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SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACTS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE BUSINESS

CASE OF JUICY ROLLY

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
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<p data-bbox="312 701 424 730">Abstract</p> <p data-bbox="312 775 1442 987">The thesis aimed to examine social media as an integrated marketing communication tool and its impacts on customer satisfaction, focus on the food and beverage (F&B) industry. The thesis also studied F&B customer behavior in the capital area of Finland and analyzed a case company's social media marketing. The objective of the research was to provide improvement recommendations for the case company's social media marketing.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1032 1442 1171">The thesis started with theoretical background which consisted of various literature, academic writings, journals and online materials as references for deep understanding of the research subjects. The theory overview was divided into two sections, social media and customer satisfaction.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1216 1442 1355">Empirical findings for the research were data collected from of a F&B customer survey conducted via social media channels, as well as information and structured observation of the case company's social media. The survey data was analyzed using quantitative method.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1400 1442 1538">The results of this study indicate the importance of developing effective social media marketing for the case company, in regard to the aspects of expanding social media channels, productively handling electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and upgrading the online contents.</p>		
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1 INTRODUCTION

As technology has incredibly developed, social media plays a huge role on nowadays business. With almost everyone having their own personal space online under various platforms, businesses' performance has significantly been improved by direct communication with their current and potential customers that leads to effective insights of their needs, expectations and recommendations in an attempt to increase the level of customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this thesis is to have a deeper understanding on social media as a channel of integrated marketing communication (IMC), specifically in the field of food and beverage (F&B), and its influence on customer satisfaction. There will be an analysis for data collected from a survey of customer expectations on restaurants' social media alongside with the study of a case company's social media development. The thesis closes up with recommendations for the case company on possible improvement for their social media marketing.

The thesis consists of four parts. Beginning with the introduction and problem setting (chapter 1 and 2), second one will be a theoretical overview of the study (chapter 3 and 4). Third part including chapter 5, 6 and 7 will be an empirical research of local customer behavior as well as the case company social media's analysis. Summary, conclusions including recommendations for the case company's marketing plan will be the final part of the thesis.

The case study in this thesis will be a food truck named Juicy Rolly that operates within the metropolitan area during the summer. This is a business project of Cheerfully Oy, a limited liability company founded in 2019 which specializes in F&B services.

2 PROBLEM SETTING AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Problem setting

The purpose of this thesis is to examine social media as an integrated marketing communication (IMC) tool and its impacts on customer satisfaction, focus on the food and beverage (F&B) industry. The thesis begins with theories on social media as a growingly important marketing communication channel, how it influences the level of customer satisfaction, following by empirical findings of the defined topics and thus, create suggestions for Juicy Rolly food truck in developing its social media marketing.

The research problem can be defined as followed:

How does social media support F&B businesses in enhancing the level of customer satisfaction?

On the foundation of the research problem, following research objectives can be set.

1. What impacts does social media contribute to F&B businesses' performance in terms of customer satisfaction?
2. What is the local customers' expectation of the local restaurants' social media?
3. How has the case company's social media been performing?
4. Based on the previous research, what are the potential recommendations for the case company's social media development plan?

2.2 Boundaries

This research-based thesis will not cover the topic of basics of marketing, marketing communication using other promotional mix than social media. The thesis will be completely focused on the use of social media channels. Food-and-beverage is the industry of the case company, therefore there will be no study applied on different fields such as retail sales or personal care service mentioned. Additionally, the market to which this research aims for is Finland, in particular the Metropolitan area.

2.3 Conceptual framework

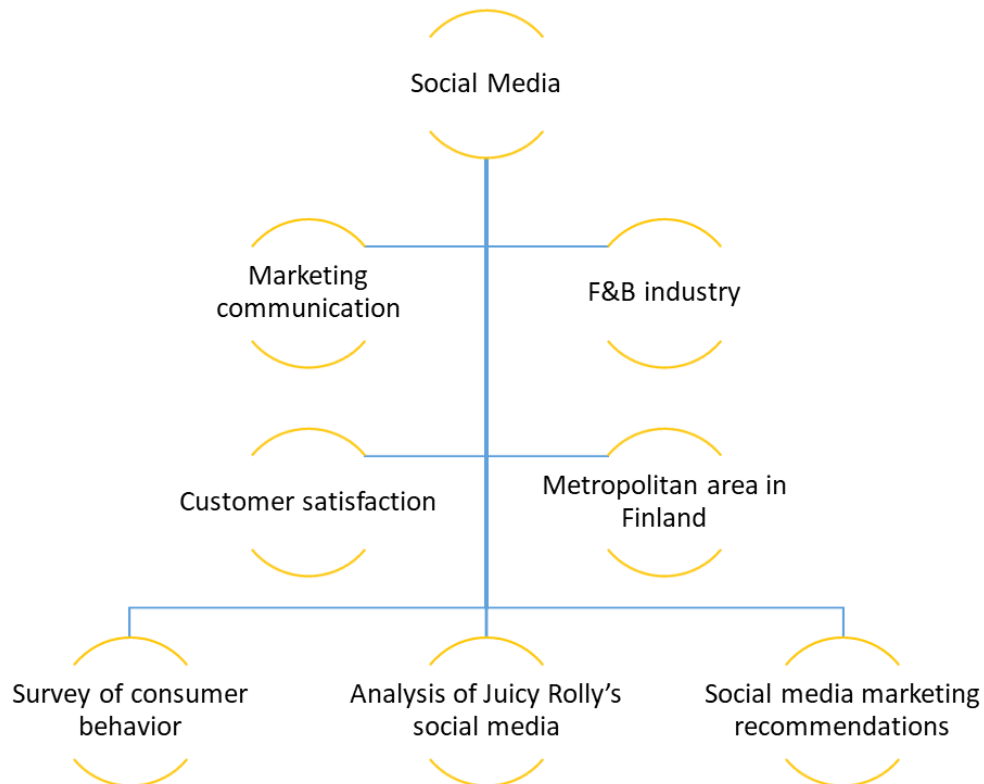


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Social media impacts on customer satisfaction in Food-and-Beverage business (Author of the thesis 2021)

The figure illustrates this thesis's structure. Literature review, which is a theoretical background for the research, covers topics of social media, social media in integrated marketing communication (IMC), social media impacts on customer satisfaction particularly in the industry of food and beverage (F&B) and the capital region of Finland. Following by empirical findings supporting the case company's social media development plan, including a survey reflecting local restaurant customer online behavior and expectations, an analysis of the case company's social media pages and finally, recommendations for further improvement.

3 SOCIAL MEDIA

3.1 Definition and use of social media

The term social media stands for digital platforms such as website and application where users, either individuals or organizations, are able to produce, commune and share contents under different types of form. (Davis, Deil, Rios & Canche 2015, 410). Discussing forum, microblogging, social networking, social reviewing, photo sharing, video sharing and wiki are some of the forms of social media. With the support of mobile applications, some social media sites are easier in accessing and, therefore, getting more familiar. Some of the most popular social media platforms especially amongst marketers in the year of 2020 are Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest (Statista Research Department 2021).

Nowadays, anyone with internet connection and an electronical device can have their own social media pages. Regardless of the huge variety of social media sites, most of them begin with a user creating a profile, typically by providing a username and email address. After that, user can either create or share existing contents. Depending on the nature of the social media platform, user can have friends, followers, subscribers; they can react in several ways towards the contents uploaded, for instance comment, share, like, even dislike and report if the contents are irrelevant in their opinions (Wigmore 2020).

The purpose of social media sites may vary from keeping in touch with family, friends, co-workers and acquaintances, to sharing an information or idea in several ways. Social media used to be popular among younger generation only, but nowadays, the majority of the society have at least one or two digital profiles. Moreover, the vast use of social media hassled to the creation of a term called “social media influencer”, or “influencer”. The term refers to people who have gained a decent number of followers as a result of their useful and entertaining online content. At the same time, influencers are extremely active on their channels, providing journals, images, videos and all other types of posts that attract and engage users for further interaction and, thus, establish a strong reputation (Website of Influencer Marketing Hub 2021).

Social media usage has significantly increased the need for organizations to open up their own page in Facebook, YouTube and other such sites in aiming to build communities around them (Baron, Conway & Warnaby 2010).

Likewise, businesses are aware of the growing importance of social media as they would utilize these sites for marketing and promotion purposes. Despite being a cost-efficient method, it is undeniable how these platforms have improved the performance of many companies' brand-awareness and customers' engagement, thanks to the huge number of social media users. Most companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and business-to-consumer (B2C) businesses, have their own websites include social components, for example like button, comment box and share options. By doing so, their pages establish a solid relationship with existing customers as well as reach out to potential ones (Wigmore 2020).

Users normally scroll through a social media platform and decide whether to pay attention to a content by how appealing it is on their "feed". Based on the information of a profile page, like where it is located and what kind of contents it provided, algorithms are used by social media companies in order to determine the order of them appearing in other users' feeds (Hudson 2020).

3.2 Finland's use of social media

Based on the Statistics Finland's 2020 survey data on use of information and communications technology by individuals collected with a web questionnaire and telephone interviews between 20 March and 10 June 2020, 92% of Finnish population aged 16 to 89 are using the internet, and 82% of them are using it several times a day. The most common purpose for the Finns in the age of 16 to 89 to use the internet is for communication. 87% are users of email, 76% are of mobile applications messaging and 72% use the internet to make calls (Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) 2020).

