

## Instagram as a Digital Marketing tool for fashion brands

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<p>In current technologically and digitally advanced world, every person has at least one social media account. Companies are following this customer need, so they promote and sell more online. The authors of this thesis chose Instagram because it is known, as one of the key social media platforms for fashion brands. Therefore, knowledge and skills to use Instagram effectively are very important for fashion brands.</p> <p>The aim of the thesis is to find out how fashion brands can use efficiently Instagram as a digital marketing tool to achieve their marketing goals. The tools and techniques will be analysed and presented for understanding how to create content according to latest trends. The theoretical framework is based on literature review about digital marketing, Instagram as a digital marketing tool, digital marketing trends, consumer behaviour and impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>The methodological approach was qualitative. The data collection methods were done by benchmarking of three luxury fashion brands and semi-structured interviews, which were organized with digital marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand, for reason to explore their opinions on marketing campaigns for Instagram account.</p> <p>The results from interviews, benchmarking results and analysed literature helped to create 10 tips for efficient marketing in Instagram. The results also indicated how important it was to study opinions from industry specialists.</p> <p>In conclusion, it is important to highlight the significance of applying latest trends by fashion brands on Instagram accounts. The research revealed that brands that are following latest trends and maintain their accounts more creatively, have more successful marketing campaigns on Instagram.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Instagram, digital marketing, fashion brands, trends, COVID-19	

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# 1 Introduction

Fashion brands are searching for the new ways of how to reach their clients and with technologies they can communicate with customers, offer and sell products worldwide. Digitalization brought a huge transformation in marketing industry. There are plenty of different social media channels in these days and depending on the person's interests, location, age, lifestyle and other characteristics the suitable social media channels can be identified.

In this thesis the Instagram social media platform will be taken into the main consideration, in case of Instagram's popularity worldwide, it has 1 billion monthly active users and more than 500 million of them use platform every day (TechCrunch, 2018). More and more people spend their time in Instagram, so fashion brands promoting their products and communicating with their clients actively through this social media platform.

The aim of this thesis is to study how fashion brands can use efficiently Instagram as a digital marketing tool to reach their marketing goals. The objective of this thesis is to analyze marketing campaigns of the case company Christian Dior, its competitors Chanel and Tiffany & Co and define what guidelines marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand follow, what kind of risks in implementing marketing campaigns are and what trends are applied for successful maintaining of Instagram accounts. Moreover, one of the aims is to understand how fashion brands deal with their sales promotion during extreme situations on example of COVID-19 pandemic.

The answers on the research questions will be revealed based on theoretical research, benchmarking results, as well as on the basis of responses from interviews with digital marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand company.

Firstly, theoretical research done in order to gain valuable and relevant information for future analyses, such as digital marketing, consumer behaviour, Instagram marketing and latest trends, all of these factors affect the success of marketing in Instagram. The literature review helps to search the base of knowledge and answers for research questions. Secondly, the research will be conducted based on benchmarking examples of Instagram fashion brand accounts, namely by Dior and its competitors, Tiffany & Co and Chanel with the purpose to find best practices. These companies were chosen because they are among the most popular and leading companies on Instagram, some of the most respected fashion brands and trendsetters that many look up to. Also, the reason of chosen companies from fashion industry is the personal author's interest and experience

in this particular industry. All researched companies belong to luxury segment in fact they were not chosen because of their status. On these company example authors of this thesis can find out the success formula of their Instagram marketing. Using the examples of companies, the latest trends for work on Instagram will be investigated. The research will be also based on three interviews conducted with digital marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand.

Thesis methodology includes literature review, qualitative research method and two data collection methods: benchmarking and semi-structured interview methods. The data collection methods are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. For data analysis will be used method of content analysis by categorising themes and ideas, which is presented in Chapter 4.

This research is based on the field of digital marketing, more precisely on Instagram marketing. The research is based on the analysis of Instagram accounts of fashion brands and on interviews with digital marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand.

The research will be done for practical benefits. Fashion brands that aim efficiently maintain an Instagram page will be able to use this thesis as a visual aid that reveals many aspects, ranging from the theory of digital marketing and Instagram, current trends, studying the most common digital tools and techniques for working on Instagram, studying some cases of successful maintain Instagram accounts, and ending with acquaintance with opinions from digital marketing experts. As a result, there will be created 10 tips to make efficient marketing in Instagram, that can be applied by any company that will read this thesis. This study will help to gain knowledge of Instagram marketing, especially of fashion brands and learned material will be useful for future career of authors.

This thesis begins with an introductory chapter, which helps the reader to understand research background, the aim of the thesis, research methods, delimitations, benefits and structure of the thesis. Chapters 2 and 3 introduce the theoretical framework about digital marketing in general, types of digital marketing, impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior, Instagram as a digital marketing tool, current trends and digital marketing for fashion brands. Chapter 4 presents qualitative research methods, that are benchmarking method and semi-structured interviews. Also, this chapter presents data analysis background, empirical data collection and data collection process. Results of benchmarking are presented in Chapter 5. This chapter consists of analysis of the case company Christian Dior and its competitors Chanel and Tiffany &Co. Chapter 6 presents

results of interviews with representatives from fashion brand and digital marketing specialists. In Chapter 7, own observations and suggestions for efficient marketing in Instagram are presented. The last Chapter is conclusion, where the research results will be dispensed. Along with author's interest and experience with Instagram marketing the suggestions of 10 tips to make efficient marketing in Instagram infographic will be created, for further improvement of the Instagram marketing strategy will be developed and described by both authors of the thesis.

## 2 Digital marketing

Digital marketing has a crucial impact on businesses nowadays. It is essential for companies to understand the importance of digital marketing, as it can make a huge difference in how a business is making revenue, by supporting sales while people in lockdowns and waiting for the pandemic is over. Digital marketing is now more important than ever, so studying the theory and foundations of this topic is very useful for the development of fashion brands. Digital marketing will lead to crucial changes not only in business, but in consumer behaviour as well.

In the following chapter, the types of digital marketing and the digital marketing trends will be discussed. Also, the consumer behaviour and the impact of COVID-19 will be considered.

### 2.1 Types of Digital Marketing

According to findings, digital marketing is defined as a concept that outlines a set of basic processes that cover all digital channels to promote a product or service or build a digital brand (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017). At first digital marketing was named as “internet marketing” or “electronic marketing”. The concept of “internet marketing” first emerged in the early 1990s and grew around websites (Minculete & Olar, 2018). Over time, a difference has developed between internet marketing and digital marketing, which is presented on Figure 1 (Reliablesoft, 2018).



Figure 1. Structure of digital marketing. (Reliablesoft, 2018)

To understand the specifics of digital marketing structure, need to explore its channels and tools, which will be presented in the following chapters.

In the modern world there are a lot of advertisements offline and online, and people simply do not have time to get acquainted with each of these advertisements. The task of a marketing specialist is to make the advertisement not only noticed but also lead to a thought of purchase. It is difficult but possible with different techniques. The biggest part of digital marketing is done through Internet marketing. Internet marketing includes such areas: website, search engine marketing (SEM), pay per click advertising (PPC), social media marketing (SMM), content marketing, email marketing, mobile marketing, banner advertising (Minculete & Olar, 2018). It will be very useful to define each area and their main characteristics.

A website is a personal website or corporate website, or even a personal blog presented on an operated marketing platform or some other type. Website is one of the most important and basic concepts of digital marketing. A company needs a website not only at the beginning of a business, but also in the process of its development and achievement of goals (Minculete & Olar, 2018).

Search engine marketing (SEM) is a basis of internet marketing and it has two crucial tasks: search engine optimization (SEO) and paid search advertising (PSA). Search engine optimization is an activity that helps to choose the right techniques to reach higher positions in search engines. Paid search advertising is created to approach customers to set interesting ads in search engines (Minculete & Olar, 2018).

Pay per click is a type of advertising methods which allows to bring advertising to potential customers in a limited time. This method is very popular now and it allows to choose the amount of money that will be paid for advertising (Minculete & Olar, 2018).

Another area of Internet marketing is Social Media Marketing (SMM). Social media marketing is increasingly important in the last years, because now we live in an era of social networks. Many people spend more time on social networks than in real life and, accordingly, advertising and promotion of goods and services on social networks is very relevant. Social media marketing activities include such components: text, images, videos and networks, which are created with online marketing techniques (Minculete & Olar, 2018). Nowadays there are a lot of different social marketing channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, Pinterest and Google+. As topic of thesis is Instagram as a digital marketing tool for fashion brands, so, Instagram will be explored and described in the following chapters in more detail.



Content marketing is an activity that requires planning, creating, distributing, publishing and sharing content with the aim that the primary target group will get it. Proper content marketing can increase brand awareness, sales, reach, brand loyalty and engagement with potential customers. It will be very useful to determine the relevant content marketing type for business and create an appropriate content marketing strategy. The most popular content marketing types are social media content marketing, infographic content marketing, blog content marketing, podcast content marketing, video content marketing and paid ad content marketing (Hubspot, 2021).

Email marketing is a marketing activity for collecting e-mail addresses of the company's products and services from current and potential buyers. While SMM is growing rapidly and has an edge over email marketing, email marketing is still a very important tool for digital marketing nowadays (Minculete & Olar, 2018).

Mobile marketing is a marketing activity and part of a digital marketing strategy, which consists of creating mobile content or ads to promote products and services via mobile devices, smartphones and tablets. While studying this topic information about choosing a target group for mobile marketing was found very useful. In mobile marketing, a primary group is defined not by demographics but by behaviors. For example, one of the forms of behavior in mobile marketing is when people during breaks check or exchange messages for a short period of time (Kenton, 2020).

Banner marketing is a type of marketing, which can be found on websites, mobile sites, mobile applications, search engines, on social media channels such as Facebook, YouTube and others (Minculete & Olar, 2018). The purpose of banner advertising is to promote a brand or get visitors from the website where banner appears, and that person click on the advertiser's website.

Nowadays methods of digital marketing are valuable not only for advertisers but also for consumers. If to use different types of marketing properly, they will help to bring business to a new level and to improve brand loyalty. Each type of marketing needs to be studied in detail as there are many nuances that need to be considered.

## **2.2 Digital Marketing Trends**

As a new technology replace the old ones, so the digital marketing world changing at the same time. The COVID-19 pandemic after the last year affected the most of all the megatrends and trends in many industries, as it didn't pass unnoticeable the brands too.

Two-thirds of brands faced a decrease in revenue since the pandemic, but still over a quarter of marketers are spending more than 90% of their budget on digital marketing, according to survey by the Digital Marketing Institute (Gibbons, 2021).

When a client wants to find information about the product or brand first thing where he or she rely is the search engine. In order to be on top in search engine, brands need to pay careful attention to adjacent search, which is brought a new trend in 2021. Another trend is a smart bidding, which brought by Google as advertisement option for digital marketing and it helps companies to easily place the ad without any difficulties with assisting each ad placement. The trend of use of chatbots rising, in 2016 only 5% of companies used chatbots, but in 2017 it increased by 32%, also 47% of shoppers in 2017 were open to buy items from a bot and it expected to rise even more rapidly in 2021 (Hubspot, 2017).

The demand for content in social media is changing and people want different format, which is video content. Ten years ago, people tend to read blog format content with a long text, but it changed, and people spend more time in YouTube and TikTok platforms, which formed a new trend for marketers is video ad in different variations for promoting their brand or product (Gibbons, 2021). While the shopping behavior is changed the purchase, way is also seen a difference, the trend is to purchase straight through social media platforms, it is quick and simple for consumers, and more chances for companies to increase a revenue (DeVries, 2020). In order to maximize sales, companies are eager to use both e-commerce and social media, for example Instagram created in 2019 Instagram Check out, which allows customers to see product price and buy it straight in this social media platform.

One of the 2021 trend is people started to focus more on their health and safety. Which brought craving convenience trend to market. People start to plan their visits, social events, shopping and days overall, which before were more likely spontaneously. Consumers start to shop more online in order to avoid face-to-face contact and keeping distances from others (Euromonitor, 2020).

Another statistic shows that 85 % consumers expect an immediate response to their question and 46% value online virtual experience. This will definitely develop 24 hours culture, which means providing experienced service to the customer 24 hours per day and bring a flexibility that is now expected (Euromonitor, 2020).

