used for brand awareness, manager should track the number of Instagram Story views. And Facebook is used for advertising, cost-per-click (CPC) is a common success metric. (Newberry & LePage 2020.)

On the first stage of the campaign a marketing manager need to measure reach - the number of people who have seen the content and impressions – the number of times the content is displayed. (Atherton 2020, 138.)

When potential customers become aware of the company's existence, they do not know or trust the company on the early stage. The next step is to start developing relationship with them. This is done through engagement with the audience by providing relevant content to generate interest and desire. KPIs to measure: the number of people who have interacted with the content (likes, shares, comments, mentions), and click-through rate – the number of people who have clicked on a link to the website or other link. The amount of traffic to the website from social media campaigns is crucial. It's the first step in converting followers into customers, meaning that they are interested to find out more about the company. If social media campaign gets a lot of reach and engagement but have little web traffic, this could be a sign to amend messages to the audience. (Atherton 2020, 138 & Carter 2018.)

Lead Conversion Rate is the number of visitors who have completed the desired action on the website (usually means made a sale). The numbers can be tracked through Google Analytics. (Carter 2018.)

Conversion Rate = (Conversions/Total Visitors) * 100%

Non-Revenue Conversion can be for example customers signing up for the newsletter. Now of Covid-19, this conversion can be very valuable for some industries.

Average Engagement Rate is the number of engagement actions (e.g., likes, shares, comments) a post receives relative to your total number of followers (Shleyner 2020).

In addition, it is important to calculate how much social media activity costs to the company by Atherton 2020, 141:

- Cost per click (CPC): The cost of a social media post divided by the number of people who clicked on the link within that post
- Cost per lead (CPL): The cost of a social media activity divided by the number of leads that activity generated
- Cost per thousand impressions (CPM): The cost of a social media activity divided by one-thousandth of the number of impressions that activity generated

- Cost per view (CPV): The cost of a social media activity divided by the number of views that activity generated

2.6 Summary

Social media marketing should be included in the business strategy. As illustrated in the figure 2, to create a successful social media marketing campaign, company should demonstrate its competence to solve customer problems through social media and build trust.

B2B customers usually need more interactions with the company to be ready to buy the product or service. Social media is a great tool to establish the constant communication and generate the desirable action from the customers.

It is harder to create engaging content for a B2B company, however customer feel more emotional when making a B2B purchase. Therefore, company should strive to create emotional connections with the customers.

3 Company Strategy, Social Media Analysis and User Experience

This chapter describes the internal strategy of the case company, analysis of its social media activities, and analysis of pain point of the potential customers. Data collection was conducted through qualitative interviews with company employees and separately with SMM manager, and with the Russian-speaking B2B company that showed interested in the participating in the fair in Helsinki. The interview frameworks are presented in the first subchapter, followed by the analysis and key findings of the interviews in the latter subchapters.

3.1 Data collection

Research methods were semi-structured interviews with company's co-founders.

The interview was conducted on the 1st of March 2021. The goal was to make sure messages sent through social media are consistent with the company's strategy. Answers to the questions will help to shape marketing messages and generate some content topics. The main interview was conducted with the Sales Director. Additional and clarifying answers were provided by The Director of International Exhibitions. The interview was lasting about 1 hour all together. Conducted in Russian and Finnish, recorded first and transcribed afterwards. The respondents have the most experience in the field, about 25 and 11 years, therefore were chosen for the interview.

1. Table 3. Company co-founders interview framework

Key Questions	Follow-up questions	Topic
1. What is the main purpose for the company's existence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would you include your company in the fair business or consulting business industry? - What does the company do and for whom? - Why you do what you do (except profit)? - How do you do it? - What does the company do the best? - How is it different from similar companies abroad? - What consulting services does the company offer? - How do you achieve your position as a "reliable partner" as mentioned on the website? - What does your logo represent? (Brand image) - If your brand would be a person, who would it be? How would you describe your brand? 	Mission, Vision, Objectives
2. What are the corporate values? (3-9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maybe concluded from personal values of the company employees. - What is the most important value? 	Corporate Values
3. Why are you aiming at Russian-speaking countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the typical customer company - What are the main needs you assume your customers expect you can fulfill? - How would you describe the value your company bring to the customers? - Why should customers buy from your company? 	Target Market/ Values for the customers
4. What is the competition like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are they? - What are their services and prices? 	Competitors
5. What is the main goal of the campaign expo PulPaper 2022?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the main goals of the campaign? - Duration of the campaign? 	Social Media Marketing Campaign
6. How do you see your company in 5 years? How do you think you can get there? Are you thinking about expanding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether they are interested in the company growth? 	