Within the year of 2020, a remarkable growth was found on the use of social network services among Finnish people. 69% of people aged 16 to 89 are using and following these network services, comparing to figure collected from 2019 and 2015, which are, in order, 61% and 58%. The change is from group of age 65 to 74 with the number of social network followers increased

from under 200.000 to over 300.000, and age 75 to 89 from 45.000 to over 75.000. The most popular social network service in 2020 was Facebook, which accounted for 58% of respondents as followers (Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) 2020).

Table 1. Finnish Internet usage and purposes of use (Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) 2020)

**Prevalence of Internet usage and certain purposes of use in 2020,
Percentage share of population**

	Used the Internet ¹⁾	Usually uses the Internet several times a day	Online shopping ¹⁾	Making Internet calls ¹⁾	Following social network services ¹⁾
16-24	100	98	62	87	92
25-34	100	97	77	91	92
35-44	99	97	80	86	86
45-54	99	93	70	82	80
55-64	97	83	46	69	60
65-74	88	62	25	55	46
75-89	51	30	8	19	16
Men	93	83	56	69	66
Women	91	80	53	74	71
All	92	82	54	72	69

In December 2020, a study published by Niinimäki indicated that the most accessible social media platforms in Finland are WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, followed by LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, Reddit and Tumblr. Among the platforms, WhatsApp is the most commonly used one with 84% of the interviewees as users. 75% of them use Facebook and 71% use YouTube, which make the sites second and third in terms of popularity (Niinimäki 2020).

The most common reason for using Facebook, according to 80% of respondents, is to stay in touch with relatives and friends. However, the daily usage of this platform has decreased during the past few years, while the record of WhatsApp, Instagram and most of the other social media platforms has continuously been growing, especially during the pandemic time of COVID-19 (Niinimäki 2020).

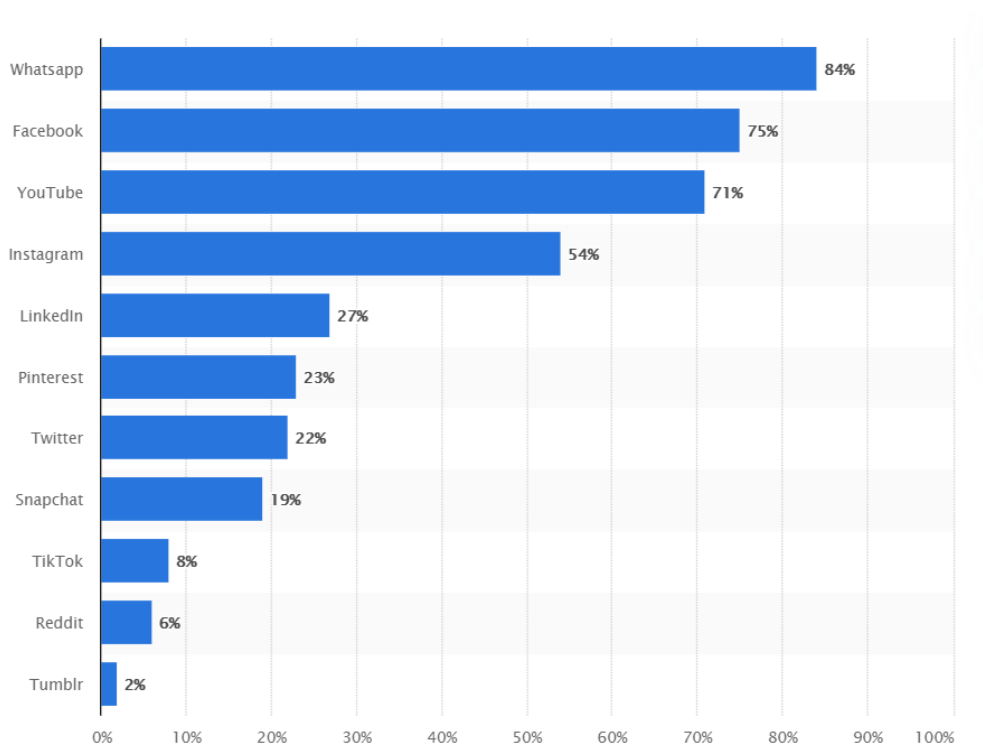


Figure 2. Most accessible social media platforms in Finland, December 2020 (Niinimäki 2020)

3.3 Most potential social media tools

There are numerous social networking services used today, however, in this study, the author only focuses on those that are potentially supportive to the development of F&B businesses, in particular the case study company. The chosen platforms are Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

3.3.1 Instagram

One of the most acknowledged, easy-to-use and beneficial social media platforms is Instagram. Instagram is a mobile app (application) where users create and establish their profile with

photos and videos instead of the traditional way of words, listings and explanations. The platform emphasizes on the wide use of mobile phone as well as the trend in visually pleasing and unique content. Similar to most social media platforms, Instagram includes a profile page in which users update their media, and a news feed where posts of the user's following profile are displayed. Instagram users interact with their followers and followings in various ways, for example follow, like, comment, tag, share, and direct message. Besides, one can add pictures and videos of their interest to a section called "Saved" (Decker 2017).

The goal of Instagram users is to create, find and share the most aesthetic pictures and videos posts and profiles. Hence, the app owns several digital filters applicable for images and videos, aiming to enhance its visual and transform them into something memorable. Videos uploaded on Instagram can be at its longest of sixty seconds, but a post of both photos and videos may contain around ten of those media files. Additionally, the mobile app provides a signature option of "stories" sharing, where users are able to upload, apparently, pictures or videos, which only stay within 24 hours. This feature appears on the top of the news feed, considering ones' status at the specific moment (Blakeman 2018, 274-275).

Instagram is favored especially in marketing communication among companies thanks to its multifunctional characteristics and the vast amount of over one billion users, normal followers as well as "influencers" - the social media's celebrities. Despite its fewer users in comparison to Facebook and YouTube with their numbers of over two billion, Instagram remains the most valuable promotional vehicle since its centralization in engagement, visual content and younger user base (Jackson 2019). Features which business may take into consideration while implementing marketing plan using Instagram includes business profile, insights, interactive hashtags, sponsored ads, highlight stories, and filtered postings (Jackson 2019).

3.3.2 Facebook

Created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook is by far the most popular social networking site with over two billion users globally. Facebook's main purpose is for people – families and friends – to connect and share online using various features, such as status and messengers. Facebook users are able to build a profile page with their profile and cover photos, update their social status with different types of content, like pictures, videos and links (Freedman 2020).

Unlike Instagram and its concentration on the uniqueness and visual effects of pictures and videos, Facebook with its huge number of users is a significant social platform for connection and engagement. According to Blakeman, Facebook's most valuable traits to business consist of customer's conversation, brand-awareness built, feedbacks, and new product's promotion (Blakeman 2018, 270). It is also a great channel for e-Word-of-Mouth, viral marketing and updating on the social trendy interests and lifestyles (Freedman 2020).

On the profile page of a Facebook account, one can link their Instagram, website as well as other social networking sites for a fully connected profile information, making it transparent for customers to explore and purchase. Similar to Instagram, Facebook has its business features which allows the purchase of advertisement postings and evaluating insight measurement for further development (Blakeman 2018, 271).

3.3.3 YouTube

The third social media channel worth mentioning is YouTube – a video sharing website that was meant for watching, creating and sharing of videos. This platform is all about user-generated content, allowing creative individuals to freely upload and share their self-made videos, which is something particularly restrictive under the age of traditional television. As a matter of fact, with more than two billion users, over 2400 channels that exceed one million subscribers and more than thirty million daily visits, YouTube has become one of the most favorable means of entertainment as well as advertisement. The variety of content and channels is one of the key characteristics leading YouTube in its fast growth (Kuligowski 2020).

Like Instagram and Facebook, YouTube is considered a potential promotional tool because of its huge number of users, both viewers and video-creators. The ultimate goal is to achieve viral videos from creative, entertaining, informative, engaging and, from time to time, “unusual” content that draws attention and interaction that lead to higher views, and hence, more solid reputation. The marketing beneficial aspects of this social media site include its relatively affordable, educating and entertaining characteristics (Blakeman 2018, 273).

3.4 Social media in integrated marketing communication (IMC)

3.4.1 Integrated marketing communication (IMC)

Robyn Blakeman (2018, 4) defined Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) as “interactively engage a specific individual, using a specific message through specific media outlets”. The purpose of IMC, also known as relationship marketing, is to establish and maintain a relationship between sellers and buyers by delivering a tailor made, personalized statement to the right audiences and constantly developing a two-way communication via the strategically chosen promotional vehicles. The diversity and competitiveness of today’s global business has driven the need for consumers to be wise and considerate in choosing a product or service provider. Hence, IMC targets at creating a brand’s identity with an individualized message in order to stand out from the competitors, gain the market’s attention and retain their loyalty (Blakeman 2018, 5).