Another trend is sustainability, which is developing rapidly in past few years and raised its popularity while epidemic. Customers demand that companies need to care about

environment and humanity, not just about revenue. This new expected trend made companies to develop new sustainable ways of producing products, product materials and recycling it. The health crisis trend will develop in longer term, and people will choose brands which help the world to be healthier, cleaner and equitable. According to statistics 69% of professionals expect consumers to be more anxious about sustainability than they were before COVID-19 (Euromonitor, 2020).

People spending more their working and leisure time at home, as everything now could be done easily online. Also working from home is still mandatory for some countries and companies, but some businesses thinking about continue working in a such way, moreover workers believe that they became more efficient working from home-office. With this tendency people figuring out the new ways of bringing the indoors to outdoor. 64 % of professionals think that working from home will become a long-term change (Euromonitor,2020), so outdoor trend will become more popular and will affect consumers in the long run.

Distrust in leadership and misinformation become the norm, that people are tired of conspiracy and want to be heard. This trend will have a long-term effect on customer behavior, while companies can provide more precise marketing on social media and let consumers have a voice. According to survey share of adults who trust news media most of the time in selected countries worldwide as of February 2020 shows that Finland and Portugal are one of the most trustful countries 56%, while South Korea has 26% of respondents trust (Watson, 2021).

There are more trends coming every day and most of them are related to digital world, for example, privacy marketing, voice marketing funnels, neuromarketing, live-video content, voice search, such as Siri, Alexa, Amazon, Google voice (Nidhi, 2021). It is essential for businesses, especially for those ones who focusing more on their online promotion, to follow digital marketing and its trends, which will attract customers and make successful online sales. Also, after analyzing study material, a conclusion was made that nowadays trends affect the behavior of consumers mostly in the long run, and businesses needs to adapt to new trends and be creative in the way to satisfy their consumers.

### **2.3 Consumer Behaviour and Impact of COVID-19**

Purchasing behavior or a decision making is a process that takes place in the consumer's inner consciousness, and the final purchase decision is made by the buyer himself based

on internal and external incentives. In the sense that the marketer plays an important role in attracting consumers through external marketing activities through product, price, location and advertising (Rathnayaka, 2018).

It is crucial to identify how consumers are making decisions before analyzing the impact of pandemic on consumer behavior. When purchasing something, people are spending the most valuable thing what they have is their time. They are putting in the effort of choosing products and services and finally they are spending hard earned money. Consumer decision making process is a long journey. The Five stage model is introduced by Cox in 1983 and it includes different steps, which are presented in Figure 2. According to the Five stage model, each step is valuable and can bring customers to brand loyalty. Especially if a customer is satisfied at the post-purchase stage, it will lead him to become a regular customer of the brand (Dudovskiy, 2012).

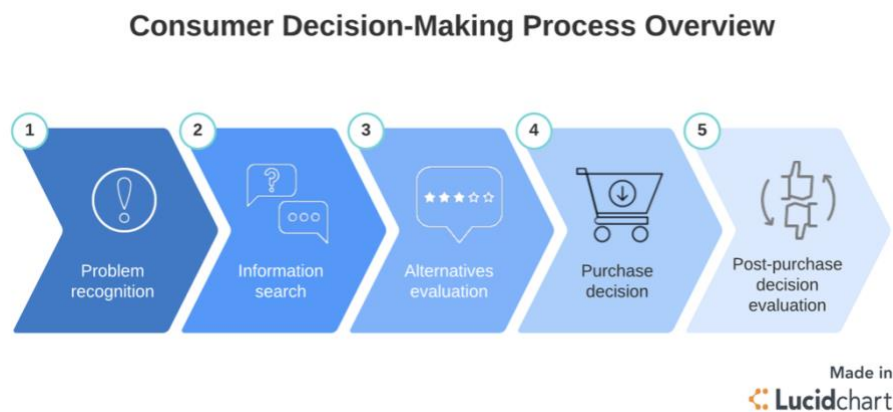


Figure 2. Consumer Decision-Making Process Overview. (Lucid Content Team)

So many factors influence a shopper's decision to make a purchase or not, to shop in the same store again or not. What happened in 2020 was not expected by anyone, the COVID-19 coronavirus has impacted the life of every person on this planet. The pandemic became the basis of the context in which the new shopper behavior was shaped. Figure 3 is presenting clearly the immediate impact of COVID-19 on Consumption behavior (Sheth, 2020).



Figure 3. Immediate impact of COVID-19 on Consumption behavior. (Sheth, 2020)

First impact hoarding means that people began to buy supplies of the most essential food and hygiene items. This point can also include the sale of the most necessary things because people were afraid that they would be bought up and they would stop producing. Secondly, it is improvisation, which means that people have become more creative, constantly coming up with new technologies over social distance (Sheth, 2020).

Next impact is delay in demand, which involves that in times of unpredictability, the general trend is to delay the purchase and consumption of any goods or services. The fourth point is directly related to the field about which the thesis is written, it is embracing digital technology. The impact of digital technologies, in particular social networks, on consumer behavior is large and widespread in customers' daily lives. With the onset of the pandemic, people began to use new technologies such as zoom, now it has become the norm for communication for most people, even for those who did not use a computer at all before (Sheth, 2020).

Another impactful concept is Store comes home. This concept includes the fact that during a pandemic in many countries people are in lockdowns and this greatly affects consumer behavior. Even now, in 2021, a year after the start of the global pandemic, many countries continue to restrictions, shopping centers, cafes and restaurants are temporally closed. The fact that this has been going on for over a year has had a great impact on the psyche of people. Even when in the beginning people could endure it for a month, then it is in this position for a year already very hard morally for many people. Such an unstable situation can provoke different reactions and behaviors from people. For

some, this may cause a lack of desire to buy something because of money problems and also because of the lack of the need to carry new things anywhere. And other people may have, on the contrary, a different reaction (Sheth, 2020).

The blurring of work-life boundaries point is about the boundaries between work and personal life. As a result, the boundaries between work and home have blurred. It is hard for many people nowadays to be effective while being at home. In order to succeed while studying, working from home it will be useful do a schedule and division. Nowadays a lot of people work, and study remotely, so they can often complain about difficulties to be efficient at home. For example, making a detailed schedule will help to be more efficient and productive, moreover focus on well-being. This is a very interesting topic, about which can be written a separate thesis (Sheth, 2020).

The last two impactful changes because of pandemic are reunions with friends and family and the discovery of talent. The first factor is about the vital need for people to share their stories and experiences with other people while they are at a social distance world must expect radical changes in consumer behavior through the introduction of faster and wider use of new technologies, which are affected by the COVID-19 disease. Discovery of talent is about people finding their skills in isolation, creating new things and using new opportunities to use old ones. In practice, consumers are becoming producers with broader commercial opportunities while using the Internet more often than before pandemic. Different channels are full of life hacks and tips on how to create something, so it opens a lot of possibilities to develop new skills and new ways of thinking (Sheth, 2020).

The COVID-19 dramatically changed consumer behavior and world in general. It is a very wide topic, which consists of rapid changes and new trends all the time, because it still takes a long time while the whole world will be vaccinated. It is clear to everyone that the situation with the pandemic has caused new habits in the behavior of people in everyday life in their purchasing preferences. Since the beginning of lockdown people began to spend more time on the Internet, also they began to make more purchases on the Internet. Now companies are trying to attract customers in as many ways and new technologies to customers as possible. Also, one of the important indicators of new customer behavior is that now people have reduced income and livelihoods. Accordingly, the number of purchases has decreased, and people have passed more efficiently. In addition, it is still predicted that old shopping habits will return, but this will take time, so brands need to keep abreast of new trends and the latest technologies for their company to stay afloat and generate income. The COVID-19 will definitely be left persistent marks on consumer behavior. Long-term consumption habits, such as more money for services,

more time and money away from home - have been disrupted, accelerated, or canceled during the pandemic. It is expected that once the virus is under control, there will be consumer demand recovery (McKinsey & Company, 2021).

### 3 Instagram as a Digital Marketing Tool

In the following chapter the Instagram social media platform will be researched, even though it is a quite new platform and there are not many reasonable literatures that can be found but researched will be done on available literatures.

Social media platform such as Instagram is designed to amplify the power photo-sharing. That was the main idea in 2010 by Kevin Systrom, when Instagram was found (Investopedia, 2020). When Instagram was launched only 25 000 users reregistered on the first day (Harrison, 2020). With development of technologies Instagram become more as a blog with image, videos, text, short story videos, reels, TV and direct messages options for content. There are many features which people use in Instagram, but the main idea of photo-sharing is still popular as the trends of visual content is rising.

In this paragraph the Instagram history timeline will be presented. First of all, October 6 in 2010 Instagram launched, then on December 12 in same year Instagram reached 1 million users. On March 21 in 2011 the first worldwide IstaMeet happened, in 2011 August 150 million photo was uploaded, later in September Instagram introduced version 2.0 with four new filters and reach 10 million users. Few month later Instagram launch hashtag project #VHP. In 2012 Instagram launches on android and in April Facebook buys Instagram. Also, in 2012 Instagram designs photo pages for web and reach 80 million users. In same year Instagram release 3.2 version with a new filter and ten days later version 3.4.1 brings 25 languages in. In 2013 tagging on photo is available for Instagram users and in summer Instagram introduced video on Instagram. At the end of 2013 Instagram creates Instagram direct and reach 300 million users. In 2015 Instagram launches boomerang option, multiple photos per post and reach 600 million users. Nowadays Instagram has more than 1 billion monthly active users and it is one of the most popular social networks worldwide (Harrison, 2020). On Figure 4 Illustrated the Instagram icon development from 2010 to 2016.



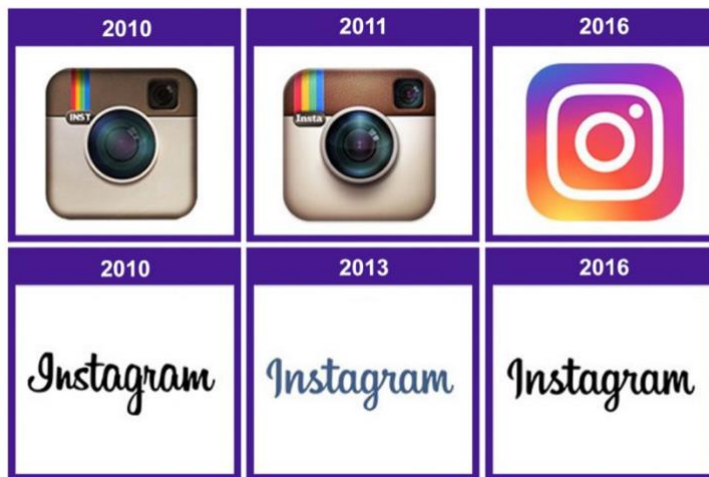


Figure 4. Instagram Icon's development. (Harrison, 2020)

Instagram social media platform developed quickly, and companies started to see it is a potential niche where to make their sales. Personal brand's blog profile is an online channel where brands can promote their products, introduce the new products or upcoming one. Also, within a blog style companies can communicate straight away in Instagram and develop their marketing plan for their target audience.

From very beginning people started to treat Instagram as a blog where they could share their stories, experiences and pictures. Later on, people started to see a potential of sharing high quality images, inspiration and encouragement. Which developed this platform into a profitable business place and many people taking Instagram serious and treat as a real business, where they can make real profit (McGilvery, 2017).

As people started to understand that Instagram is a great platform with small limitations on promotion and at some point, it become a gold mine, where marketer's dream come true (McGilvery, 2017).

In 2016 Instagram's algorithm was simple, if person post a picture of a new bag and few minutes later another person post a family picture, then the picture of a new bag will be showed up first. In March 2016 Instagram did a major change in their algorithm and it is not anymore chronological feed. It became more experienced platform, and the visibility of the post depends on user engagement. The fact is, more people started to create accounts and post more pictures, so it become difficult to follow every post, and people miss around 70% of their feed (Forsey, 2019).

According to researched literature (Forsey, 2019; Harrison, 2020; McGilvery, 2017), there are many different algorithm formulas, which could explain different tactics and algorithms how Instagram uses engagement to evaluate how many people see the post and how high the post will be. First of all, after publishing a picture, it will be shown to small number of followers. Then Instagram measures engagement with post through comments and likes, also in what time frame it happens. Next Instagram will compare with another later published post from the same page and evaluate the quality of post engagement. If the post is attractive, so Instagram will show it to more percentage of audience, and probably surface it on the Explore Pages. If that post still attractive, then Instagram will leave that photo at the top for audience. In case of not attractive post Instagram will push the post further down and less people will see it.