An interview with SMM manager of the company was conducted 2nd of April 2021. The semi-structured interview was done online.

Table 4. SMM manager interview framework

Key Questions	Follow-up questions	Topic
1. What is online audience characteristics?	Age, gender, geographical location, time of activity, level of activity	Audience
2. What are the measures of KPIs?	Reach, Impressions, CTR, Engagement Rate, amount of traffic to the website, non-revenue conversion rate.	KPIs
3. Webpage activity	Visitors' footprints on the webpage, what interests them the most.	Webpage surfing analysis

Client interview was the most important and insightful part of the research. The goal was to find out challenges while interaction with the company online, their concerns and pains, interests also and to conclude recommendations for improvement. The interview was conducted by e-mail 5th of April 2021. The respondent company represents the ideal potential client of the case company by its size and location. The respondent also has shown interest in trade fairs in Helsinki. The online live interview would be more efficient as author could ask more in-depth following questions, but the respondent did not have an opportunity for that.

Table 5. Potential customer interview framework

Key Questions	Follow-up questions	Topic
1. Where do you get information about international fairs?	Platforms used to find information about international fair trades	Where they find the information?
2. What is important to you when choosing what international fair to attend?	Location, pricing, list of participants, other.	Where does the customer journey start? - need/problem recognition
3. Why do you attend international expos? What do you expect to achieve?		Objectives for participation in the fair/Criteria they use for measuring the success

4. Who in your company decides of participating in the international fair?		
5. What challenges do you face when participating or organizing participation in the international fair?		
6. Have you participated in international fairs and exhibitions?		
7. What do you think about online exhibition? Especially in nowadays situation		
8. Are you familiar with Global Trade and Exhibition oy and its services? 9. What are your impressions from the case company's website?		Case company services

3.2 Reliability and Validity of Data

Researchers refer to reliability and validity to demonstrate the quality of the research (Daymon & Holloway 2002, 88). Measure of reliability – record the data and decisions the author have made during the project (Daymon & Holloway 2002, 90). Also, author actions were aligned strictly with the sequence of project tasks and checked regularly.

In the qualitative research validity refers to credibility and trustworthiness (Silverman 2013, 285).

Company interview was conducted on the place with most of the team present which defines the trustworthiness of the interview.

Customer interview was done only with 1 potential customers. Therefore, it would be hard to generalize answers to all customers. However, there is still value for the company.

Internal validity how to make sure - After the interview with the commissioning company, author put together all information received and has formulated key statements for the company. These statements will be presented to the company employees for their confirmation and alignment with the areas of development. To ensure that author's interpretations is compatible with the interpretation of participants. (Daymon & Holloway 2002, 90).

3.3 Key Findings

The author has done a descriptive coding of the qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell 2018, 193). In this subchapter key findings from all the interviews will be presented.

3.3.1 Interview with the Company

What is the main purpose of the company's existence and what business field would you refer your company to?

The main function of the case company is to provide services for *internationalization* to the companies in Russian speaking countries to enter European markets. These services include participation in exhibitions, business meetings, conferences and seminars. Services the company offers: organization of participation, translation and negotiation, preparation of the marketing materials (videos, brochures etc.). The second function is to take Finnish and other *European* companies to the Russian speaking market.

Please describe your typical company client.

SMEs from different business fields in the Russian speaking and European countries. Also, Russian speaking export centers and any companies who offer internationalization services.

Please describe your competitors.

The company has one competitor on the Finnish market - Arvelin International Oy, that also organizes and provide services for the companies to participate in trade fairs worldwide. In the Russian market according to the case company, there are no competitors with the equivalent level of the services.

The case company is the only and official representative of the Messukeskus, Helsinki, Finland. The case company's uniqueness and differentiation are having many years of experience working in the Russian and Finnish markets and understanding of both cultures and having long list of contacts in Finland and Russia.