There are several reasons for businesses to focus on IMC. Firstly, with the massive development of nowadays technology, advertisement is no longer of traditional mass media. The variety of research and communication tools on the Internet has given customers the opportunity to have better knowledge of a product or service along with access to a much wider selection of brands. Comparing to before, when traditional marketing was to send a general message to an overall population, now companies need to become as individual and unique as the consumers themselves, as an attempt to attract the attention and loyalty from audiences who are incredibly well-educated about the market. Secondly, computer databases play an important part in marketing communication of today’s world. With the computer data of one’s previous interests and purchases, companies are able to indicate the right market segmentation and deliver the accurate advertisement. A potential marketing strategy would most likely be created based on research and analyze the market’s information, behavior, and responds. Lastly, one of the key factors in relationship marketing is to maintain a two-way communication between businesses and their customers, which results in successfully attracting and retaining brand-loyal customers. Additionally, interactive conversation with the help of technology can make it easier for companies to probably deliver a customer-driven marketing (Blakeman 2018, 10-12).

It can be way more expensive and time-consuming to operate IMC than to stick to the traditional way of advertising, but its effectiveness and returns are undeniable. (Blakeman, 2018, 5).

Developing a potential IMC implementation depends greatly on companies' choice of promotional mix. These communication instruments can be appropriately determined through sufficient study and understanding of the targeted audiences, a company's level of brand-awareness and the marketing budget of it. The promotional mix consists of:

- Public relations (news release)
- Advertising (newspaper, magazine, radio and television)
- Out-of-home (outdoor/ mobile billboards, wall murals) and transit (bus/train/plan advertising)
- Direct marketing (direct mails, catalogues, telemarketing)
- Sales promotion (coupons, samples, contests)
- The Internet and social media
- Mobile (mobile web, text, video options, QR codes)
- Alternative media (sidewalks, ATM, equipments)
- Personal/face-to-face selling (Blakeman 2018, 14).

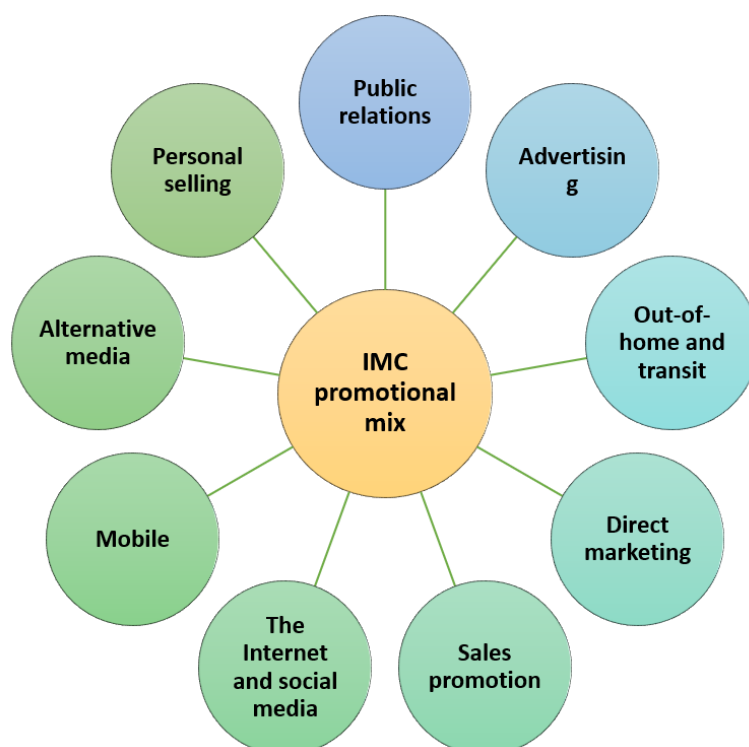


Figure 3. IMC promotional mix (Blakeman 2018, 14)

3.4.2 Uses of social media in integrated marketing communication (IMC)

Social media is a useful promotional tool for businesses to reach out to potential and existing customers by establishing a relationship through online exchange and communication (Ryan and Jones, 2009). The main idea is to attract a specific group of targeted customers via fascinating contents, constantly interact with them by creating dialogue and therefore, maintain a relationship which leads to various advantages, such as brand-equity, revenue boost, customers' satisfaction and loyalty.

In comparison to both traditional mass-media outlets and other promotional mix mentioned above, the impacts of social media on marketing communication are various. Advertisement no longer consists of a group of common and neutral ideas being sent out to a huge audience, nowadays, with the assist of computerized database, firms are allowed to learn better on their targeted market and hence, deliver consumer-driven messages that are as personalized and individualized as possible (Blakeman 2018, 9).

Social media as a part of the internet, plays a key role in supporting sellers to understand their buyers' interest via their profile pages' detailed information. In addition to attractive statements, social media is a place where businesses can create two-way communication with their customers. Maintaining a long-term relationship requires direct, immediate and effective conversation in which each party is both engaged, heard and respected. As the study of social media claimed, the use of this network is extremely massive and continuously developing, it can encourage customers to participate in interactive activities generated by companies, commonly consist of like, comment, share and subscribe or follow, which may lead to a great spread of word-of-mouth, enhancing popularity and even satisfaction (Malhotra, Usley & Bayraktar 2016, 97).

In today's business world, it is no longer companies who control their brand-image utilizing their own efforts, but rather consumers and their feedbacks. Social network services enable buyers to directly express their opinions, suggestions and complaints about the product or service that will not stay only between them and sellers but would affect the relevant

community. It is significantly essential of businesses to focus on these feedbacks and respond appropriately (Price & Jaffe 2014, 6-7).

Another vital impact of social media as a marketing tool is its contribution to diversify nowadays business world. The easy access to social media that has granted almost everyone, individual and organization, the ability to create an e-identity where they can promote themselves, be viral and earn profit. This has developed a way more dynamic and competitive business world than ever before, leading to every company's greater effort in building its signature advantages. As individual as each customer, businesses, especially SME, have to stand-out from the crowd and effectively draw the attention by emphasizing their unique nature using the right social media marketing strategy (Blakeman 2018, 5).

Besides, despite its undeniable influence, social media marketing communication is undoubtedly way more cost-efficient than other promotional mix, which is among the beneficial factors of concentrating on this particular promotional vehicle for IMC (Blakeman 2018, 267).

3.4.3 Social media impacts in food and beverage (F&B) industry

With the vital growth of social media usage, businesses are more likely to lose their control over the brand-image to their customers. Especially with the Food and Beverage (F&B) industry, reviews, recommendations and even rumors spreading on the internet are the information that is accessible to most customers. According to an article called "Social Media influences on the restaurant industry", every customer nowadays has the power to control the reputation of a restaurant with the help of social media (Storms 2014). The sharing of information on these online platforms spread widely and speedily, leading to the growing importance of F&B businesses effort in valuing every single consumer's opinion and experience to maintain their brand-image. There are several ways a F&B service provider can utilize social media in improving its business performance (Storms 2014).

To begin with, the content of a restaurant's social media must be in focus. Consumers now tend to decide a place for dining out by surfing the Internet looking for restaurants' information, including locations, reviews, menu selection and images. Approximately one third of a recent

survey's interviewees admit searching for such contents on different kinds of social network services before trying a new diner. An attempt to attract and maintain the satisfaction level that leads to loyalty of customers requires a firm a structural development plan for their social media's appearance, including posts' content, images, videos and appropriately handling of customers' interaction. Some platforms, such as TripAdvisor and Yelp, allow users to rate their experience (for example on the scale of 5-star), taking "the word-of-mouth recommendation to an international scale" (Storms 2014). These platforms also make it easy for any customers to post photos and videos of their own, write reviews and recommendations based on their experience with the service, which are the content that are not only out of a restaurant's authority but also available to the public. Such information can spread in a matter of seconds and may either strengthen a restaurant's branding or negatively affect its reputation (Price & Jaffe 2014, 6-7).

Keeping customers in engagement via social networking services is another way F&B business can make the best of the social media effects. Many restaurants as well as other F&B premises are using social media in an innovative method that encourage followers to interact with the pages repeatedly and continuously. Some of the noticeable examples are asking customers for new menu's recommendations or hosting a special lottery with the prize of a free meal with the requirement of customers sharing the restaurant's page to other social media users. In these activities, social media assets such as comment and share are in utilization. These are extremely effective events in which business and consumers are directly communicating, creating a win-win situation where consumers' opinions are being valued and business has an opportunity in handling suggestions and complaints (Mealey 2018). Awarding followers free meals and voucher to encourage their support in terms of like, comment and share a restaurant's social media pages results in an incredibly positive spread of e-Word-of-Mouth (Storms 2014).

Another impact of social network service on the F&B industry is that potential customers are easier to target and approach, especially those who are local. With the help of the "check-in" feature on most of the social network services, social media users often actively update their profile along with their location, granting businesses access to further understanding the local market segments. "This allowed the organizations to obtain the detailed consumer information which was not able to access in the past" (Sawchuk 2011). Likewise, there has been a noticeable rising trend of local food blogs (or vlogs) and reviews, in fact, many F&B businesses nowadays are making efforts in connecting to this blogging community in order to gain more access to

the local segments and increase brand-awareness. In addition, hashtag is another helpful feature since it is widely used among mobile applications for effectively content-tracking within a specific region or of a certain cuisine (Mealey 2018).