Bloggers, influencers, entrepreneurs, educators and many others, who reach some popularity in Instagram and a certain number of followers, they become the main target who can promote fashion brands. People follow them not only on Instagram page, but follow their lives, thoughts and ideas. People start to engage with them and believe to what they say and what products they use. That is the reason why Instagram become one of the best platforms for fashion brands where they can promote, engage and sell their products.

### **3.1 Digital Tools for Instagram**

In order to achieve goals in Instagram digital marketing campaigns, it is essential to have a command of digital tools. Studying digital tools is especially important for fashion brands accounts, because the visual part of Instagram accounts of fashion brands is crucial in engagement with customers. Based on research and own experiences from one of the authors of thesis, the most valuable digital tools for fashion brands in Instagram are tools for infographic design (Canva), tools for photo editing (Pixllr, Adobe Lightroom, Adobe Photoshop Fix) and tools for video editing (InShot).

Digital tool for infographic design as Canva was established in 2012 by Australian entrepreneur Melanie Perkins (Gehred, 2020). This platform offers a lot of different templates, graphics, ready designs, photos and writing styles for creating visual materials. Generally, with Canva basic package this digital tool is free of charge, but if users want to upgrade their creations there is possibility to pay fee and to receive Canva Premium. Some of their templates and graphics are really unique, so for this need to pay. Anyway, there is plenty of free variants of templates and graphics there, so it is definitely possible

to use free of charge. Also, platform offers free Infographic tutorial, which is very useful for those, who wants to learn at least basis of Infographics. This tutorial gives understanding of main points in Infographics. Canva is a versatile design tool, which is not complicated to use. This digital tool can use for professional purpose, for studies and for hobby as well. Canva can help professionals to create unique experiences (Gehred, 2020).

With the help of Canva digital tool, fashion brands can create visual collages of clothes, shoes and accessories. One example of what can create with Canvas is a collage of clothes and shoes named as “Elegant Style Guide”. Collage is presented in Image 1. (Savolainen, 2020a). This visual example gives ideas to followers, how they can mix and match different clothes, shoes and accessories. This collage can be used for Instagram stories and for Instagram posts.



Image 1. Example of Elegant style Collage made in Canva. (Savolainen, 2020a)

Canva is very useful digital tool for companies, especially for fashion brands, because it has a crucial impact on visualization, marketing, and branding. Canva is very comfort and popular digital tool, because people can use it from various devices. The biggest advantage of this tool is that it can be shared easily via Social Media channels.

Another important digital tool is Adobe Photoshop Fix, which was established in 1988 by Thomas and John Knoll. This platform was created for graphics editing and later on it became as one of the most popular digital tools for editing photos. Nowadays it is popular as one of the types of digital art. Adobe Photoshop is an essential technique for graphic

designers, photographers, visual content creators, web creators and generally for various designers. This digital tool is used for different tasks as photos editing, adding effects, improving image by changing various features and many others (Smith, 2021).

Example of editing pictures is presented on Image 2. Editing photos is a crucial part in work of creating visual material for fashion brands. Attractive pictures increase engagement with customers and brand awareness. As a result, it brings profit to the company.



Image 2. Editing photos in Photoshop. (Savolainen, 2020b)

Third program is Adobe Photoshop Lightroom, which was created in 2007 by software engineer Mark Hamburg and interface designer Andrei Herasimchuk, who worked for Adobe Inc. At the beginning many people thought that it is a new version of Photoshop app, but it is another app with new functions. Nowadays, Adobe Lightroom is one of the most used programs by professional photographers, bloggers and brands in general. Everyone recommends it for use as it has so many functions for editing photos: red eye corrections, adding various filters, spot removal and many others. There are two versions of this program: Lightroom CC and Lightroom Classic. The last one is recommended for professional photographers as it is faster and more streamlined product (Ware, 2017).

There is a lot of tutorials on how to use Lightroom app, so digital marketing specialists can easily implement this into daily work by editing photos. The application is convenient, and

it is possible to configure the necessary data there once and save the pre-set. In the future, for editing photo everything can be done in one click, just by selecting the photo editing in a certain pre-set. It allows to save different pre-sets and edit photos with one click into different style. Example of photo editing in Lightroom app is presented in Image 3 (Savolainen, 2021c).



Image 3. Editing photos in Lightroom. (Savolainen, 2020c)

Another platform for editing photos is PIXLR, which is available in the newest version Pixlr 2021 and is free of charge. This program allows photo editing and graphic design with AI-powered tools (Savolainen, 2021d). Example of photo editing in Pixlr is presented in Image 4.



Image 4. Editing photos in Pixlr. (Savolainen, 2021d)

And the last but not least digital tool, which is very crucial in video editing for Instagram account is InShot app, which is used for editing videos. This program allows to edit photos, make photo collages and videos. InShot is most used for video editing. With the help of this program, it is possible to edit video, namely, to connect different parts, speed up or slow down a video, add music, add captions, emojis and stickers, apply filters and edit sound. This is the one of the most convenient and simple programs to use.

Professionals can be satisfied also with free versions of this app. InShot digital tool allows to flip and rotate material; this functions not available in many other apps. It is also named as one of the best mobile application to use for visual content editing in 2021 (Law, 2020). The pictures of the InShot program and video editing are presented in Images 5 (Savolainen, 2021e).

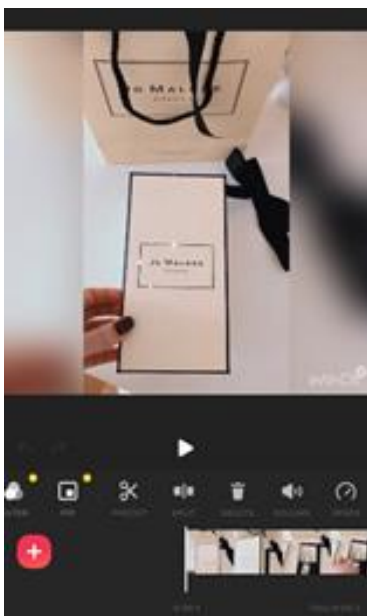


Image 5. InShot video editing. (Savolainen, 2020e)

Digital tools are essential in creating customer value. Proper digital tools are helping to create viral content and increase engagement with customers. The potential of using digital tools in Instagram for fashion brands is crucial. It has a significant impact on businesses success, especially for fashion marketing in Instagram.

### **3.2 Digital Marketing of Fashion Brands**

Nowadays, with rapid development, brands need to consider the latest fashion trends and work according to innovative technologies. The fashion industry is greatly influenced by changing trends and it is very important that brands analyze and anticipate fashion trends

before shoppers choose competitors. Digital marketing channels are great platform for consumer loyalty and transformation by measuring and optimizing digital media to meet consumer needs (Rathnayaka, 2018).

Currently, more online and offline channels available to consumers than ever before, brands need to be able to motivate consumers to be active on their channels and inspire them to make purchases. The fashion store is constantly evolving and changing fashion trends around the world. In the arts of the digital marketing industry, it is very difficult and important to identify consumer interests and changes (Rathnayaka, 2018).

Nowadays digital marketing places are important for fashion brands. With the development of technology, the traditional decision-making process has evolved into a digital decision-making process. Digital channels are now one of the fundamental drivers in making a purchase decision. And this also applies not only to online purchases, but also to offline purchases. The number of followers and the total activity on the brand account can play a decisive role in whether a purchase is made (Rathnayaka, 2018).

The role of Digital marketing in fashion industry can be described with many factors such as active existence of businesses in social media channels, consistent service without set working days and days off, the most recent and updated information about products on platforms, admission to worlds brands and consumers. Accessibility to all information about brands on different channels and sources is very important to customers as it gives the opportunity to study different opinions and reviews about brand products. For many years, the practice of advertising fashion brand goods on the pages of fashion bloggers has been popular. This makes it possible for buyers to see how the thing looks in real life and to hear real reviews of the blogger they follow and whom they trust. Digital marketing also places a role in changing fashion trends (Rathnayaka, 2018). Bloggers, vloggers; street style fashionistas and regular users of digital channels are affecting fashion trends.

A proper digital marketing strategy is very important for building a successful fashion brand. There are some tips how to make it happen. The first one is retargeting visitors. When buyers visit a website or any digital channel of a brand, they enter a specific request for a product in the search engine. Then the client can spend some time on the site and leave it in thought of a further purchase. Now in the fashion market there are many different brands, and the client can simply forget about the product that he just looked at on the website. It will be very useful to remind the potential client of a recent action with the help of an advertising banner. According to Uhuru's research on Facebook

advertisement management, the average ROI for multi-brand retargeting campaigns is 398% (Rosa, 2020).

Another tip is holiday promotion. During the holidays, most people are in high spirits with the desire to give gifts to others and to themselves. Potential customers are financially and emotionally tuned in to purchase. It will be very beneficial for companies to give discounts these days and send promotional emails to their regular customers. Special promotions, such as buying two and getting a third as a gift, are very tempting for customers to spend more money on the brand's website and search for more items (Rosa, 2020).

Recently, many stylists and style selection services have appeared. People want to look their best and even take pride in using professional stylists. The presence of collages and examples of how can combine things and make fashionable bows is a very successful marketing ploy. The examples are presented in Image 6 and 7 (Savolainen, 2021f&g).

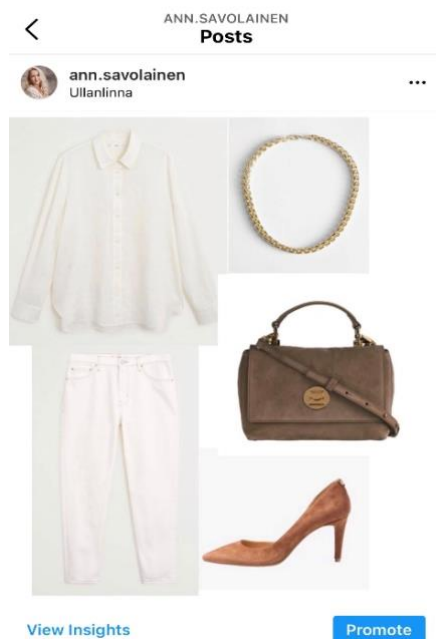


Image 6. Styling guide in Instagram post. (Savolainen, 2021f)



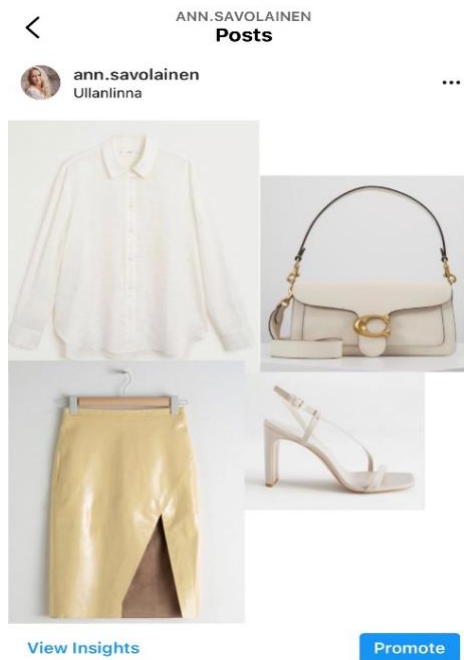


Image 7. Styling guide in Instagram post. (Savolainen, 2021g)

Collaboration with bloggers and influential people is one of the most important things in fashion brand promotion. Nowadays, there are a very large number of fashion bloggers on Instagram. People scroll through Instagram feed several times a day and constantly see advertisements, since some bloggers have several advertisements campaigns a day. It opens great opportunities for the brand, on the other hand, social media is oversaturated with advertising. People are just tired of advertising and don't react to it as good as before. But it is still very important for brands to consider regular collaborations. If a customer will not buy immediately after seeing advertisement, there is a chance that he or she will make a purchase later, when customer hears about brand second or third time. It is about building long relationships and brand loyalty (Mediakix, 2016).

When collecting and analysing various resources, the question arose does there are any specific feature between digital marketing for fashion brands and digital marketing for another types of brands. The difference is that initially some channels were created specifically for certain industries. Fashion bloggers became the first most successful bloggers on Instagram. Such as, for example, Chiara Ferragni, one of the first successful fashion bloggers, who introduced the concept of fashion blogging in websites and then brought it to Instagram, where she now has 23 million followers on account @chiaraFerragni (Ferragni, 2021). As more fashion bloggers began to appear on Instagram, this opened even more opportunities for fashion brands. This is how many brands became popular with the help of PR companies on the Instagram accounts of

fashion bloggers. An example of collaboration between brand and influencer is presented on Image 8 (Ferragni, 2021).