Tell me about your brand

The company wants to position its brand as positive as possible. Brand image the company wants to communicate is "meidän kassa toimiminen ratkaisee monta ongelmaa yhdellä kertaa" "cooperation with us can solve many problems for the partner at once". Makes internationalization much easier for the client. Main colors are blue and white (Finnish flag colors) to show "ko-timaisuus aspekti" referring to the "domesticity". "E" letter refers to the word "exhibition". Company wants to show itself as professional. "Professional and reliable". Event management field in Finland is not on the high level compare to that abroad. One should go abroad to learn new possibilities and skills. Etiquette and cultural knowledge are important. Luckily, here in Finland people have strong educational background, language skills. Trendy, innovative, sustainable.

How can you guarantee your professional level and results to the client?

Company promise to the client is to organize the "*Possibility*" to internationalize for the company as much as possible. The company guarantees to find possible partners who would be truly interested in the client's company products or services if that was agreed. The client company would get much more *resulted experience* (meeting/participation) compare to that one if they would come by themselves due to the equipment and large network the case company has. *Partnership* network connections.

What are the company values?

Experience in the field, the staff has all together 50 years of experience in exhibitions. Understanding of the business operations in Russian and how events are organized there. Juridical personnel. Straight contacts in Finland and Russia.

What do you customer want to achieve?

1. To become a subcontractor. 2. Open sales abroad, find dealer. 3. To find seller from Finland or EU to their domestic market.

How to measure the efficiency of the campaign?

Because of the covid it is hard to estimate the goal in terms of KPIs. It depends on the free area left in Messukeskus for the exhibition.

Plans

Hope that situation will get better in the world. The company will grow very fast.

What is your company's mission?

Our mission is to help our clients to enter the markets they want to. Most companies when they are at their beginning of the internationalization journey might have difficulties with deciding in this case it is better to ask specialists, to give them necessary recommendations so that the internationalization would be the most effective. About the vision: to develop the business and become a big player on the market. Our differentiation point is that we have many years of experience and we know to communicate with different people and company representatives. Intercommunication.

What are your customers' fears?

The loss of the reputation when entering new market and making mistakes, financial loss, we make sure our client company will avoid mistakes while entering the new market. We are making all the process

The author would identify the values as: "To deliver great experience for our clients so that they can concentrate on their business goals while presenting at the exhibition. We will take care of the rest." Also, cultural perception of the country may play a role in the brand perception and company's values. The case company is Finland-based. Interview questions to the interviews regarding the country associations will be addressed further. (move to the practical part)

Also, the case company could see itself in a few years as a linkage between Russian-and Finnish-speaking market. Each campaign should relate to the vision of the company (Kim 2016, 24). The vision states what the company wants to be by a certain time (Parmenter 2010, 38).

3.4 Conclusion

Company has at least one competitor in the domestic market which was mentioned. On the global scale there are many different companies who offer similar services. Author has found one similar company on the Russian market that case company can be compared with AVS Show Event Expo (<https://avshow.ru/>). This company has decided to concentrate now on finding and connecting buyers and sellers between Russia and other countries. The case company should be more realistic when assessing their competitors on the domestic and global scale. The huge advantage of the case company is its location in Finland and contact lists.

3.4.1 Interview with the SMM Manager

After interview with the SMM manager, it was decided to use Instagram platform for the marketing campaign as it is the most popular in Russia now. Some posts can be copied or linked to other platforms.

The case company competitor does not have an Instagram profile.

The situation on Instagram on 19 April 2022:

- Number of posts: 59
- Number of followers: 1322
- Number of following accounts: 766

Online audience is created based on the Instagram analytics in the attachment 3 taken the 2nd of April 2021.

Most of the audience is in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg, the rest is from the smaller cities. 70% of the audience is 25-44 years old, divided almost equally between men and women.

The rate of engagement February-March time is $(55/1322) * 100\% = 4,17\%$ which is considered as high (Mee 2020). From the 55 engagements, there are 50 likes.

Because of the Covid-19, there were no conversions this year so the conversion rate cannot be calculated. However, the website traffic of the year is 316 (31 from Instagram, 237 Facebook, and 45 V Kontakte). Each industry and niche have its own rating for high and low website traffic, depending also on the company's age (Bowdoin 2020). Taking into consideration the world's situation, the website traffic can be considered as average-high. For the further research is considered to study visitors' behaviour on the website, how much time they spend on the website and what topic interest them the most.

The reach level on Instagram was quite high when posts were published regularly.