4 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

4.1 Definition of customer satisfaction

In the book of “Relationship marketing re-imagined”, customer satisfaction is defined as “the difference between post-purchase experience and prior attitude with respect to the brand choice in question”, which is a result of “the level of value received compared to a standard which is based on what the individual feels he or she deserves” (Malhotra, Uslay & Bayraktar 2016, 70). In other words, satisfaction is measured by comparing one’s expectation of a product or service to their actual experience. A simpler definition of customer satisfaction by Gerson and Machosky is “when a product exceeds a customer’s expectations, the customer is usually satisfied” (1993, 7). Whether a customer is satisfied or dissatisfied with the brand of choice depends on their own evaluation of the purchasing process. The level of customer satisfaction also determines a product or service’s quality, meaning quality is “whatever the customer says it is” (Gerson & Machosky 1993, 7).

In present days, it is no longer sufficient to provide a single product or service aiming at pleasing and reaching a customer’s needs. The fast-growing and competitive business world results in customers’ higher requirement and demand on, not only the product or service in need, but every other element that comes asides the process of purchasing. From the product’s description to payment, delivery and after-sales service, these factors are all under one’s consideration when it comes to a decision of re-visiting the service provider. Customers place their trust upon whichever organizations that succeed in meeting their satisfaction at each stage and hence, potentially becoming loyal (Malhotra, Uslay & Bayraktar 2016, 63).

Apparently, an emotional response of each customer is both extremely diverse and unpredictable, as the expectation and fulfillment standard of every individual is completely

different. Therefore, satisfaction cannot be reached based on a universally known study, but rather firms' own efforts in segmenting their core-valued markets as well as sufficient knowledge and understanding about them. Such information goes beyond data-collecting, it requires every employee's responsibility to establish, develop and maintain a stable relationship between them and their customers. Organizations must pay attention in creating a well-structured and detailed customer database, where lies not only customer general information but also the history of their purchasing, conversations and, especially, complaints. Saving records of each customer's purchase in detail helps both avoiding previous mistakes and providing greater value every following performance (Price & Jaffe 2014, 16-17).

With the support of the Internet and online social network services, nowadays businesses are able to strengthen their relationship with customers as well as enhance marketing productivity by handling customer communication directly and individually. Many social media platforms' natures encourage active and continuous interaction of not only user-user but also business-user or even business-business. Such channels allow business a two-way gate of communication for in-depth understanding, establishing and maintaining a stable relationship of existing and potential customers individually. Besides, it is proven that customers delightfully participate in interactive activities of organizations' social media, as those are opportunities in which their contributions are significantly appreciated. Having their favorite brands taking their opinions into consideration and acting in response also benefit in the future products or service provided being more customized in order to satisfy their needs (Malhotra, Usley & Bayraktar 2016, 65-67).

As stated above, ensuring quality results in a great level of customer satisfaction, that eventually leads to a massive marketing productivity improvement, including customer retention, relationship quality and profitability. These elements contribute to the outcomes of a B2C company's relationship marketing, of which priority purpose is customer satisfaction. Relationship marketing concentrates on creating value towards customers, maintaining long-term customer loyalty and commitment that eventuates in business overall performance. The outcomes of a B2C relationship marketing are divided into two categories: organizational outcome and consumer-level outcome. In other words, a successful relationship marketing is one where both parties' needs are fulfilled, thus retaining a sustainable relationship (Malhotra, Usley & Bayraktar 2016, 68-69).

4.2 Social media in customer satisfaction of the food and beverage industry

As mentioned above, customer satisfaction leading to customer retention is the ultimate goal of every marketing implementation plan, especially amongst B2C organizations. One of the most effective vehicles for achieving this goal is social network services. Social media creates a two-way dialogue where a firm and its customer are able to establish a sustainable relationship (Blakeman 2018, 270).

Unlike any traditional marketing tactics where sellers control the information published to the society, in present days, with the help of the Internet, especially social media, it is buyers who are in charge of controlling the reputation of brands. The nature of social media urges users to be active, to spread e-contents either achieved or self-created which leads to limitless information available under various types of platforms. According to a report on the digital blog of Deloitte, over 4 million people in the world responds with 'like' button to the content on Facebook every minute passes and more than 1.5 million applies on the platform of Instagram (Deloitte Digital Blog 2021).

Previously stated in section 3.4.3 (impacts of social media in F&B industry), the popularity of social media use nowadays has led to numerous changes in the way a F&B business implements its marketing strategy, of which priority is maintaining and strengthening customer engagement, enhancing social media content and reaching out to potential customers. In this section, the author of the thesis will dig deeper into the topic, focusing on the impacts that induce the level of customer satisfaction.

4.2.1 E-loyalty

The first crucial impact in regard to effects of social media is the growing importance of e-loyalty. Malhotra, Uslay and Bayraktar indicated that e-loyalty, or customers' willingness to repeat the purchasing process on a firm's online vendors, is driven by several factors, from the flow of ordering and selection, the products' availability and information, the efficient delivery process, the customers' privacy policy and just overall e-commerce quality (2016, 98). E-loyalty results in a long-term customer relationship, which is the essence of competitive

advantages of today's business world, in particular the F&B industry (Malhotra, Usley and Bayraktar 2016, 98).

4.2.2 Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM)

Thanks to the nature of social media related to sharing and spreading of info, customers have access to not only a vast number of choices but also limitless resources while considering a brand for consumption. The company's website or social media pages are no longer the most trustworthy sources of information. A variety of buyers nowadays regularly write reviews of their post-purchase experience, either under the firm's channels or personal blogs and social media profile pages. Particularly in the F&B market, there has been a rising trend in creating food blogs or vlogs (video-blogs) that attract millions of viewers. Such contents tend to spread promptly and, from time to time, uncontrollably, which are worth for organization to take into consideration. Even one customer's perspective on the firm's performance evaluated under one circumstance can critically affect a large number of online users' opinion in the case of this customer being a social media influencer. Thus, it either strengthens or destroys a business's reputation and performance. Handling online feedbacks, complaints along with responding loud and clear in accordance are extreme essential, as they determine e-loyalty and customer retention on the scale of a whole community (Price & Jaffe 2014, 6).

4.2.3 Personalization

While implementing a firm's social media marketing plan aiming at increasing customer satisfaction, it is essential to concentrate on personalization. Authors of the book "Relationship marketing re-imagined" define personalization as "the process of collecting customer information that will help the firm develop products and services that will perfectly meet the customers' desires and needs in a personal way" (Malhotra, Usley and Bayraktar 2016, 75). Since satisfaction is indicated by customers' comparison between expectation and post-purchase experience, a brand's ability in providing personalized solutions will most certainly lead to an intimate relationship on the level of individual, hence, obtaining customer loyalty. Under the circumstance of online purchasing, authors of the book "Your customer rules!" emphasized the key role of approaching customers individually and getting to know them as

human beings instead of merely another email address (Price & Jaffe 2014, 36-38). When a company takes into consideration serving buyer with customized choices that are worthy of their time, wishes and needs, like a tailor-made luxurious dinner meal or a customize-themed wedding ceremony, it results in the high level of commitment and customer retention (Price & Jaffe 2014, 36-38).

The concept of personalized values offered to consumers does not simply indicate products or services, but the whole process of purchasing. Online buying experience is as vital as the product itself regarding to customer satisfaction. A brand which speaks a consistent message on every social media channel delivers a transparent information and a well-instructed shopping environment that are incredibly pleasing to online customers and will be considered the company's competitive edge. As the social media community's nature is the sharing of information, businesses are expected to pay attention to their profile pages' contents and values offered (Malhotra, Uslay and Bayraktar 2016, 97).

4.2.4 Content

Likewise, the content of a business's social media channels, as in product and service information significantly affects the customers' experience as well as evaluation. Like an individual establishing his or her social media profile, a brand's social media pages must be created with a cautiously prepared strategy on the foundation of its uniqueness, aiming to deliver its key messages and most valuable solutions. The developing process of these channels takes into account several elements, such as the visual effects, transparency of price and products' description, posts' regularity, privacy policies and e-commerce quality (Malhotra, Uslay & Bayraktar 2016, 97). Simply stated, online users generally determine their perception on a business via its social media's data and content, which affects their willingness in supporting the business with either purchasing or spreading e-word-of-mouth. It is vital for companies to put effort into the implementation of social media marketing strategy, in a way so that their cutting-edge values can be well-delivered, building a one-of-a-kind brand-image, successfully grabbing the crowds' attention and attracting potential customers (Malhotra, Uslay & Bayraktar 2016, 97).

In addition, there are various e-activities that are appealing and engaging under customers' perspective, for example online contest, survey, new menu recommendations, give-away and fund-raising events. Such activities are amongst the most effective social media marketing tactics that encourage customer contributions towards the development of a company, for example customers' share of information might become viral and improve the company's reputation. Businesses, especially SME, might gain further understanding of their existing and potential market segments through their participation in these occasions. Such activities also increase customers' engagement and show the brand's appreciation for their regulars (Mealey 2018).