Image 8. Christmas time in my new @lancelparis bag. (Ferragni, 2021)

The focus on events means planning marketing campaigns also according to different events and holidays. It is very important to plan marketing campaigns according to the holidays of the brand's target audience. For example, in Finland, in addition to the main holidays such as Christmas, Easter and New Year, the holiday of May 1, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Friendship Day are also celebrated. These holidays are very much appreciated by Finnish population, and these days people give gifts to their loved ones. In addition, many brands practice sending birthday discounts to regular customers. (Rosa, 2020)

Another tip for digital marketing strategy is engagement with the target audience. Engaging with customers helps to create a connection between customers and brands. By designing campaigns that impact the target audience is a driving factor on this point. It will be useful to publish post or write comments about the values of brands and customers (Gilliland, 2020)

Giveaways on digital channels are a very popular activity on Social Media Channels, example of Nellycom's giveaway on of the fashion brand's Instagram account illustrated on Image 9 (Nellycom, 2021). According to experiences from thesis authors, regular Giveaways are beneficial for fashion brands, because through such activity's customers become loyal to brands and are willing to make purchases from brands in the future. While people are winning free gifts, they are usually sharing photos of gifts on their social media channels and this is a great free advertising of brand, because people usually trust recommendations from their friends and close ones.



Image 9. Giveaway. Babies! Guess what? It's giveaway time. (Nellycom, 2021)

## **4 Methodological Approach**

This chapter introduces qualitative research methods, limitations and data collection method. It also presents information about research ethics, which is a very important issue to consider during research processes. Thesis methodology includes benchmarking and semi-structured data collection methods.

Qualitative research is a market research method that focuses on obtaining information through open and conversational communication. Qualitative research is exploratory research. It is used to understand the root causes, thoughts, and motivations. It gives an understanding of the problem and helps to develop ideas. Qualitative research methods have been developed to identify the behaviour and perceptions of the target audience on a particular topic (Sofaer, 2002). Qualitative method, such as interview are designed to collect a broader source of information from a small number of people about attributes, behavior, preferences, feelings, attitudes, opinions or knowledge. For deeper understanding of researched topic, the benchmarking method and the semi-structured interviews data collection methods will be introduced in the following sub-chapters.

### **4.1 Method of Benchmarking**

Benchmarking method applies when company's development compared with other companies, often the best practice. The main idea of benchmarking method is to learn from others and questioning own operations (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2017).

Firstly, different sources of benchmarking are presented in thesis for a detailed disclosure of the topic and analysis of different opinions on a basis of further research. Research includes analysis of the Instagram accounts of Dior, Chanel and Tiffany & Co companies. Another qualitative research method is a semi-structured data collection method is the most common format of data collection and the most suitable for this analysis, which defined in next sub-chapter.

In fact, that research approach is to analyze Instagram of a Dior company and its competitors, Chanel and Tiffany & Co. The benchmarking method is most convenient for collecting reliable information, which studied by comparison. Also, the semi-structured interview method was chosen for data collection method as it is more suitable for collecting information from three in-depth interviews. These qualitative methods will provide concrete and valuable information of Instagram marketing processes and implemented in suggestions development.

Benchmarking method was chosen for learning processes by authors of this thesis. In benchmarking method best practices needs to be researched in organizations and applied innovatively while developing something new. The main purpose of benchmarking is to identify weaknesses in processes, create goals and develop ideas (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2017).

Benchmarking method is very useful while developing successful, qualitative and profitable operations for corporations. The first step in benchmarking method is to identify the target, which is in our case is what are successful indicators which use fashion brand Christian Dior for their digital marketing in Instagram. The second step is to find competitors and analyze their operations, what are their best indicators in same channel. The aim of benchmarking is to analyze marketing campaigns from best practices from case companies, in order to create 10 tips to make efficient marketing in Instagram. After these steps all researched information collected systematically (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2017).

According to rules and regulation of COVID-19 benchmarking method is suits well for those issues, because benchmarking visit is more systematic rather than a planned normal company visit. Also, while benchmarking visits a list of questions can be prepared for a short interview in organization. All results need to be analyzed critically and creatively, also applied to own organization. There can be a difficulty of finding right applications in case of different company cultures, but if identified correctly this method will improve company's competitive position (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2017).

As author's interest in digital marketing of fashion brands, the best practices will be analyzed and applied creatively in order to create realistic tips for efficient Instagram marketing.

Moreover, analyse of the benchmarking methodology will be concluded in a table format with a provided explanation of results. The analysis of qualitative data is a challenging aspect, and it requires precise work. Qualitative research data are usually indicative, it is rarely definitive. The verification process must be very careful and systematic (Sofaer, 2002). For data analysis will be used method of content analysis by categorising themes and ideas.

Content analysis is a research tool that is used to determine the presence of certain words, topics or concepts in a given qualitative information (interview responses). Content

analysis allows researchers to quantify and analyse the presence, meaning, and relationship of specific words, topics, or concepts (Sofaer, 2002).

## 4.2 Semi-structured Interviews

One of the chosen data collection method is the semi-structured interviews method. According to Oakley (1998), qualitative interviews are a type of framework in which the practices and standards will be not only recorded, but also achieved, challenged and as well as reinforced. Semi-structured interviews are in-depth interviews where the respondents answer open-ended questions.

Three interviews were conducted, with one representative from Ivana Helsinki Finnish luxury fashion company Henna Vierros and with two digital marketing specialists, Ekaterina Kolbasiuk from the company Simple fasting app and with Suvi Rosqvist from digital marketing agency Paper Planes Oy. In addition, the own observations will be presented at the end of the interview results chapter. The interviewed companies were chosen in order to understand the Instagram marketing processes from different perspectives. The fashion company Ivana Helsinki is closely related to analysis of benchmarking method case companies and gave valuable information related to Instagram marketing in fashion industry. While the Simple app representative described processes overall about Instagram marketing and gave valuable information for optimizing Instagram account as a business account. The digital marketing specialist from Paper Planes Oy was interviewed for understanding Instagram marketing from digital marketing agency view, which is focusing on different topics and have broad mind in relation to digital marketing overall and marketing in Instagram. Each interviewed person gave a permission to include their name in this thesis and it was agreed that collected information will be used in thesis content research only. So, information about company's type and some details about interviews are presented in Table 1 for illustrational purposes.

Table 1. Information about company types and details about interviews

	Type and the name of the company	Date of interview	Length
Henna Vierros	Ivana Helsinki Finnish luxury fashion company	19 May 2021	15 min 23 seconds
Ekaterina Kolbasiuk	Simple fasting app	26 May 2021	22 min 42 seconds
Suvi Rosqvist- digital marketing specialist	Digital marketing agency "Paper Planes Oy"	26 May 2021	12 min 59 seconds

According to guidelines interviews include open-ended questions and language that participants can easily understand (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). Semi-structured interviews consist of four parts of question topics. First questions are relying on basic information of interviewed person. Then questions about their marketing processes, especially in Instagram were asked. Next part is affection of COVID-19 and risks which implement on their work development. The last part of questions aimed to find out what trends companies apply while creating content. The example of question part and questions are illustrated in appendix 1.

One of limitations is the pandemic situation, which gives no opportunity to meet with interviews face-to-face, but only online or through phone call. People usually more open and prefer to have meetings direct meeting in café, office or park, but while coronavirus restrictions of having private meeting and recommend having contact with less people. In this case all interviews will be conducted online, which can affect interview results, because of not enough open conversations or simply people not used to talk in front of camera. It will be very important on stage of development of interview questions to think about open speech, possible difficulties while answering some questions and tips which can help create comfortable atmosphere.

Interviews were conducted with two digital marketing specialists and one representative from fashion brand, located in Finland. The purpose of interviews is to make disclosure of the topic and find out the answers for the research questions. First it was planned to conduct interviews offline in café or on agreed location, but according to the pandemic situation interviews can be done only through online meeting, for example via Zoom meetings or via video call.

Finding the right equipment for recording the interview could be a possible limitation in case of unstable internet connection, bad quality of using devices of interviewees, not updated applications for having online interviews or simply uncharged devices, all of this factor needs to be taken into consideration and all possible back up ideas needs to be acknowledged.

Another possible limitation could be the difficulty to find representatives from fashion brands and digital marketing specialists, who could be related to fashion industry. Also, everyone values their time and if the correct marketing specialists will be found, there are

few weeks of time to agree on the actual meeting, which can be a difficulty of business of profession industry.

There many other different issues can be happen before, during or after the interviews, so both authors need to understand the possibility of that, and be professional, polite and reasonable in any decision-making processes.

Analyse of the benchmarking methodology will be concluded in a table format with a provided explanation of results. The analysis of qualitative data is a challenging aspect, and it requires precise work. Qualitative research data are usually indicative, it is rarely definitive. The verification process must be very careful and systematic (Sofaer, 2002). For data analysis will be used method of content analysis by categorising themes and ideas.

Content analysis is a research tool that is used to determine the presence of certain words, topics or concepts in a given qualitative information (interview responses). Content analysis allows researchers to quantify and analyse the presence, meaning, and relationship of specific words, topics, or concepts (Sofaer, 2002).

#### **4.3 Reliability of Research**

The reliability of the research is a degree by using the same instruments more than once can obtain the same answers. Stability and consistency are the main research topic. Reliability issues are related with subjectivity and when researcher embrace a subjective perspective towards the study, then the degree of reliability of the research is going to be compromised (Wilson, 2010).

This research is reliable for variable reasons. Trusted sources will be used in order to make analysis of Dior and competitors, also the data collection process will be done according to created instructions and results will be analyzed by both authors with provided and confirmed information. Sources for company research will be reviewed and selected by each of the authors. Interviews will be recorded in audio and manuscript form will be analyzed in detail by each of the authors.

Finding and analysing relevant literature can be difficult, so theory about recommendations and advices on this process was studied before starting the literature review. Literature reviews is the basis of all types of research. It has to be accurate, precise and reliable to make a proper research. The value of a literature review is based



on the quality of information what was found and the coherent look of introducing that information (Snyder, 2019).

Benchmarking method of data collection method introduces to authors the processes which fashion brands are using in practice. Also, the status of chosen fashion companies are very high, that explicit relevance for researching exact companies. The comparison between chosen three companies provided relevant information, for instance, if only one company use specific tool or technique, or there are some similarities in Instagram appearance, which commonly used for achieving concrete results.

For interviews the specialists were carefully chosen in order to gain information which provide efficient answers for created questions. Also, these answers were compared to the results from completed research of literature review and benchmarking. Semi-structured interviews were based on several key questions that helped authors to keep conversation in the right areas of the topic and gain valuable information from specialists. Open-ended questions helped to get descriptive answers. This interview provides the interviewer with comparable, reliable, and qualitative data (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008).

The format of data collection methods has a flexible approach that allows to discover the most needed information that is important for further research and development of 10 tips for efficient Instagram marketing by authors.

#### **4.4 Data Analyses Process and Background of the Research**

The following sub-chapters explains the research methods that were used in analyzing the empirical data which were collected from the interviews. Also, it explains data collection process and different tools that were used by authors of this thesis in achieving meaningful insights from the collected data. There are different kinds of research methods such as case study, action research, constructive research, and service design. Different kinds of research methods can be used, but the approach depends on the wanted outcome.

The selection of the approach guides the developer in the selection of the method, and it is important to remember that almost all methods are appropriate for almost any approach. For example, different interviews and observations can be used in all approaches (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2017).

In the beginning of development of the thesis idea and creating a plan for research, it was planned to travel to France and visit case company Dior and competitor companies, such as Tiffany & Co and Chanel, in purpose of making analyses on researched questions and conducting interviews. However, as it was mentioned in previous chapters the pandemic situation affected plans of authors and interview collections. So, the plan B is used by authors, which includes finding the right digital marketing specialist in Finland and abroad, which ideally are focuses on Instagram marketing and fashion industry.

While contacting digital marketing specialists both authors faced the difficulty of cancelation for interview, in case of busyness of specialists in this time of the year. Also, some companies struggled with language barrier, which also leads for interview cancelation. In fact, of these occurs authors observed the difference of popularity of Instagram page and brand overall and attach it with company's replies to their possible customers group. In authors opinion it was fascinating to monitor company's replies and even their silence, as one of the latest and important trends, which was mentioned in chapter 3 is to have active social media marketing presence in order to increase company's popularity and profits.