3.4.2 Interview with Potential Customer

The interview was held by email with the potential customer who showed interest in participation in the fairs.

How do you get information about international trade fairs?

We get all information from the socialized online portals (websites). After participation in the fairs, we usually get an invitation for the next years fairs.

Have you participated in international trade fairs?

Our company participates in exhibitions every year. At first, exhibitions in the countries closest to us, for example, in Russia. Later, with the expansion of sales markets, we managed to participate in exhibitions in Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine.

We planned to visit exhibitions in Finland and Sweden this year, but, unfortunately, they were postponed.

What are your expectations and goals from participation in exhibitions?

The goal of participation in exhibitions is to find new clients, or to strengthen the image among the existing clients. We carefully study each exhibition to understand what to expect from it. However, the main thing that we need at the end of the exhibition is clients. An exhibition is considered successful for us if company who learned about us during the exhibition have become our client.

Do you use services of companies that organize participation in international exhibitions, or do you prefer to organize participation yourself?

We have received proposals on organizing participation in exhibitions, but we are quite successfully coping with this ourselves. Like that we immediately understand the budget, how we want to see the stand, etc.

What criteria are important for you when choosing an international exhibition? (For example: location, price, list of participants, other ...)

First, the country of an exhibition is important. If the market is new for us, or we want to attract more customers, then the cost of the exhibition does not matter. The main thing is that the theme of the exhibition is relevant to our business field as much as possible.

We also study the list of participants to understand in advance our potential contacts.

Who and how in your company decides on participation in exhibitions?

The final decision on participation in the exhibition is made by the CEO.

But first, we must identify possible exhibitions, since it often happens that in one country there are several exhibitions with similar themes, but with different scales and in different cities. We form a list of events and select the most important exhibitions based on the key criteria.

What difficulties do you see for your company / yourself when participating / organizing participation in the exhibition?

We do not have serious difficulties in organizing exhibitions and participating in them. The only thing we must consider is how to convey to the visitor of the exhibition what we represent. If this exhibition is in a distant country, we cannot bring samples of our goods there. Therefore, we compensate for this by the design of the stand.

Are you interested in taking part in international online exhibitions? (because for example in Finland some exhibitions were moved to the online format in 2021 due to the situation)

An exhibition is more interesting when it is held live. This is a different atmosphere and different experience. After all, there is no substitute for live communication with the visitors.

Are you familiar with Global Trade and Exhibition Oy? What are your impressions of the company? Company website?

Yes, we are familiar with this company. We found out about it when they wanted to take part in one of the Finnish exhibitions.

We liked that the company reminds about future exhibitions and quickly gets in touch with us. So is the company's website. It is filled with all the information you need.

3.5 Conclusion

Based on the interview, the main goal of the exhibitors is to attract new clients and sustain a positive company image among existing ones. After careful internet desktop research, the author concluded that acquiring new clients and buyers after the exhibition is the main goal for many exhibitors. Therefore, content should emphasize the topic of attracting buyers, organizing meetings, and signing contracts.

4 Analyzing the Results

The purpose of this chapter is to further analyze the interview results and connect them to the content plan development. Although, the results were outlined in the previous chapters, this chapter will provide deeper insight and further discussion about the same topics. Reading this chapter will give the reader a better understanding of the outcomes of the project objective and the project tasks 2,3 and 4.

4.1 Company Strategy

The purpose of the company existence is to offer internationalization services both to the Russian and Finnish speaking companies. The case company has all the needed resources and skills for that such as contacts, cultural and linguistic knowledge of Russian and Finnish. The case company understand customer needs and problems and is looking for the solutions.

4.2 Social Media Analysis

The goal for the case company in Instagram is to have 3 000 followers in one months (now there are 1324 followers).

After careful investigation of the similar companies who organize participation in the trade fairs worldwide. Companies' social media post do not generate much audience engagement, most of the post are regarding coming or previous exhibitions. (AVShow_official, Exposalon etc.)

However, when the case company will reach a limit of 3 000 followers and then 10 000. 10k number will allow company to use a "Swipe" feature and invite followers to the website directly through the swipe feature via stories. (Moeller 2019).

4.3 Persona and Customer Journey Map

Before starting a marketing, strategy company should identify its goals specifically. The case company cannot attract more exhibitors than there are free spots available in Messukeskus. The case company get some profit for the attracted companies. To get more profit, the case company should emphasize services they offer, find the value for the customers.