Finally, despite all the effort put in social media marketing communication, companies may take into consideration the fact that social media is simply a communication tool. Satisfaction and trust cannot be established from the vague promotion and online promise, but the actual quality of a business' products and services, or how they manage to fulfill customer expectation. If a business fails to accomplish the goals and customers' values indicated upon its social media pages, the business is no longer trust-worthy and hence, dissatisfies their customer and negatively affects its brand-equity. In regard to F&B business, it is expected of restaurants to deliver most valuable products and service, as well as thoroughly handle feedbacks and complaints accordingly so that the level of satisfaction, trust and commitment would be further established (Mealey 2018).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research design

Following the theoretical background of this study will be the research project of F&B customer behavior and expectation on social media applied to a case company. The project, firstly, aims for insightful understanding of local market segmentation in the field, which is the restaurant consumers residing in the metropolitan region of Finland. At the same time, Juicy Rolly food truck as a case business and its social media operation will be studied and investigated for potential future development. A combination of exploratory and descriptive

research design will be used for this empirical part of the thesis. While exploratory research, of which techniques including case study, observation and database information analysis, is meant for exploring and discovering non-existing hypotheses; descriptive research allows the identification of characteristics of specific objects, as in a phenomenon or a group of people (Habib, Pathik, Maryam & Habib 2014, 7-8).

There will be an overview analysis of the case company's social media IMC performance, regarding the firm's internal implementation as well as the public's responsive level under each post. Applying exploratory research tactics such as observation and historical outcome analysis, the study targets at identifying the pros and cons of Juicy Rolly's IMC efforts. Alongside the stated exploratory research will be the study of F&B customer behavior on social media. The big question for this thesis, as mentioned under section 2.1, is "how social media improves F&B business performance in relate to customer satisfaction". Since the study focuses on the behavior and characteristics of a specific group of people, descriptive research design is chosen for the examination of the project, which will be conducting a customer survey.

5.2 Research method

Research methods deals with data collection and the process of analyzing data. One of the most common research types are quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative research is a number-based and measurable method, using calculation and statistical data to indicate a problem. Meanwhile, qualitative research involves descriptive and conclusive information, collecting through one's personal observation and experience. In other words, a quantitative research deals with numbers and statistics while a qualitative research refers to an idea, expression, attitude and opinion (Habib, Pathik, Maryam & Habib 2014, 8-9).

Table 2. Overview of qualitative and quantitative research (Habib, Pathik, Maryam & Habib 2014, 8)

	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Purpose	Descriptive and conclusive	Exploratory and no conclusive evidence
Sample Size	Small samples	Large samples
Question Type	Broad range of questioning	Structured questions
Interpretation	Subjective interpretation	Statistical analysis

The author of the thesis decided to choose quantitative research methodology in an attempt to gain in-depth insights of F&B customers behavior in a data-based and statistical way. Participants' answers for the questionnaire will be gathered and transformed into statistical data as in graphs and charts for measurement and conclusions.

5.3 Population and sample

A population refers to a group of whom a researcher intends to draw conclusions about. In a study, population does not always mean people, but can also be objects, events, measurements, organizations, etc (Bhandari 2021). Target population of this project are F&B customers located in the metropolitan region of Finland who are using social media.

Normally, when a population is in large scale making it impossible to gain access to the entire data, a sample that represents the population will be selected and of which data will be analysed. The sampling techniques applied in this study is non-probability convenience sampling, since the questionnaire will be carried out to social media users residing in the selected location. There will as well be a notification of the project's target respondents included in the survey form.

5.4 Designing the questionnaire

A questionnaire is established on the base of this research problem and consists of 15 questions concentrating on the impacts of social media in customer satisfaction, which were defined under section 4.2. The survey will be designed using an online questionnaire platform called

Google forms, and eventually be carried out via online networking services of Facebook, Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp. Language choice for the questionnaire is English.

The author sections the questionnaire into four parts, which are respondent's general info, their social media uses, their dining habits and finally, their social media customer behavior. This will be specified within the form in order to support participants as instructions. Using closed-ended questions like multiple choice and rating scale, as well as phrasing them with simple and unambiguous words, the survey intends to ensure respondents' fully understanding on the purpose of the survey along with avoiding any implicit assumptions.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1: Survey on customer expectation on restaurant's social media.

5.5 Data collection and analysis

Participants' answers for the customer survey will be analyzed systematically and transformed into graphs and charts in order to create a clear picture of the problem utilizing visual effects. This primary data will be supporting the research findings and conclusions in the behavior and expectation of the target population. Second primary data will be collected from the author's observation of the case company's social media, using exploratory research techniques. By following the company's social media implementation, the researcher aims to gain insightful knowledge for further findings regarding the topic.

On the other hand, secondary data of this thesis includes sources referenced in the literature review section, case company accessed data as well as case company and its competitors' social media background information.

5.6 Validity and reliability

Validity of a study indicates the level of accuracy in its research content and data, or simply stated, to make sure the research measures what needs to be measured (Kothari 2004, 73). Meanwhile, reliability of a research indicates the concept of its result's consistency and

stability regardless the number of attempts (Kothari 2004, 74). In this thesis, the validity and reliability of the research project is ensured with the questionnaire built on the foundation of the topic's theoretical background gathering from academic and professional books and articles, of which sources are available on the website of SAMK finna – Satakunta University of Applied Sciences Library. Wording and phrasing for the questionnaire are carefully chosen along with an appropriate number of alternative answers for each close-ended question in order to prevent any implicit assumptions and misunderstandings. Language choice will be English. Additionally, several consulting sessions are made with the thesis's supervisor to evaluate the validity of the questionnaire content. The author, at the same time, has made a few discussions with the case company's manager aiming at maintaining the accurate direction for the survey analysis in accordance with the company's objectives.

6 RESEARCH FINDINGS

From March 10th to April 10th, 2021, the questionnaire was sent to social media users who are also restaurant's customers in the metropolitan region of Finland. There were 73 responses collected in total.

This chapter will be a presentation of the survey's data findings and analysis.

6.1 Age of respondents

The survey begins with a question aiming to gather the respondent's age.

1. Which age group do you belong to?

73 responses

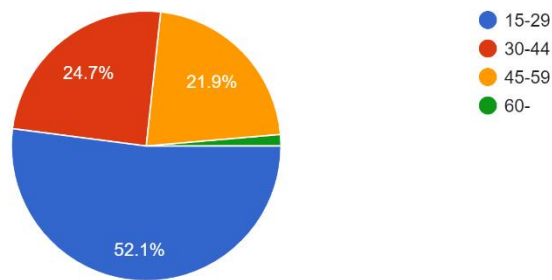


Figure 4. Respondents' age group

The majority of respondents are in the age of 15-29 (52,1%), following up is the age group of 30-44 with 24,7%, 45-59 with 21,9%, and one respondent who is in the group 60-. There are a lot more younger respondents responding to this survey.

6.2 Social media habits

The survey then explores the social media using habits of the respondents concerning their choice of social media platforms and the amount of time spent on social media.

2. Which social media platforms are you using daily (or almost daily)? (You can choose more than 1)

73 responses

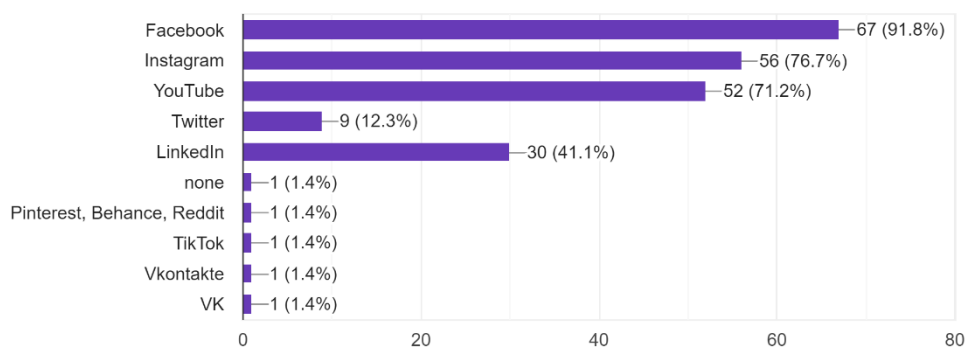


Figure 5. Respondents' choice of social media platform

The second question aims to figure out which social media platforms the respondents are using daily. Among 73 responses, 67 chose Facebook as their daily used channels (91,8%), making

the platform the most popular one. Following up with 56 chose Instagram (76,7%), 52 chose YouTube (71,2%) and 30 chose LinkedIn (41,1%). The big gap between YouTube and LinkedIn confirms the thesis's developed theory on most potential social media platforms being Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

3. How many hours do you spend on social media per day?
73 responses

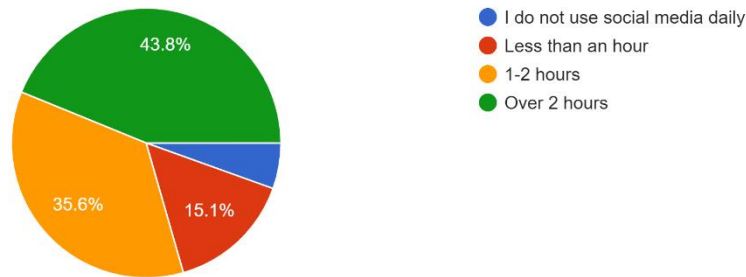


Figure 6. Amount of time respondents spend on social media

Regarding the amount of time spent on social media, 43,8% of respondents claimed to spend over 2 hours per day on these platforms, while 35,6% spend 1 to 2 hours for the same purpose.

6.3 Restaurant dining habits

This section of the survey dug into the dining-out habits of the respondents with 3 questions discussing the frequency of restaurant purchasing, how they choose a place to visit and methods used to order takeaway.