Nevertheless, authors could agree for interviews with two digital marketing specialists and representative from fashion brand.

#### **4.5 Empirical Data Collection**

The aim of interview with representative of fashion brand was to find out the answers for the research questions by professional from the fashion industry. The purpose of interviews with digital marketing specialists was to get the answers for the research questions by digital marketing specialists from digital marketing agency. The interview company that is not connected to fashion the purpose was to hear opinion from different industry to find the best practices of Instagram marketing.

The email or Instagram direct message sent to specialists and then agreed on specific time for making a call in WhatsApp or video meeting in Zoom. The Interviews time frame is around 10-25 minutes. All interviews are audio recorded for providing evidence of reasonability.

There are complex tools that are used in analyzing empirical data and for this Thesis, Voyant-tools is used in analyzing the empirical data that was collected from the interviews.

Voyant-tools is an open-source, web-based application for performing text and was developed by Stéfan Sinclair and Geoffrey Rockwell.

The interview questions were divided in four main topics for discussion, which are presented in appendix 1. In the beginning of the interview short introduction speech presents the interview's purpose and outcomes. Then the basic questions are targeting for opening the conversation and understand the responsibilities of specialists and their experience. The second part of questions for interview are created to open up the marketing campaign processes in Instagram, what are the company's guidelines for creating an Instagram campaign and what kind unforeseen situations were experienced. The third part of the questions are focus on affection of COVID-19 situation on marketing campaigns and overall, what risks that specialists have while implementing marketing campaigns. The last part of the question is the ended conversation topic, which is mainly conclude the interview with specialist share of their secrets.

#### **4.6 Data Collection Process**

In the following sub-chapter, the empirical data collection research process presented. This process describes what steps and actions were taken during whole process of collecting the relevant information in order to answer on the main research question. The collected data was followed according to the written guidelines in sub-chapters 4.1 and 4.2.

First of all, during February and March 2021 the analyse of theory was completed and presented, such as Instagram marketing and the luxury brands analyse and benchmarking of target company and competitors.

Secondly, generation of possible questions and creation of the list of digital marketing specialist in March and April 2021. During second stage the chosen companies and specialist was contacted and agreed for the interviews.

Thirdly, during April and May 2021 the interviews with digital marketing specialist occurred. Analyse of collected data from interviews, creation of final result, such is the 10 tips for efficient marketing in Instagram is developed in May 2021. The Figure 5 illustrates the timeline of research process.

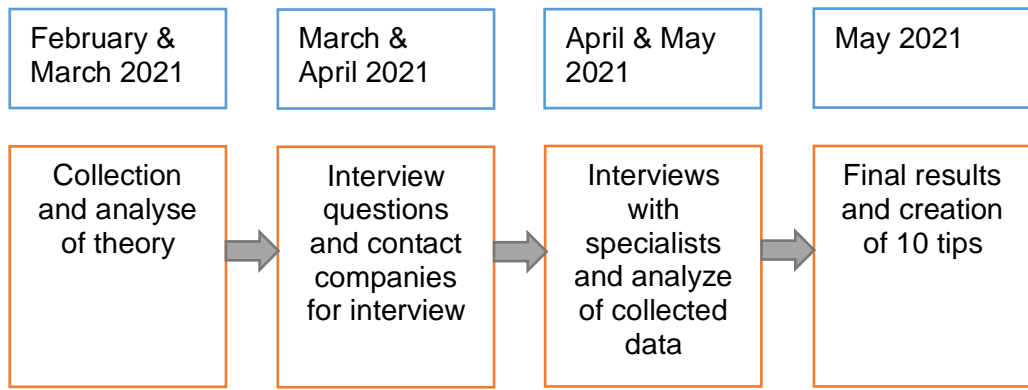


Figure 5. Timeline of research process

## **5 Results of Benchmarking**

In the following chapters, the analysis of the case company, their direct and indirect competitors will be explained and described. The summary of the findings will be presented in a table of format for illustrational purposes.

Luxury brands Christian Dior, Chanel and Tiffany & Co were selected for the analysis. Brands from luxury segments were chosen for several reasons. According to statistics, it is luxury brands that are leading in terms of success on Instagram. Chanel is the most followed luxury fashion brand on Instagram in the world in 2020 (Statista, 2021).

Luxury brands were also chosen because these brands have been iconic brands and trendsetters for a long time. Since this Thesis is about Instagram as a digital marketing tool for fashion brands, accordingly, the brands were chosen, which draw the attention of fashion brands from all over the world. Fashion houses like Dior employ the best digital marketing specialists and they have a very large staff who devote a lot of time to the development of the Instagram page for the brand. This was found out at the Dior webinar in April 2021, which was attended by one of the authors of Thesis (Jobteaser, 2021).

Another reason why the luxury brands Christian Dior, Chanel and Tiffany & Co were chosen for analysis is because the authors of the report like the style and aesthetics of the brands the most. It is a pleasure to study the Instagram pages of brands that you like visually and in which there are a special interest.

### **5.1 Christian Dior**

Company Christian Dior was chosen as it is a famous and well-known brand, which has a unique history and excellent marketing campaigns in different marketing communications channels during few decades, especially in Instagram social media platform. Both authors after analysing of Dior brand and company's marketing in Instagram can gain a valuable knowledge of developing fashion brand Instagram account, which also will be useful for future careers.

Dior was founded by Christian Dior on 16 December 1946 in Paris. Dior launched his first collection the "New Look" in 1947 at the company's headquarters. In 1949 Dior was the first licensed couturier producer of his own designs (Sowary, 2012).

One of the most iconic and legendary Dior accessories must be Princess Diana's handbag. Dior carries into produce beautiful, elegant pieces that remain timeless and innovative. Innovative but traditional, Dior keeps its reputation as the creator of recognized haute couture. Christian Dior's purpose was to make women feel confident, beautiful, and happy in their everyday wear. Later on, Dior states that they want to provide women with timeless beauty. This is not an unfamiliar statement of Dior as Christian Dior himself stated that when releasing his first collection "New Look".

One of Dior's values is to display creativity and innovation. In addition to that, they want to demonstrate forward-thinking and an entrepreneurial spirit. One of the most important values that Dior has is that they want to provide excellence and glamour to their customers, especially women. Even though Dior is a brand specifically intended for women there is menswear and kids wear in their collection. The Dior vision is to respect their identity of classic and timeless beauty to ensure excellence and long-term success. Dior strongly believes that their pieces – clothing and accessories -will drive confidence amongst their customers (Patel, 2020).

According to statistics Christian Dior group spending on promotion and advertising 6 265 million euros in 2019, which is the highest costs from 2014 to 2019. The fact is that in 2016 Dior group spend around 2 392 million years on their advertising, and after that number is consistently growing (Statista, 2020).

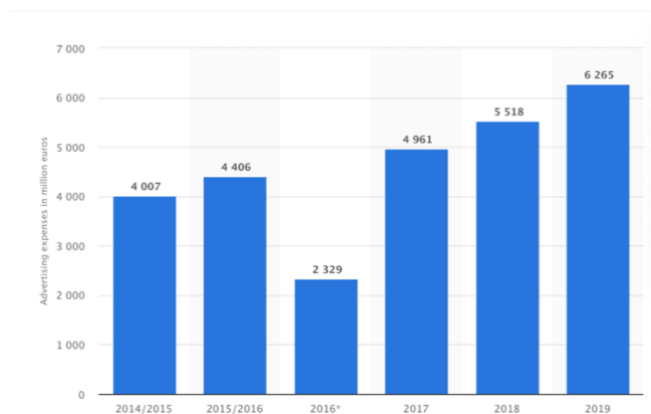


Figure 6. Advertising and promotion expenses of the Christian Dior group from 2014 to 2019. (Statista, 2020)

In April 2021 was organized webinar by representatives from brand Dior about Communication & Press at Dior: The Art of Storytelling. Speakers were Gary Pinagot, Social Media and e-Reputation Director and Justine Provent, E-communication Officer. At the webinar, many interesting topics were discussed regarding how the work in the digital

marketing department has changed after the pandemic and how decisions were made in the company. A large number of employees work on advertising campaigns in Dior, and each campaign is thought out to the smallest detail, which speaks of the very careful work of specialists. On Image 10 is presented Dior webinar advertising (Jobteaser, 2021).



Image 10. Dior webinar advertising. (Jobteaser, 2021)

Dior Official Instagram page has 35,6 million followers and 7 821 posts. In Instagram Story Dior posts their new and upcoming products in photo or video format. Image 11 illustrates the Dior Official Instagram page.

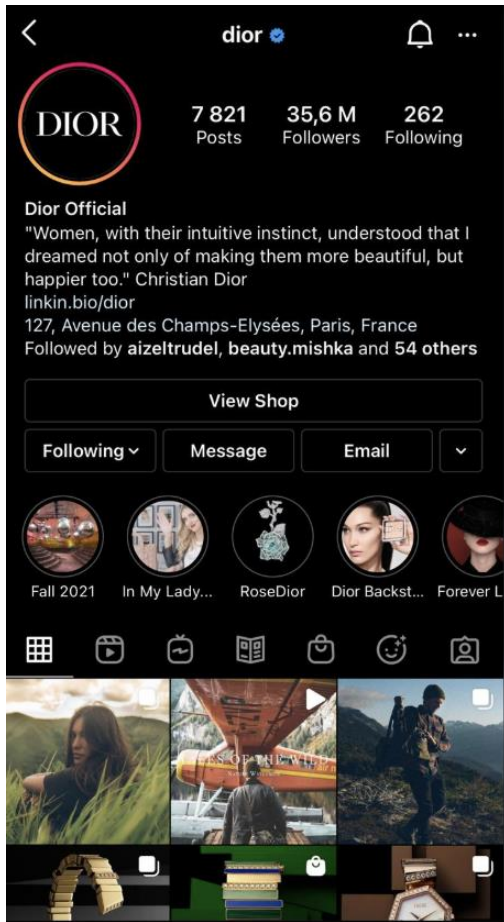


Image 11. Dior's Official Instagram account. (Christian Dior, 2021a)

Dior's Official Instagram page present mostly of their new products, new ideas and upcoming events. The example illustrated on Image 12.



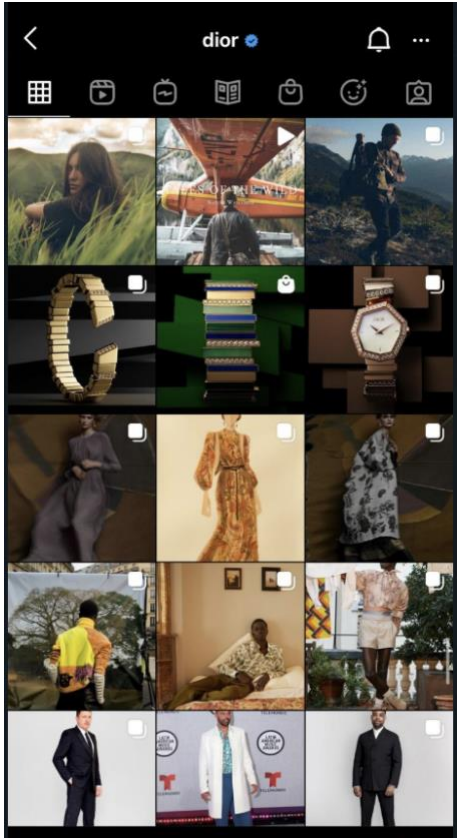


Image 12. Dior's Official Instagram account. (Christian Dior, 2021b)

Moreover, Dior has few more Instagram pages where they present only Dior fragrances, Dior Maison, Dior makeup and Dior skin care products. The example presented on Image 13.

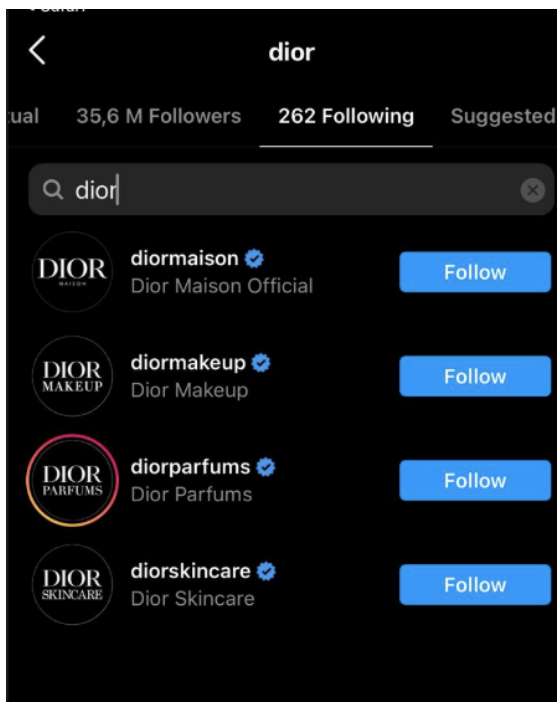


Image 13. Dior's Official Instagram account. (Christian Dior, 2021c)

Dior is focusing more on direct marketing of young, positive minded and active women. Also, according to feminism trend, Dior is reaching this audience through their social media platform and celebrate the international women's day, for example in Instagram with post "WE SHOULD ALL BE FEMENISTS", which illustrated on Image 14.