From the interview with a potential client, the main goal of participation is to attract clients and sustain brand image for the existing clients. The pain that was mentioned by the interviewee is the impossibility to bring samples of the company's products to the fair (e.g., building material). If case company provides solution to this problem, it can succeed. Based on the client interview and assessment of the online audience, the Persona was created (Figure 5).


Ekaterina Krasnova		SHORT NAME EKA
IMAGE 	OCCUPATION Marketing Specialist	
	NATIONALITY Russian	
	MARITAL STATUS Married	
AGE 38	QUOTE "Make decisions based on your personal value system".	
GENDER Female	DESCRIPTION <p>Background: Married, 1 child, practicing for 13 years. Master's degree in sales and marketing. Lives in Moscow.</p> <p>Company & Role: responsible for marketing activities, her words weigh when company is making crucial decisions.</p> <p>Channels: Laptop and phone</p> <p>Lifestyle: hectic, many interactions with people, result-oriented.</p> <p>Pain points: trying to balance working and personal life, wants to spend more time with the kid and family, used to travel a lot for business trips, looking for new solutions in a fast-changing world.</p>	

Figure 5. Persona

During the year 2020 there were challenges with selling in the company due to the Covid-19. Therefore, the author will concentrate on the 3 phases of the journey map: Initiation, Consideration and Decision (Figure 6). The exhibition and post-exhibition experience will be omitted.