4. How often do you dine outside or get take-away meal?
73 responses

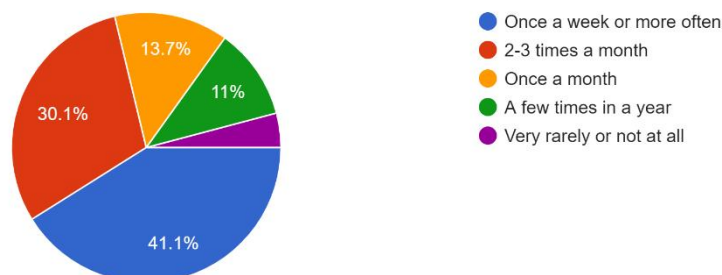


Figure 7. Frequency of respondents' buying from restaurants

When asked how often one purchases from F&B service provider, the most chosen answers were once a week or more often and 2 to 3 times a month, accounting for 41,1% and 30,1% respectively.

The statistics from figures 6 and 7 indicate the survey's respondents, as a sample of the study's target population, are not only highly active on social media, but also remarkably frequent consumers of F&B local businesses.

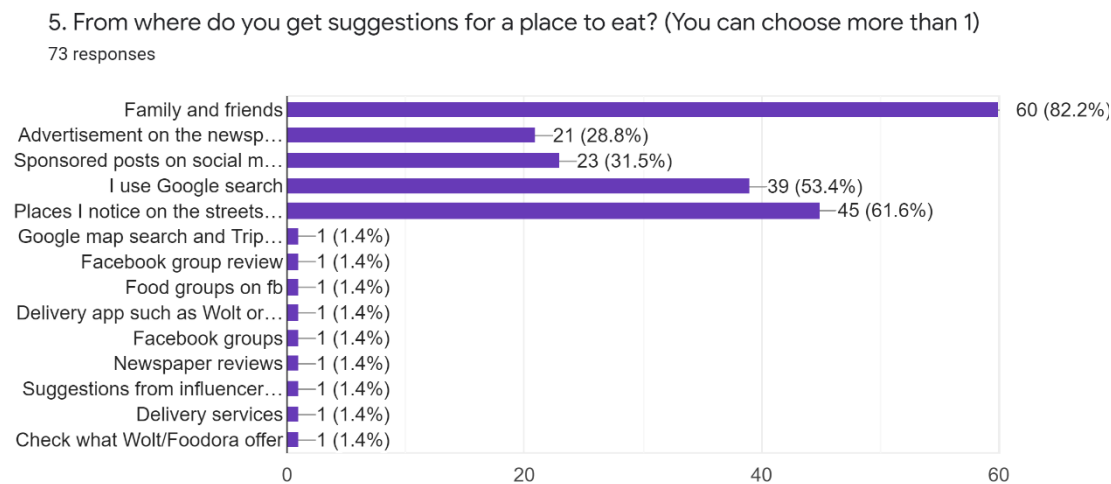


Figure 8. How respondents make their choice of restaurants

Figure 8 illustrates the factors influencing respondents' choice of restaurants. The majority of 82,2% get their suggestions for a place to eat from family and friends. Meanwhile, 61,6% visit places they notice on the street and in the mall, 53,4% use Google search tool and 31,5% try out places of which sponsored ads appear on their social media. Apparently, the Internet, particularly social media, has a considerably low impact on respondents' choice of F&B service. Nevertheless, the result suggests the significant of word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, especially coming from family, friends and acquaintances, for the sake of attracting potential customers.

6. When ordering take-away, what is your most usually used method?

73 responses



Figure 9. How respondents order take-away

The next chart reviews respondents' choice of method for ordering take-away. With the question being single choice, the majority of 45,2% get their take-away through a third party, for example Wolt and Foodora. 26% of the answers are to make an online order through restaurant's website or mobile application. However, the gap between the highest picked answer and the rest is huge, indicating social media's lack of importance in terms of ordering take-away.

6.4 Social media customer behavior

In contemplation of discovering F&B customer behavior on social media, the questionnaire continues with 4 single-choice and multiple-choice questions, following by 5 rating scale ones that study respondents' behavior. Besides, this section aims at collecting their opinions as both social media users and customers of the F&B industry.

7. Do you follow any restaurants on social media?
73 responses

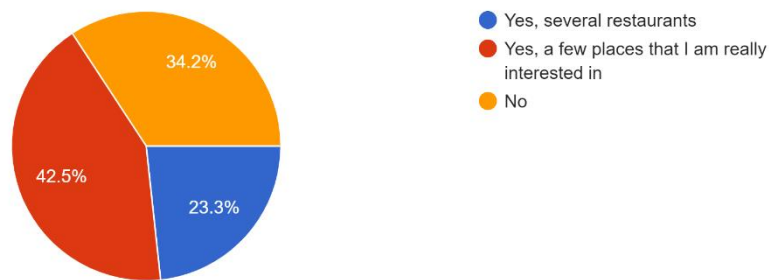


Figure 10. Following restaurants' social media

Question 7 collects information on whether respondents follow or subscribe to restaurants and F&B service provider pages on social media. The majority of 42,5% of respondents claimed to follow only their favorite places, while 34,2% of respondents chose no for answer.

8. From restaurants' social media, what kind of content interests you most? (You can choose more than 1)
73 responses

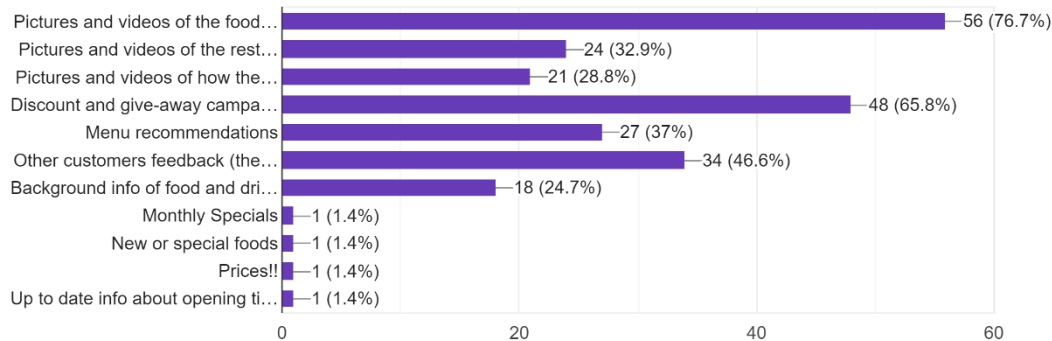


Figure 11. Most attractive social media content to respondents

The next question targets at collecting one of the most important insights in terms of social media marketing communication, which is the type of content attracts respondents most. 76,7% of respondents chose the basic food and drinks media to be their most interested posts, following by customer beneficial content of discount and give-away campaigns that accounts for 65,8%. Other figures such as customer feedbacks (46,6%), menu suggestions (37%), images

and videos of the place (32,9%) are also among the majority's picks. Hence, pictures and videos are the most attractive types of social media posts from the respondents' perspective.

9. In your opinion, how often should a restaurant run discount, give-away or any other type of promotion?

73 responses

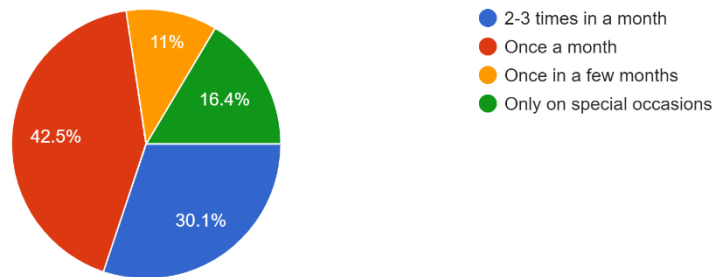


Figure 12. Frequency of social media promotional campaigns

10. In your opinion, how quickly should a restaurant respond to their customer's online chat/message?

73 responses

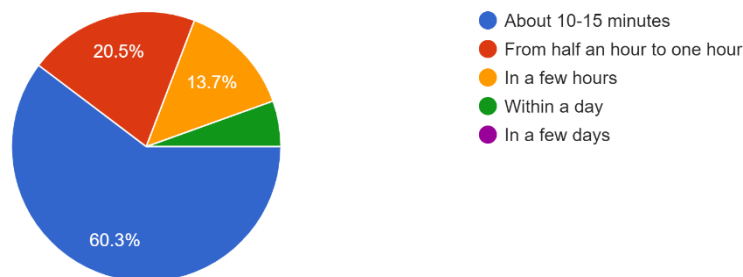


Figure 13. Respondents' preferable waiting time for restaurants response

Regarding the topic of discount, give-away and similar type of promotional events on social media, 42,5% of respondents think restaurants should once every month run these events.

Meanwhile, according to question 10, their preferable waiting time for a restaurant's social media response in terms of chat, message, comment and feedback is about 10-15 minutes, which holds 60,3% of total respondents. The gap between the first (60,3%) and second (20,5%) most chosen answers for question 10 is excessively large, indicating the importance of F&B

service provider's fast response on social media in exchange for higher customer satisfaction level.

From question 11 to 15, respondents are asked to rate the given statements on the scale of 1 to 4, concerning their own choice of frequency (in regard to questions starting with “how often”) and likeliness (in regard to questions starting with “how likely”). The scale of frequency begins with 1 as “very often” and ends with 4 as “rarely or not at all, while likeliness begins with 1 as “very likely” and ends with 4 as “very unlikely”.