Image 14. Christian Dior Instagram post. (Christian Dior, 2021d)

One of the Dior's promotion in Instagram example is the Instagram post by Romee Strijd Victoria Secret model. She published a regular post of her and her new-born, where people can clearly see the Dior bag and the model added hashtag #Dior, which shows that it is a promotion post. This is example of how famous person in Instagram making a promotion of Dior products. The example illustrated in Image 15.



Image 15. Romee Strijd's Instagram account post. (Romee Strijd, 2021)

Dior is clearly seen as this empire of couture fashion, makeup and accessories. Dior has the power to have a big impact on the fashion industry and its trends. Also, Dior is using Instagram social media platform very actively and doing their promotions with cooperation with celebrities in Instagram.

While COVID-19 pandemic time is a real challenge for many brands, Christian Dior decided to create new campaigns for to increase engagement with customers. For example, Dior created virtual event on Instagram account, "exhibition to Monsieur Dior", where they published vintage photos. Creative campaigns helped to save connection with followers and have active communication with them (Caruso, 2020).

One of the trends that is actively used by Christian Dior on their Instagram account is creating video content. Analyzing the Dior account on Instagram, it is clear that Dior publishes more video content than photo content, nowadays. This suggests that Dior follows trends and tries to create the content that is in demand.

## 5.2 Chanel

Competitive analysis is a plan of actions, where essential competitors are recognized, their products, sales and marketing strategies are explored. Competitive analysis is very important in running a business, it helps companies understand their competitive abilities and take their business to the next level. One of the biggest benefits of this process is that it helps to identify a value proposition and its competitive edge (Hubspot, 2021).

It is essential to identify direct and indirect competitors. Direct competitors are companies that provide products or services which can serve as a similar replacement, and that work in the same geographic area. Indirect competitors are those who provide products that are not the same but can meet the same customer needs or figure out the same problem (Hubspot, 2021).

One of the direct competitors of Dior is the luxury brand Chanel. Brand "Chanel" was chosen as indirect competitors, because it is a luxury brand of the same level, which produces the same type of products (clothes, accessories, shoes, cosmetics, perfumes etc) for the same target market. Chanel and Dior share a similar product style: sophisticated and elegant.

Chanel is one of the most valuable brands in the world. This is the brand that many brands look up to. Chanel became the trendsetter of its time. Even 100 years after the creation of the brand, it has not lost its relevance and owning the things of this brand is very prestigious, a sign of status and prosperity. The history and development of the brand are closely connected with the creator of the brand Coco Chanel, who opened a hat store in Paris in 1909. In 1921, the famous Chanel 5 perfume was created, which made this brand world famous especially after Marilyn Monroe said that she uses only a couple of drops of Chanel in bed. Coco was a revolutionary of her time, creating various new design techniques and clothing models. It was she who introduced the vests and the little black dress into fashion. After Coco passed away in 1983, Karl Lagerfeld became the brand's chief designer. (Wilson, 2010) Karl managed to maintain the style of the brand and at the same time brought modern trends to his collections. He was a brand designer until his death in 2019.

In their Instagram account, the company has 44 million followers, and that has grown by 3 million since 2020. Image 16 illustrates main page of Chanel Instagram account @chanelofficial. (Chanel's Instagram, 2021).

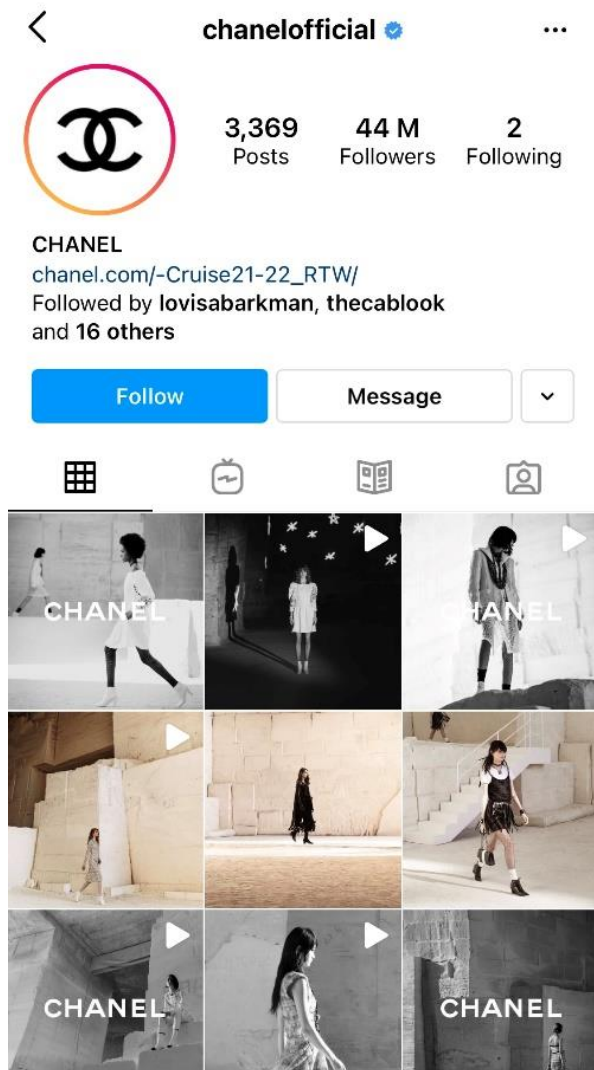


Image 16. Chanel's Instagram profile. (Chanel's Instagram, 2021)

Their Instagram marketing campaigns are very successful, not only because Chanel is a world-famous brand, but because the brand truly creates creative and engaging campaigns. Therefore, studying their Instagram was very helpful.

The problem with luxury brands in social media is that the brand wants to be popular on social media, to promote advertising campaigns through social media, but at the same time they do not want to lose their exclusivity and become like a mass market, accessible to everyone. Chanel is working very hard to maintain its unique image and stay exclusive brand, but at the same time do not exclude consumers. However, Chanel uses social media to encourage users to feel that they are special. As for example, Autumn/Winter campaign 2017/18 was very successful. Chanel used hashtag #ChanelTower for inviting customers to a private party. A fashion show was organized in Paris, including a large-format copy of the Eiffel Tower with a walk through its models. The brand promoted the Fashion show extensively on Instagram, using a hashtag to match event-related content

such as celebrity videos and exclusive material from the new designs. The #ChanelTower campaign was very successful as subscribers indicated the hashtag and shared content from the show on their pages. This increased the activity on the Chanel Instagram page and also the engagement of subscribers (Gilliland, 2020).

Luxury brands usually collaborate with the most popular bloggers and influencers. These are most often influencers, celebrities and bloggers who have the biggest number of followers. Accordingly, it is luxury brands that reach the largest audience on Instagram (Mediakix, 2016). It will be very helpful to study what marketing strategies are used by brands that create content for a wide audience. After all, it is known that many people are subscribed to luxury brands that they may never even buy into life. But they follow these accounts in the hope of getting inspiration and enjoyment of the esthetics.

Example of one of the posts from Influencer with #ChanelTower campaign is presented on Image 17 (Thefashionguitar, 2017).



Image 17. ChanelTower campaign. (Thefashionguitar, 2017)



Throughout the history of maintaining an Instagram account, Chanel has always paid a lot of attention to cooperation with influencers and celebrities. One of the successful examples of their Marketing campaigns with influencers on Instagram is presented on Image 18 (Kirschner, 2021).



Image 18. Chanel's Instagram profile. (Kirschner Instagram @jemerced, 2016)

During the advertising campaign for new No. 5 L'Eau perfume, Chanel created hashtags #newchanel5 #chanelgrasse and encouraged everyone to indicate these hashtags under the photo with the same perfume. Subscribers willingly indicated hashtags as this increased the reach of their posts and increased activity on their pages. Creating new hashtags for ad campaigns turned out to be a very good idea as the content went viral. In the first month of the campaign, about a million likes (over 900,000) were collected. In partnership with celebrities and influencers, Chanel has drawn over 9 million people to the brand's marketing campaign (Mediakix, 2016).

One of the questions that was researched during Chanel analysis is about "how fashion brands deal with their sales promotion during extreme situations of COVID-19". According to literature review, Chanel made an assumption that the adverse impact of the pandemic

can last up to two years. Brand also mentioned that e-commerce sales had grown 60% from their 2019 levels if to compare with 2020 (Cppluxury, 2020).

Fashion brands reacted to the changes with pandemic by being creative on their Instagram accounts. They decided to stay connected with consumers by interacting more campaigns with followers. They created new campaigns in social media, like for example #AtHome and invited subscribers to engage in campaigns (Huber, 2020).

Analysis of the Instagram feed of the Chanel page showed that the brand is very active in publishing video content. Created short videos for new collections have a large number of views and likes. Chanel, like Dior, clearly knows about the demand for video content and uses this trend very effectively for its marketing campaigns. Analyzes of the visual part of the Chanel account also showed that the brand is following the trend of naturalness in photo processing.

### **5.3 Tiffany & Co**

Another competitor of Dior is indirect, and it is luxury brand Tiffany & Co. Tiffany & Co was chosen as indirect competitor, because it is also a luxury brand of the same level, but it produces different type of products, like jewelry but for the same target market. Tiffany & Co and Dior also share a similar product style: sophisticated and elegant.

Tiffany & Co a distinctly American icon of sophistication and style, was established in 1837 and has been the nation's preeminent jeweller for more than 50 years. Tiffany invented the raised solitaire diamond, six-prong "Tiffany Arrangement," which has since become a popular engagement ring design. Fine watches, timepieces, sterling silver products, crystal, china, writing instruments, fragrances, and personal accessories are among Tiffany & Co.'s main product lines. Presidents such as Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy, European royalty, prominent American families such as the Vanderbilts and the Astors, and numerous celebrities have all valued the brand (Encyclopedia, 2019).

Tiffany & Co's Instagram account has 12,1 million followers, and it is increasing every month. They position themselves as "synonymous with superlative diamonds, innovative jewelry design and expert craftsmanship. In the last month their marketing communication has changed in that way that they started to publish interesting stories about the company's history and general stories about jewels. These stories are making the content more diverse. Also, influencers have a place in their marketing campaigns. For example, Jackson Yee is their brand Ambassador as in 2020 the company focused on



the China target market. Image 19 illustrates main page of Tiffany & Co Instagram account @tiffanyandco (Tiffany's Instagram, 2021).

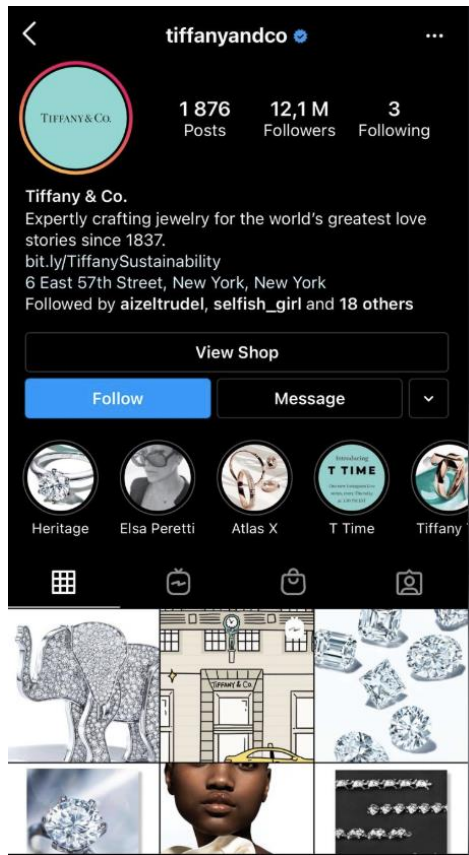


Image 19. Tiffany's Instagram profile. (Tiffany's Instagram @tiffanyandco, 2021)

Engagement is what matters in digital marketing and, indeed, in Tiffany's business model. Has Tiffany & Co. managed to keep its air of exclusivity and maintain its appeal to high-end customers while also expanding its social media presence so dramatically? Yes, to put it simply. In fact, what makes Tiffany's digital marketing strategy so impressive is that the retailer has managed to embrace social media wholeheartedly while still remaining elite enough to maintain its diamond reputation (eTail, 2021).