Exhibitor Journey Map

Created with Smaply
Trial Version — smaply.com

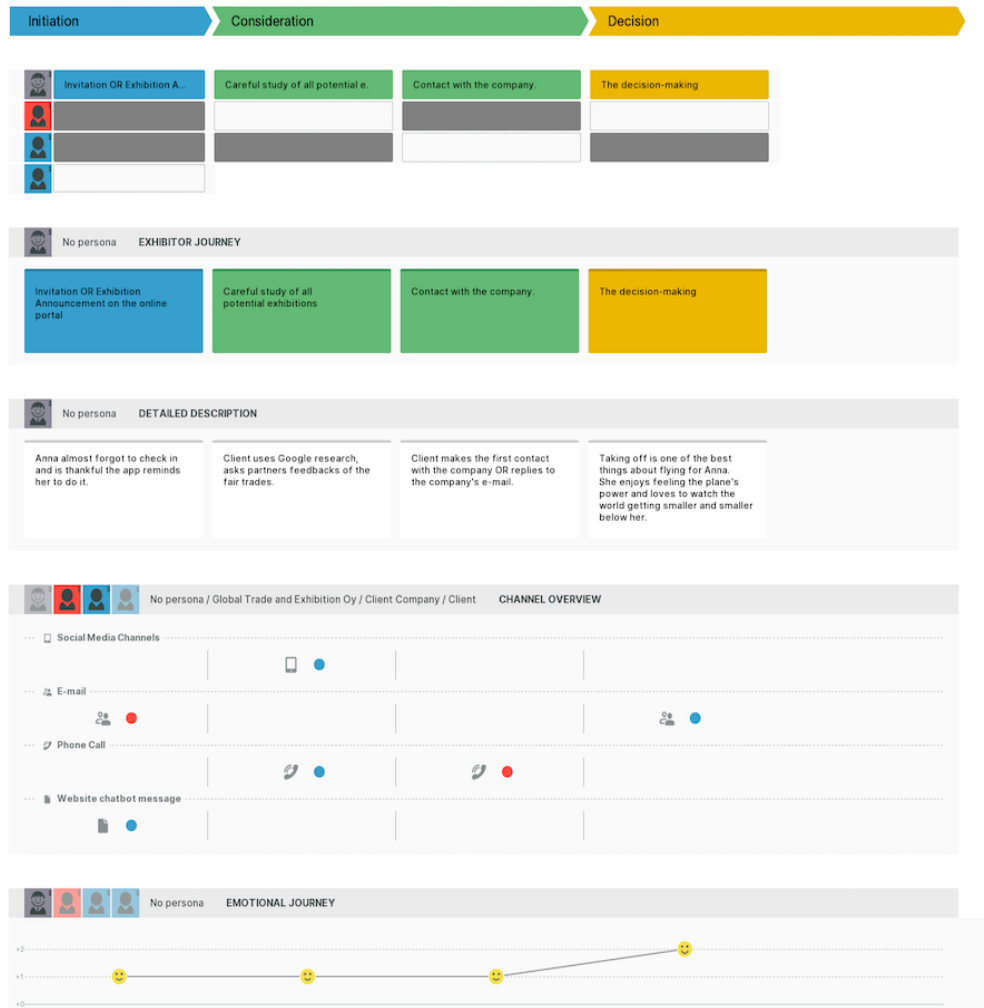


Figure 6. Customer Journey Map

5 To Prepare Example Content Suited for the Russian BtoB Clientele

After careful assessment of social media activities of the companies in the event industry, the author came to the conclusions that, most of the companies post current and future exhibitions and do not have much engagement in the discussion. The author could not find a company for benchmarking in social media.

5.1 Methods

The author has created a content plan in Excel table.

5.2 Outcomes

Number	Title	Additional Information	Category
1	The meaning of the brand Global Trade and Exhibition Oy	Describe the meaning of color and name. Blue refers to Finland. Values of Finland are transparency, trust, environment, gender equality and happiness.	Educational/Entertaining
2	How to get maximum results from the exhibition?	How to attract more clients?	Educational
3	Your company image on the international trade fair	How to create a positive company image abroad? What criteria to take into consideration when creating an image?	Educational
4	Why us?	The point of difference - Russian and Finnish culture and language knowledge, experienced; large network in Finland and Russia team	Educational/Inspirational
5	How we solved a problem?	Tell a story from the previous experience, funny or awkward and how the company has solved it	Entertaining/Inspiration
6	Customer experience	Feedback from the customer	Inspiration
7	What to do if you cannot bring the sample of your product to the exhibition?	Offer a solution to the company who cannot bring samples of their product, compensate the absence of sample by the stand design	Inspiration
8	Finnish design	How to make stand more attractive according to the Finnish style and design?	Education
9	Finnish business culture	Tips good to know when coming to Finland/business etiquette in Finland	Education/Entertaining
10	What to do in Helsinki while you are on the business trip?	Sightseeing, recommendations, places	Entertaining
11	Why to use an organizer company?	Outline advantages of using services of the case company	
12	The case company achievements in numbers	Describe work experience of 25 years/countries visited/number of successful stories/contracts/contacts/	Inspirational
13	Tips for the beginner exhibitor		
14	4 reasons to participate in online exhibitions	1. Easy to measure the effectiveness using metrics	Inspirational
15	How to measure the success of your participation in the exhibition?	The amount of contracts and contacts. The results can be usually measures in the long run (about 6 months). The amount of meetings. Source: https://www.metal-expo.ru/ru/participation/additional/effect	Educational
16	Exhibition - sales instrument/sales growth, what has changed? Plan your participation for the year 2022.	Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewbxPO-9lyk	Educational
17	What is an ideal exhibition?	Describe ideal exhibition: offers meet demand, great infrastructure, all leading companies and stakeholders of the industry are taking part	Educational
18	Update covid situation and regulations in Finland	New regulations and requirements, before, during and after exhibition; future expectations	Educational
19	How to attract buyer during the online exhibition?	Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byzhZff7zzY	Educational
20	ONLINE B2B matchmaking	What is a matchmaking and how to make one during an online event?	Educational
21	Describe a successful story of creating a partnership between international companies	Describe a successful partnership story which happened with the help of the case company	Educational/Inspirational

6 To evaluate project management and project outcomes

This chapter will provide a company's feedback on the project and author's self-evaluation and reflection.

6.1 Company Feedback

The case company was satisfied with the project outcome and content plan. The author got positive feedback from the company, and its readiness to implement and use content plan ideas. Insights for the customer interview were recorded. The company agreed to research customer pain points in-depth in the future.

6.2 Self-evaluation and reflection

The author has studied materials about event industry. Interview with the company has helped to understand how the commissioning company works. The author got the useful learning experience of holding an interview, she has analyzed the process afterwards and has drawn some conclusions.

Doing a research for the existing company is a way to understand how the theory is applied in the real business world.

Generally, the author considers her project as a successful one. She has aimed to apply her theoretical knowledge in the specialization field into the project. However, she would like to get a deeper understanding of the customer behavior by conducting an in-depth interview with potential clients, this would be insightful.