11. How often do you try out a new place of which sponsored posts/ advertisements appear on social media?

73 responses

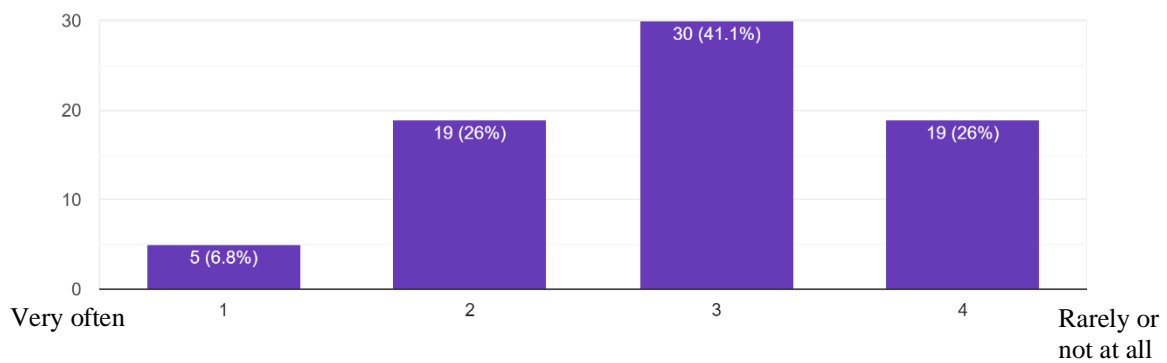


Figure 14. Respondents' willingness to give advertised restaurants a try

Over 73 responses, 30 people rate 3 for their willingness to try out sponsored or advertised restaurants that appear on their social media feed (41,1%). This, plus the result of question 5 concerning factors influencing a customer's choice of F&B business, proves that it is a relatively low chance attracting new and potential customers using social media advertisement figure. However, it does not mean the figure has no good use, rather implies the need for a better approach to the method, for example a combination of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and advertised posts, or sponsored posts only on promotional campaigns. The topic shall be discussed more in depth in the summary section.

12. How often do you read online ratings/ reviews on new restaurants or places you have already visited?

73 responses

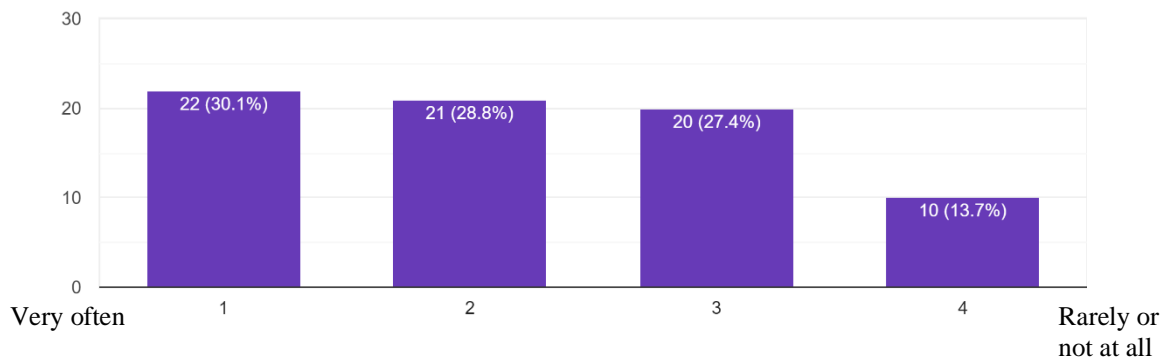


Figure 15. Respondents' interest level in other's online reviews on restaurants

13. How often do you give online ratings/ reviews for restaurants?

73 responses

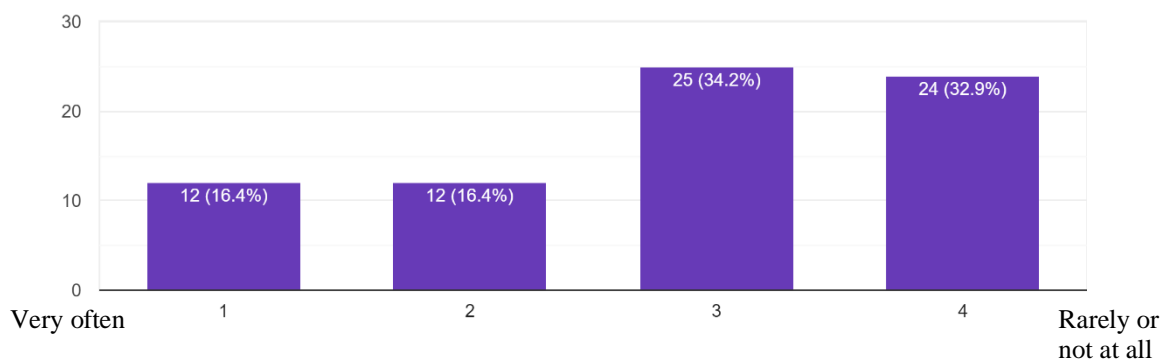


Figure 16. Respondents' frequency in giving their own online reviews on restaurants

Question 12 aims at figuring out the level of interest respondents have in the rating and review section of a F&B business social media page. The majority of respondents claimed to be very often in reading restaurants' online feedbacks by choosing rate 1 (30,1%). In addition, with 2 being the second most chosen rate (28,8%), respondents are undoubtedly interested in other customers' reviews given to restaurants social media pages.

On the other hand, question 13 gathers data on the frequency of respondents' writing online reviews. In contrast to the previous result, most respondents rated 3 (34,2%) and 4 (32,9%), as in they sometimes, rarely or not at all give their own feedbacks and rating to restaurants' pages.

14. How likely do the online ratings/ reviews affect your decision to visit or re-visit the places?

73 responses

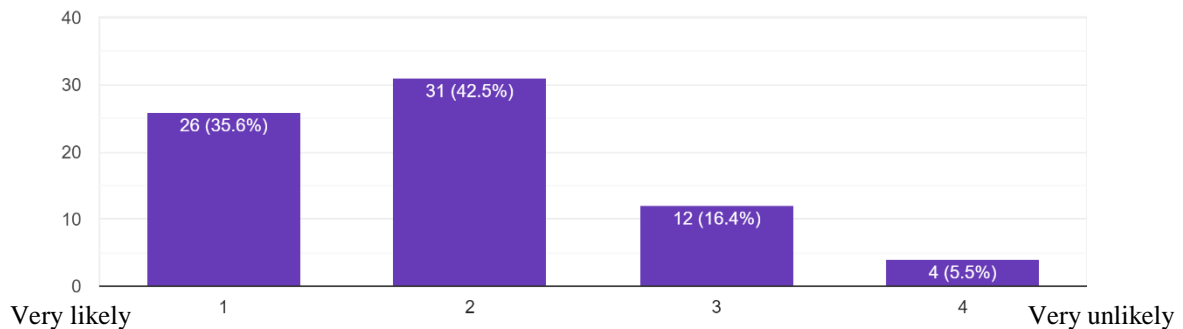


Figure 17. Influence level of online reviews in respondents' decision to visit restaurants

The next figure illustrates respondents rating on the likeliness of social media feedbacks affecting their decision to visit or re-visit a restaurant. 2 and 1 were rated by the majority of respondents, accounting for 42,5% and 35,6% respectively. In other words, online ratings and reviews of restaurants have a huge impact on customers, both potential and existing ones.

15. How likely would you participate in restaurants' discount/ give-away promotional campaigns?

73 responses

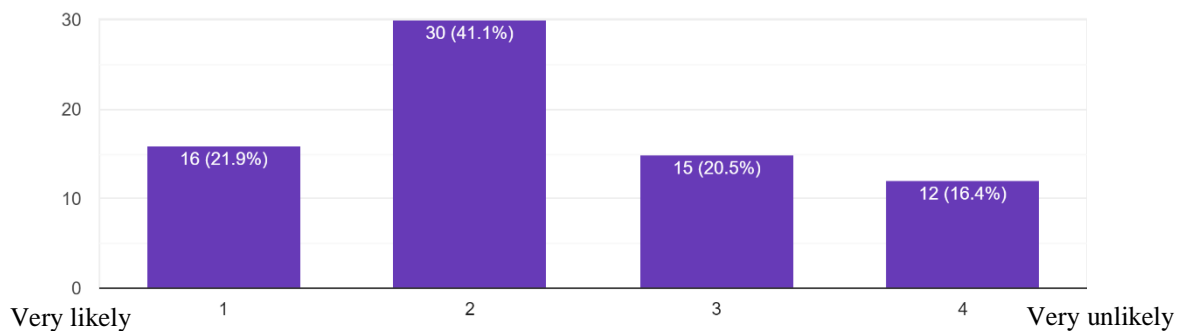


Figure 18. Willingness to participate in promotional campaigns

The last question asks respondents to rate their willingness to take part in F&B business's social media promotional campaigns, such as discount and give-away. Over 73 answers, 30 rate 2 for rather likely it will happen (41,1%), implying the likelihood of this scenario may depend on the level of benefit one gets joining in the events, or how attractive and persuasive they are.