Tiffany must find a way to reinforce its brand on social media, given its high-value reputation. And it does so superbly. Each piece of content published by Tiffany & Co. is as refined and high-quality as any of the company's products. The accompanying copy is often twinkling with poeticism, and each image is as sophisticated as it is beautiful (eTail, 2021).

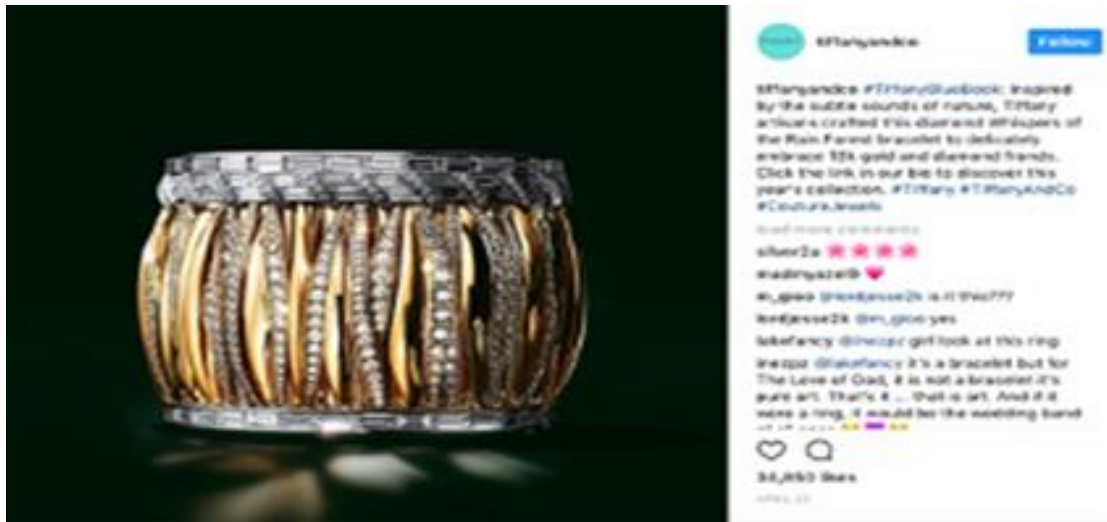


Image 20. How Tiffany & Co. Built a Diamond Digital Marketing Strategy. (eTail, 2021)

COVID-19 pandemic effected Tiffany & Co brand as well. But brand took care of their customers and encouraged them to do online shopping instead of going to offline shops (Azmanova, 2020). Also, during the pandemic, the brand began to publish more posts with fascinating stories about the brand and their creators. This enabled the brand to retain subscribers and promote its new collections.

Tiffany & Co brand uses quite a bit of video content on their Instagram account. There is a video on the page, but the photo content still prevails. Their posts consist mainly of photo content about new collections as well as posts with stories about the brand and their creators.

#### 5.4 Benchmarking Results Conclusion

Competitor analysis showed that the most successful luxury brand on Instagram is Chanel brand. The results are made on the basis of statistics of the most successful brands, on the analysis of the marketing activities on Instagram and on the basis of the analysis of Instagram accounts for the question of the number of likes and comments under posts, since this is already an indicator of the engagement of subscribers in the content. Chanel was a clear winner in the number of likes and comments. This can be clearly seen in the comparison table which illustrated below in Table 2.

Table 2. Benchmarking method results.

Criteria's	Case company Dior	Chanel	Tiffany &Co
Number of followers	35,8 M	44,1M	12,2M
Number of likes per publication in feed	30k-80k	30k-120k	10k-120K
Number of comments per publication in feed	100-500 comments	100-800 comments	50-1000 comments
The number of posts under main brand hashtag	52m posts under hashtag #dior	69,8M posts under hashtag #chanel	14,3M posts under hashtag #tiffany
Frequency of feed publications	3-5 posts per day. In total they have 7873 posts	3-10 posts per day. In total they have 3390 posts	1-5 posts per day. In total they have 1902 posts

The secrets of successfully maintaining an Instagram account can be called the fact that the brand involves in its content not only influencers and celebrities, but also followers and Instagram users. The brand knows how to organize marketing companies so that they seem to be still exclusive but at the same time accessible to everyone. It is a unique balance, which succeed the brand. The analysis also showed that Chanel publishes more video content, which is a winning decision, since the more subscribers spend time on the brand's page, the higher the coverage of the publications. Also, the feed of Chanel publications looks harmonious as a one picture. Posts have the same style and are immediately recognizable by subscribers, which increases the likelihood that the subscriber will notice the publication in his feed and like them. The results also showed that the more often a brand publishes posts, the more engagement of subscribers.

One of the most obvious trends that can be seen on the pages of Chanel and Christian Dior is the creation of video content. Now the feed of these companies consists mostly of videos. This is justified by the worldwide trend in video content. Tiffany & Co very rarely publishes videos, and this is most likely one of the reasons why this brand does not have such good engagement as Christian Dior and Chanel.

In summing up the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, brands Christian Dior, Chanel and Tiffany & Co have been able to get creative with new campaigns to match the current

situation where people are isolated and don't go offline as often as they used to. Each brand has his own way to keep connection with followers. For example, by creating virtual events or campaigns with the hashtag #athome, brands have managed to keep in touch with their followers.

The best practices from brands marketing campaigns helped to identify the characteristics of successful campaigns and create 10 tips to make efficient marketing on Instagram.

## **6 Results of Interviews**

In the following chapter the data analyses from interview results will be illustrated and explained, in order to understand digital marketing specialist's working environment, their thoughts about their Instagram campaigns will be also described according to researched information.

Results from interview will be presented under the four sub-chapters from interviews: marketing campaign process, affection of COVID-19, risks and current trends in marketing campaigns. After interview sessions it is clear that for understanding if the marketing campaign was successful or not, they use analyses tools, and in same time sales team and marketing team usually need to work cooperatively to share feedback. This makes all team members share their feedback and get new ideas for future marketing campaigns.

### **6.1 Interviews**

The first interview was with Ivana Helsinki company's marketing producer Henna Vierros and conducted by the WhatsApp phone call on 19 May 2021. The lengths of the interview were 15 minutes, and the semi-structured method was applied as pre-planned. Ivana Helsinki is a Finnish fashion company which was founded in 1998 by designer Paola Suhonen as a personal art project and today it is still internationally known and family-owned brand (IvanaHelsinki, 2021). The combination of brand purpose is to bring childhood memories, summer stories, nature, northern seasons and cycle of life. Also, American vintage notes and endless adventure is a world of Ivana Helsinki personality of a brand identity.

The second interview was managed on 26 May 2021 and the interviewed company was Simple intermittent Fasting app it is an American company which has a branch in Russia. The interviewed Instagram marketing specialist was Ekaterina Kolbasiuk. Ekaterina's position is focuses only on Instagram marketing and her responsibility is to manage publishing content. Her experience as Instagram marketing specialist is already 3 years and in Simple app organization 7 months. On her opinion the most successful campaigns are those which focuses on different types of customers under one post, where they recommend, advice or explain the specific healthy eating. This is a compelling observation, as usual guidelines recommend focusing on specific target group and the smaller and more specific target is the better.

The post development process is for a short time, as they post content in Instagram every day, Ekaterina explains “I create posts for full week to post content every day and make a schedule of creating them one week before”, so at this point she did not experience the unexpected marketing content. However, the post is published by two people and they experienced that there was small mistake in the text, which later were mentioned by followers, Ekaterina explains that maybe it is even an advantage as it creates more activity under the post’s comments.

The third interview was with Suvi Rosqvist, who is a digital marketing specialist at Paper Planes Oy. Paper Planes Oy is a digital marketing agency specialized in content strategy and content marketing. At her work Suvi is concentrating on Paid Social Media advertising, optimizing advertising and analyzing results in different digital marketing channels. The interview took place on May 26, 2021 via WhatsApp phone call. Agency is located in Helsinki, Finland, but interview was organized in a distance because of current situation with pandemic.

The aim of interviews was to study the use of Instagram as a digital marketing tool by professionals from digital marketing agency. Also, the purpose of interview was to discover the Instagram for other types of brands in order to have a general idea of Instagram as a digital marketing tool from a different perspective, because Suvi shared that she has no experience directly with fashion brands, but she has several years of expertise with many other industries.

The main aim of the interviews is to collect valuable information from asked pre-planned questions and question that implemented during interviews.

## **6.2 Marketing Campaign Process**

The summary of findings from research shows that all three interviewees don’t have strict instructions and guidelines in planning marketing campaigns. Digital marketing specialists freely plan marketing campaigns on Instagram without specific instructions. This makes it possible to be creative in planning marketing campaigns for each company individually. The most common answer was that working on marketing campaigns for Instagram is based on own knowledge, personal experience and expertise, for instance “I work freely, have my own timetable and always look for ideas for my own education, in order to create better content” stated by Ekaterina Kolbasiuk. As the development of contents and schedule are not strict, each company work as it suits their sales processes and target customer preferences. So, it is very important to constantly develop skills, also gain fresh

knowledge and ideas about digital marketing channels, content creation, last trends, review competitors and customer's feedback.

According to the analysis of responses, the most successful Instagram campaigns appear according to such criteria as the number of purchases made after a certain campaign, the number of new followers, the number of likes and comments. Keeping these statistics helps to improve further marketing strategy and select the best options for future campaigns. The experience and knowledge that is constantly being improved is what marketing specialists rely on. "I always look for fresh ideas and apply sales team hints from previous campaigns for achieving good sales results" stated by Ekaterina Kolbasiuk.

The interview also showed that because of the pandemic some of the marketing campaigns were cancelled and the specialists had to improvise in the current situation, since there are no instructions on what to do in this situation. The specialists also shared that there were situations in which it was necessary to change the text of the advertising campaign or even replace the photo. Marketing specialists are working in team with at least one person and closely connected to sales team. Published content usually created by few people and it was experienced that there was a small mistake which later were mentioned by followers. Interestingly, some specialists see it as an advantage as it creates more activity in comments under the post.

Trends also dictate the change of previous published content, which marketing specialists are taking into consideration and making sure that that previous post's information does not bring harm to company's image overall. For instance, Simple app in recent month is checking all previous published posts pictures in Instagram, where was illustrated plastic bottles and they replace that image with long-term bottle icon.

### **6.3 Affection of COVID-19**

According to replies of three companies, it become clear that COVID-19 affected those companies who mostly offer physical products and organize events. For fashion company Ivana Helsinki COVID-19 brought a huge difference. Before pandemic the company created a lot of events, on which people come and not only try on dresses, but also experience the brand's atmosphere. That was the reason why company implemented a new way of virtual meetings through Instagram page. Marketing producer Henna Vierros explained "Last week we streamed Instagram Live from our Ivana Helsinki house, where our CEO Paola Suhonen showed dresses and made a house tour. Also, we received a good customer's feedback and increased our sales".

For instance, Simple app organization observe even more new customers and followers than before the pandemic. Representative from Paper Planes Oy answered that COVID-19 effected trends for Instagram in general, especially for creating content.

COVID-19 brought changes in Instagram marketing, as stated by marketing specialists some companies find advantages and some challenges, which were needed to be implemented successfully in order to increase profit or at least make stable sales as were before pandemic. All of the three interviewed companies are connected to main change factors which are implementing more in digitalization, being active in social media and following latest trends.

#### **6.4 Risks**

The main risks in Instagram that can harm company's image is a customer's feedback, which company leave without reply or reply not professionally. Each interviewed specialist mentioned that in the company they try to reply on social media feedbacks, some companies have a prepared list of answers and some specialists are realizing answers according to the feedback. Additionally, Simple app mentioned that they are happy when they receive a negative feedback, that help them to improve their mistakes in the future. Moreover, Ekaterina Kolbasiuk recommended to be open and honest with followers and customers, and to show empathy to them.