The author has also studied theory and step-by-step process of creating a marketing campaign plan. The results would be more insightful if author could conduct several in-depth interviews. However, with all the time and material resources, the project is quite successful.

7 Conclusions

This chapter will provide recommendations to the commissioning company from the author's point of view.

7.1 Key Findings and Outcomes

The company can offer great possibilities for the clients to create partnerships. The company is ready to offer its experience, contacts, skills, and instruments in finding potential partners.

7.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The author recommends conducting a SWOT- analysis for the company. Also, understand mission, vision, and values of the Messukeskus to be sure they are aligned with the ones of the case company. This is important for the consumers that they would have a clear and consistent picture, understand the concept, and build trust.

Think about adding channels Twitter and Youtube. Publish videos.

To regularly organize workshops/webinar online with partner companies. Increase video-type content and live videos.

To hold a live interview session with E. Manukovskaya, co-founder of the Expomap, event industry portal to raise awareness of the company.

The author has conducted an interview with the client via email. The further recommendation would be to research user experience to identify more pain points and offer solutions, to better understand company's clients.

To research website activity of the visitors.

To calculate and allocate the needed amount of money for the marketing campaign.

To use Targeting to choose from all online users the right target audience, companies who would be interested in entering international market. Study potential clients more to understand better their needs and wants and interests.

Instead of manual search of companies in the internet and sending marketing emails to them, I would call it the manual targeting.

To emphasize the possibilities for the online trade fairs. In case this world does not go back to the situation it was before. Study customer's concerns regarding online participation in the fairs, offer advantages of online fairs.