It was mentioned that one of the biggest risks is not having the right budget for campaign. As stated by Suvi Rosqvist "It is very important to choose the right budget for marketing campaigns." Also, it is important for companies to focus on right target audience and post the right content for them in right time. Moreover, the global situations and trends can affect on company's product and brand image. That is probably why interviewed companies are not planning marketing content in a long-term.

#### **6.5 Trends**

At the end of the interview session, the question was asked related to latest trends which were applied in company's published content. During interviews was found out that sustainability is the main trend. It is also the last trend that was a driver for marketing campaigns in Instagram for each brand. About the content trends, it was mentioned that live video and video post for feed are in trend nowadays.



In fashion industry Ivana Helsinki is applying the trend of “clothes for every size” and sharing it with their followers in Instagram, which brings to them woman different sizes and increase sales of dresses.

The summary of findings is presented also in a table format for illustrational purposes below in Table 3.

Table 3. The summary of findings from interviews.

Themes from interviews	Ivana Helsinki	Simple App	Paper Planes Oy
Instructions and guidelines for marketing process	No specific instructions, everything is discussed together with team.	No specific instructions.	No specific instructions. Campaigns are planned in multi-talent teams, according to own experience, expertise and knowledge.
Affection of COVID-19	Some of the events needed to be cancelled and planned content delayed (for example, private shopping, live band event)	Pandemic didn't affect campaigns. There even positive dynamic. More new customers and followers than before the pandemic.	Covid-19 effected trends for Instagram in general, especially for creating content.
Risks	Risk of receiving negative feedback.	Unanswered customer's feedback.	Not finding the right target audience, poor quality of content, risks of not having the right budget.
Trends	Sustainability as a main trend. “Clothes for every size” About the content -live video and video for feed are in trend now.	Sustainability-changing all content which shows plastic icons.	Sustainability - last trend that was a driver for campaigns.

## **7 Observations and Suggestions for Efficient Marketing in Instagram**

In the following chapter own observations about Instagram as a digital marketing tool from one of the authors of this thesis will be presented. Also, the final suggestions in the form of ten tips for efficient marketing in Instagram will be described.

### **7.1 Own Observations**

Since one of the authors of the work is a fashion blogger, own observations about Instagram as a digital marketing tool will be mentioned. Anna started her blog 2.5 years ago, before the pandemic began. Instagram has changed a lot since that time. People used to subscribe more willingly because there were fewer bloggers, but now there is incredible competition and people have become very selective. Despite the small number of subscribers, at the time of writing, Anna has 10.2k subscribers, she has been actively cooperating with fashion brands for a long time, since in the fashion sector, the most important is visual component.

According to Anna's experience, during the COVID-19 pandemic, brands became more selective in choosing influencers to collaborate with, and some brands stopped collaborating altogether due to the global situation. The content and format of the ads has also changed. If earlier there were more filming in public places and in rented studios, now many photographs and videos for advertising are made at home. This made the filming process very difficult, and the creative part of the advertising campaigns suffers greatly. Bloggers and influencers were very worried, especially at the beginning, that subscribers would start decreasing because of the same type of content. But subscribers got used to it over time, because, of course, they understand that this is due to lockdowns and restrictions and that this is temporary.

Concerning cooperation with fashion brands. Brands choose influencers not only by the number of subscribers and popularity, but also by other criteria. As it is well known, the number of followers and likes is not a decisive factor. Now it is very easy to artificially increase the number of subscribers and get likes for a certain fee. Brands know this and are trying to figure it out in order to really collaborate with live blogs, which have real people subscribers and not bots. More importantly is the engagement of subscribers, what is the coverage of posts and stories for the brand, the number and quality of comments by the percentage of engagement of subscribers in the blog. Therefore, brands ask for statistics on reach and audience before cooperation.

The success of an advertising campaign can be assessed by the number of purchases made using a personal code that created delusion specifically for this campaign. For example, it can be "Ann15", and then the brand can easily determine how many purchases were made with this particular discount code –15%. The success of an advertising campaign is also assessed by statistics. It appears by the number of clicks on the brand's nickname. The blogger himself checks how many clicks were perfect on a nickname. Success often depends on how well the ad is organized, on the creativity and quality of the content.

Collaboration with influencers is now one of the most important tools for advertising the products of fashion brands. But every ad is a brand risk, because advertising campaigns with bloggers costs money, and no one can guarantee the success of the campaign. Even the most experienced and successful blogger does not always know whether an advertisement will go to his blog, since the success of an advertising campaign depends on many factors. Brands need to be very selective and listen to their gut.

According to Anna's observations, one of the most popular trends on Instagram now is sustainability. Influencers create a lot of content on this topic. Often, collections from fashion brands that are created from natural fabrics and are harmless to the planet, turn out to be more successful and gain more engagement with customers. The trend towards naturalness is also very popular. Subscribers want to see live content without strong filters. Slightly processed photos are in fashion.

Also, according to Anna's experience, video content is gaining more likes and comments. Nowadays, subscribers really enjoy watching videos rather than reading long texts. Of course, the percentage of those who want to read and write long texts will be, but video content still remains more popular on Instagram.

## **7.2 10 Tips to Make Efficient Marketing in Instagram**

All the above, literature review, analysis of the case company and its competitor, interview analysis helped to identify the 10 tips to make efficient marketing in Instagram. The idea to create 10 tips for Instagram came after the authors of the thesis analyzed the companies with which they would like to conduct interviews. Authors aimed to create a work that will also have practical value in the future.

Tips were created at the very end of writing thesis, after interviews were conducted and analyzed. The theory helped to understand the basics of digital marketing and the best

techniques for working on Instagram. The interviews helped to understand how the workflow of creating marketing campaigns goes and also many answers from specialists confirmed the importance of the later created tips. But the advice is mostly inspired by the analysis of Dior, Tiffany and Chanel companies. Since the most successful analyzed company is Chanel, it was the analysis of the best marketing campaigns for the Chanel brand that helped create most of the tips. So, tips by numbers two, three, four, five, seven, nine were inspired after case company analysis, especially after Chanel analysis. Tips by numbers two and three are related. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to both tips. During analysis was found out that by creating hashtags for fashion events, subscribers have opportunity to publish photos with the brand's hashtag. This action has benefits for brand's account and followers as well. Subscribers feel connection with the brand even if they have never bought their products. As a result, subscriber engagement with the brand's Instagram account increases and marketing campaigns become more effective. 10 Tips to Make Efficient Marketing in Instagram are presented below, and Infographic illustrated in appendix 2.

1. A harmonious publication feed is your business card. Create quality visual content and use the latest techniques and tools.
2. Create engaging content. Encourage users to feel that they are special. Ask them questions, let them give feedback and be heard.
3. Brand's hashtags. Create hashtags for each campaign and entice subscribers to publish posts with these hashtags. Content will go viral.
4. "Follower-generated" content, or namely "user-generated content". Pay attention to the content that is published by users and if possible reshare it on brand's account (feed or stories).
5. Collaborations with influencers is very important. Pay attention to choosing the right influencer for your campaign, analyze their audience and statistics.
6. Apply latest trends when developing Instagram content and share it with your followers.
7. Create short videos for marketing your product or service, don't forget to use creative tools. Customers like visual content and short videos will increase interest in your brand.
8. Educate your followers. Tell and show them fascinating stories about your brand, company and what you do.
9. Use daily Instagram stories and Instagram live for increasing constancy engagement with your followers, for instance it will increase brand loyalty relationship.
10. Be honest with your followers and show empathy to them.

The idea to create tip number one came after literature review analysis, more precisely after studying digital tools, techniques and after competitor analysis. It was clear that coherent look in feed plays significant role for brand's account. The idea to create tip number six came after studying literature about current trends and their impact on digital marketing. Tip number nine was created from multiple research results, for instance, Nidhi (2021) stated that live-video content is one of the last trends, as was also mentioned by Ivana's Helsinki marketing producer, that they involve this trend lately. Also, during research of company Dior it was found out that they apply the trend in online seminar form. Tips by numbers eight and ten were inspired after interview with Ivana Helsinki, where they noted importance of creating fascinating stories about the brand. Ivana Helsinki representative also mentioned that being honest with followers and showing empathy to them plays crucial role in building relationships with customers.

To conclude this chapter, ten tips will be useful in further studies and future professions both for fashion companies and authors of the research. Understanding that the authors of the thesis themselves created tips for Instagram adds confidence that not only theoretical knowledge but practical skills were acquired.

## 8 Conclusion

Studying various materials about digital marketing, Instagram as a digital marketing tool, digital marketing trends, consumer behavior and the impact of COVID-19, has proven to be very helpful in order to understand the basics for further detailed study of Instagram. The COVID-19 dramatically changed consumer behavior and world in general. There are still not many works written about this, so the authors of the thesis were especially interested in studying the impact of the situation in the world in digital marketing for fashion brands and consumer behavior in general.

Determination in the selection of the most important techniques for Instagram was beneficial in studying marketing campaigns. This helped to identify the most successful marketing campaigns and to understand which characteristics made the campaign effective.

The analysis of the case company Christian Dior, their direct and indirect competitors was very useful for studying Instagram. It helped to identify the most successful marketing campaigns and determine which techniques to use to successfully run an Instagram page for a Fashion brand. Competitor analysis showed that the most successful fashion brand in luxury segment on Instagram is Chanel brand. The results were made on the basis of statistics of the most successful brands, on the analysis of the marketing activities on Instagram and on the basis of the analysis of Instagram accounts. The analysis of the companies helped to reveal that one of the most popular trends for marketing campaigns is video content, which is used often for advertising new collections. Chanel and Dior are actively publishing videos in their feed. This is justified by the global trend in the popularity of video content. Interviews with representative from fashion brand Ivana Helsinki confirmed the relevance of this trend.

The summary of findings from research shows that interviewees don't have strict instructions and guidelines in planning marketing campaigns. This way can creatively plan marketing campaigns for each brand individually. The main risks in maintaining Instagram are receiving negative feedback from customers, leaving the customer's feedback without professional reply, not having the right budget for campaigns, Research also showed that one of the biggest trends on Instagram is sustainability. To summarize the literature review, interview analysis and the analysis of case company and competitors, the COVID-19 has a huge impact on digital marketing, it affected trends for Instagram in general, especially for creating content. Brands began to create campaigns that are relevant to the current situation in order to maintain contact with subscribers.

Fashion brands need to consider and apply latest trends on their Instagram accounts in order to achieve consumer needs and expectations. The results of benchmarking and interviews showed the brands that are following latest trends and maintain their accounts more creatively, have higher engagement with followers on their Instagram.

In conclusion, both authors are gained a valuable information from literature review about digital marketing and Instagram overall, digital tools, which can be applied in future when creating content. Also, methodological approach was studied for understanding how beneficially collect data and analyse it afterwards. Benchmarking and semi-structured interview methods helped authors to collect information and compare results when developing 10 tips for efficient Instagram marketing which presented in appendix 2 below.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1. Interview Questions**

#### **Basic questions**

1. What are your work responsibilities and tasks?
2. What is your experience with working on digital marketing for fashion brands?

#### **Marketing Campaign process**

3. What was the most successful campaign in Instagram?
4. Does your company have some instructions or guidelines while planning marketing campaigns? If yes, what it includes? If not, how then campaigns are organized?
5. Have you ever had unforeseen situations when it was necessary to change the marketing campaign due to the prevailing circumstances? If yes, give examples. Do you have instruction, what you have to do in such situations?
6. How do you understand that you chose the right marketing campaign for the brand? Please, give examples.

#### **Affection of COVID-19 and risks**

7. Has the pandemic situation affected the creation and implementation of a marketing campaigns? What specifically has changed?
8. What are the main risks in implementing marketing campaigns?

#### **Trends**

9. Can you share your secrets, what was the last trend you applied to your marketing campaign?



ALENA MAKSIMOVA & ANNA SAVOLAINEN

# 10 Tips to Make Efficient Marketing in Instagram

1

**Create quality visual content and use the latest techniques and tools**

2

**Create hashtags for each campaign and entice subscribers to publish posts with these hashtags**

3

**While creating campaigns, think about WOW experiences for followers**

4

**“Follower-generated” content, or namely “user-generated content” in feed or stories**

5

**Pay attention to choosing the right influencer for your campaign, analyze their audience and statistics**

6

**Apply latest trends when developing Instagram content and share it with your followers**

7

**Create short videos for marketing your product or service, don't forget to use creative tools**

8

**Educate your followers. Tell and show them fascinating stories about your brand**

9

**Use daily Instagram stories and Instagram live for increasing constancy engagement**

10

**Be honest with your followers and show empathy to them**