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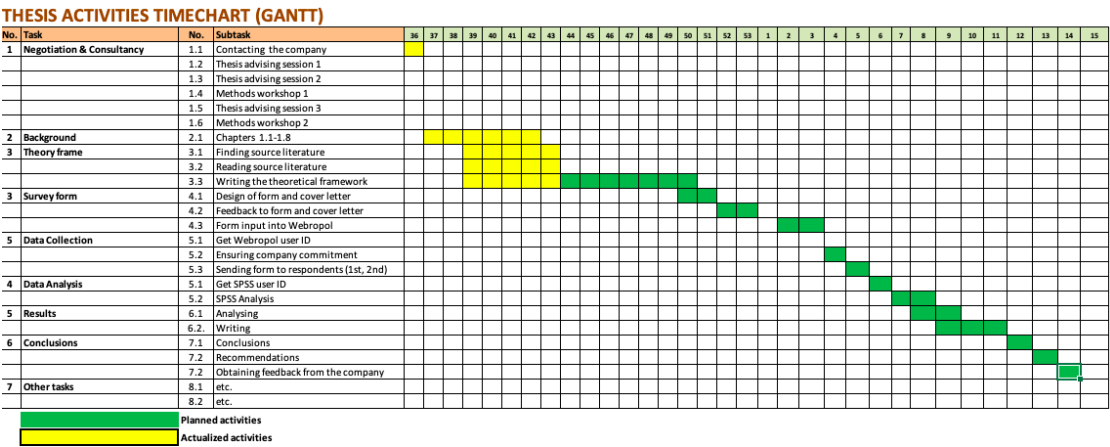
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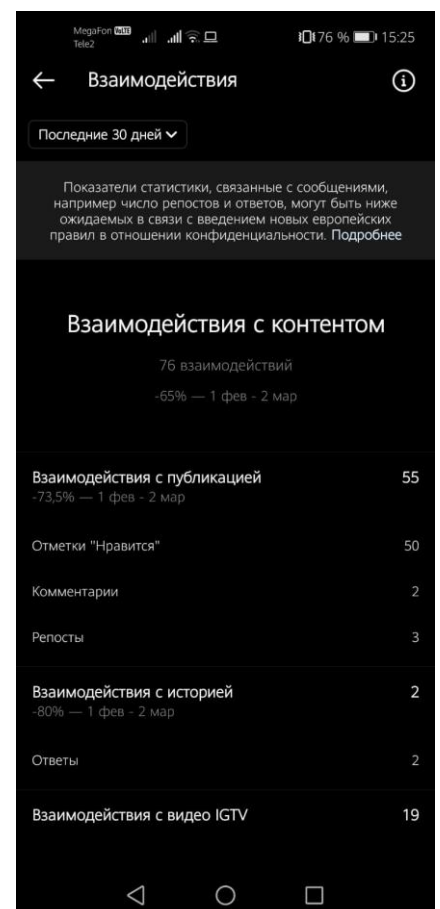
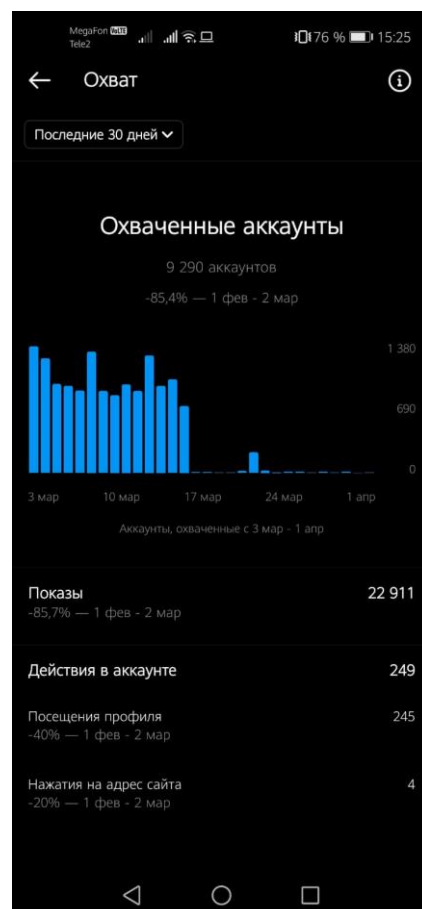
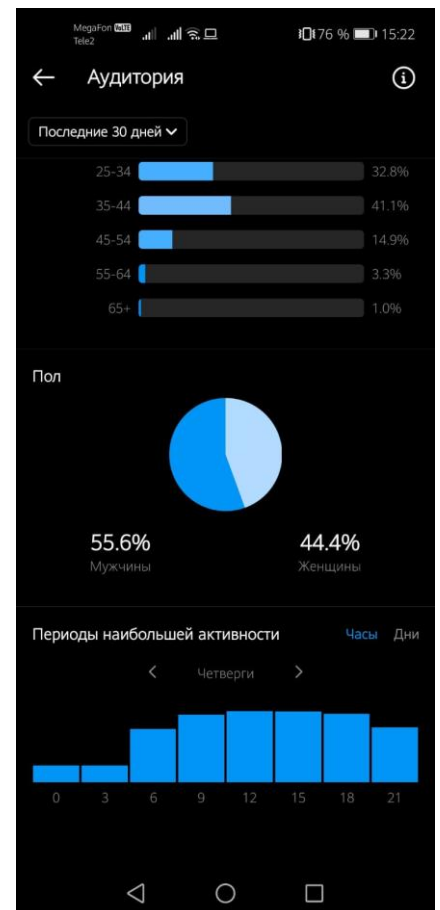
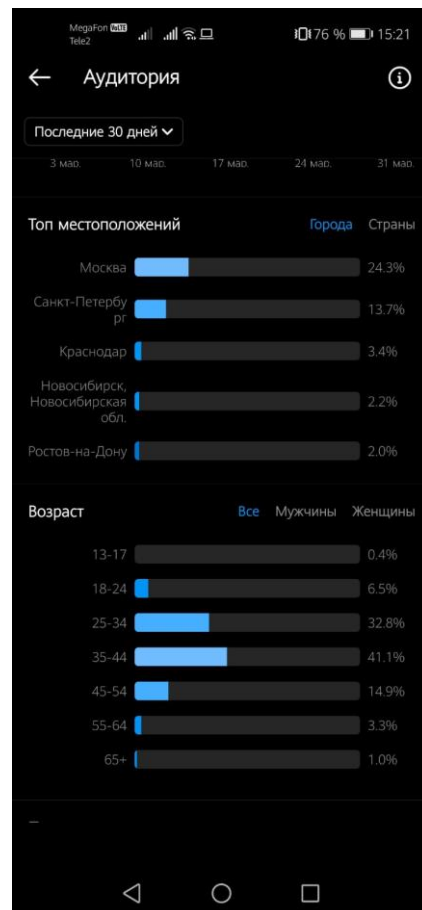
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Attachments

Attachment 1. Thesis activities timeline as a Gantt chart



Attachment 2. Instagram Audience Profile.



Attachment 3. Customer journey map