7 CASE STUDY – JUICY ROLLY FOOD TRUCK

7.1 Company's background

Cheerfully Oy is a limited liability company founded in 2019 specializing in food and beverage (F&B) services. The company runs food premises that are based in Finland. In the summer of 2020, Cheerfully implemented a food kiosk's plan within the capital region. Using mobile trucks, Cheerfully went around Helsinki and Espoo providing F&B services. The products of each truck are different from the other, depending on the local market's needs in which the truck operates. The majority of Cheerfully trucks' main service is ice-cream, along with coffee and waffles that has been a signature of Finnish summer scene.

Meanwhile, Juicy Rolly was a new project of the company, of which products are summer rolls and cold drinks. The truck moved mostly around the central area of Helsinki, offering freshly made healthy summery food that comes together with refreshing iced tea or juice. With keywords such as "fresh", "healthy", "refreshing", "summer", the firm's vision is to provide healthy yet delicious food that is best to enjoy in the heat of a summer.

Around the central part of Helsinki during the summertime are groups of families and friends hanging out on the streets, having picnics in the parks, as well as office workers looking for take-away lunch or after-work snacks. Therefore, Juicy Rolly's target customers are those people who enjoy fast, convenient meal yet at the same time, are conscious about staying fit and healthy. With vegetable and fruits as the majority of the ingredients, along with the variety of vegan options on the menu, customers with special diets are also a part of the truck's target market.

On the 22nd of May 2020, Juicy Rolly officially started its operation in Rautatientori. The truck later on moved around different parts of the capital area, including beaches such as Veijarivuoren Ranta and Hietaranta. The food truck was put into postpone on 1st of September 2020, because of its nature as a summer kiosk. Cheerfully is planning to run the kiosk for the upcoming summer of 2021.

Juicy Rolly has two social media pages, one on Facebook and the other on Instagram. Within a week prior to its grand-opening day, Juicy Rolly social media pages were created and advertised on the platforms. The contents are menu description, location and opening hours. The truck does not have its own website or any other social media pages than those mentioned.

7.2 Analysis of the current social media sites

This information was collected on the 1st of March. On Instagram, Juicy Rolly has 29 posts, 23 followers and 3 feedbacks. The average number of likes for each post is approximately 15, and almost no comment. Likewise, the Facebook page of Juicy Rolly has 9 followers, 25 timeline photos and no ratings. The language used on both sites is English.

As observed, there is plenty of room for improvement on the social media marketing plan for Juicy Rolly. Objectives set for the potential plan including:

- Expand the scale of all social media channels (number of channels, posts and engagement).
- Gain more brand-awareness.
- Receive more positive feedbacks as in number of likes, ratings and reviews.

There have been a few advertisement campaigns run during the operation of both Facebook and Instagram pages. These promotions allow access to a sufficient insight of the target segmentations. Specifically, the majority which made up to 72% of reached audience was female, who are in the age of 18-34. The company spent about 10 euros on each promotion reaching out to social media users among the area of Helsinki region, leading to thousands of reaches in the duration of 3-6 days. Yet only 4% of people who got in touch with sponsored post engaged with the pages. Such low result is a significant point for the company to keep in consideration, that the content of sponsored posts might in need for modification.

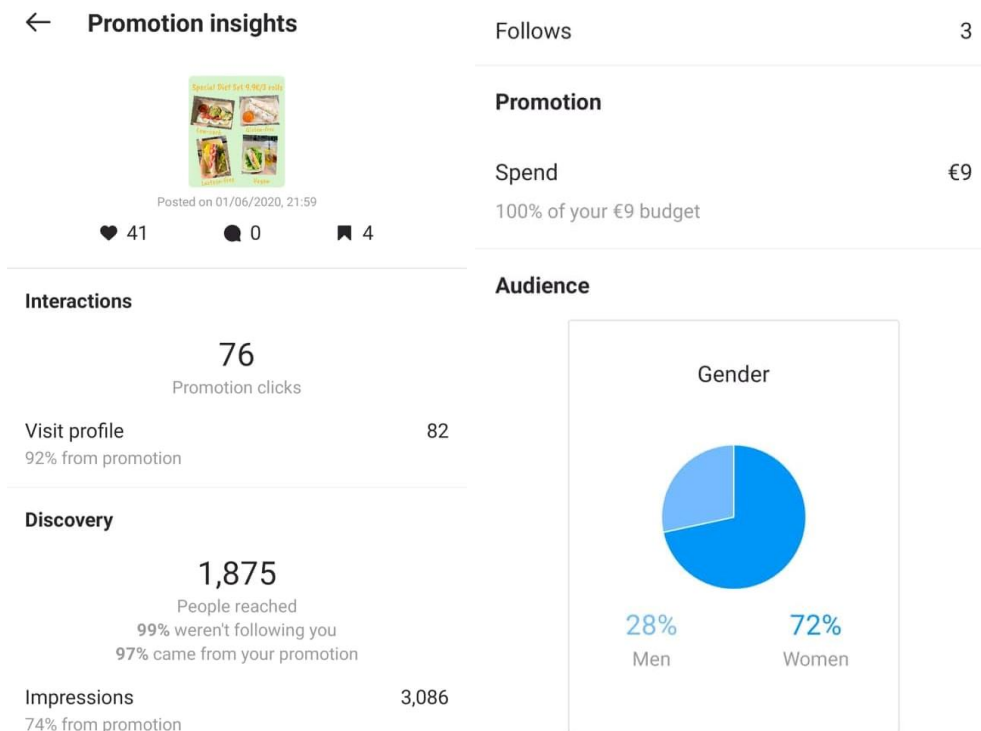


Figure 19. Juicy Rolly promotion insights (Instagram of Juicy Rolly 2021)

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is undeniable the influence of social media in nowadays lives, leading to various changes of plentiful aspects including the world of business with a concentrate in integrated marketing communication (IMC). Social media as an IMC tool has been significantly helpful to companies, especially SMEs and startups. The ultimate purpose of social media being people's engagement and share of information has led to businesses' constant attempts to establish and maintain customer relationship through two-way dialogues and encouraging the spread of information. The uses of social media in exchange for improvement of customer satisfaction, particularly in the F&B industry, are undoubtedly important, with customers being the center of attention on the level of individual. By delivering consistent and transparent messages throughout every channel, providing valuable and dynamic offers as well as effectively handling communication as in feedbacks and complaints, companies shall very likely be able to uphold customer relationship and thus, improve marketing productivity and profitability.

In exchange for more in depth and valid data supporting the developed theories, the author of the thesis conducted and analyzed a survey on F&B customer behavior, followed by studying and observing the case company's social media. These empirical findings are eventually used for suggesting improving suggestions for the case company. To summarize data findings of the research, there are several important elements to be discussed.

1. Social media platforms

Both the literature review and data findings show the most potential social media channels for F&B businesses are Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Despite having lots of similarities, each platform holds its own distinctive nature and purpose, motivating businesses, in particular the case company, to design and implement suitable marketing plan for different channels. It is highly recommended that, instead of posting the same content on both pages, Juicy Rolly should focus on each page's characteristics and create post in accordance. For example, Instagram is a great platform for visually pleasing content, while on Facebook, people tend to seek for engagement and communication. The case business should strengthen its reputation on the platforms by delivering more attractive content, interacting with followers more frequently and constantly improving every other aspect.

Juicy Rolly may as well consider opening a new page on YouTube, a platform that has not been worked on yet, for the sake of expanding its target audience through entertaining posts such as videos about the product's manufacturing process, the environment of the kiosk and the cultural history of the product. With the fast-growing number of YouTube users, particularly in Finland, it is a potential platform for the case company to reach out to more customers.

2. Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)

It is essential the effects of e-WOM on today's business world, making it one of the most prioritized aspects of any companies, especially within the F&B industry. The literature review section of this thesis gathered several writings in regard to the importance of e-WOM, such as the topics of influencers, food blogs/vlogs, reviews and ratings. Likewise, the research findings show statistics of customer behavior being directly affected by online information, feedbacks and complaints. Hence, effectively handling these matters will certainly lead to a solid brand-image and a boost in profitability.

Concerning the spread of information, this will lead to better brand-awareness and upsell if effectively implemented. Since the survey results found family and friends being the most reliable source of information for restaurant ideas, it is most likely more persuasive for an existing customer to share and market about an enterprise, rather than running advertisements and sponsored posts. There are various ways to productively carry out this e-WOM marketing, for example running promotional campaigns that require customer to tag their friends to the promotional posts or share it to their own profile pages, write review on the service either positively or honestly, and tag their friends to the company's pages, in exchange for discount, coupon, give-away and lottery. These events can, at the same time, be advertised using the "sponsored" figure of social media channels in order to reach a larger number of audiences, creating a better marketing effect.

3. Customer communication

Both theoretical background and empirical findings of the thesis showed the aspect of customer communication being properly taken care of, as in fast response towards message, direct chat and comment, are extremely appreciated by customers. After considering all information collected from the survey results, Juicy Rolly's social media as well as secondary data, the author of this study has come up with several suggestions for the case business. Firstly, it should only take Juicy Rolly 15 minutes to half an hour to respond to customers' messages, otherwise the level of satisfaction and retention shall be affected. Secondly, online feedbacks and complaints, as proven previously, are significantly influential. Without sufficient solutions, businesses can be affected seriously regarding customer loyalty, brand-image and profitability. Hence, feedbacks and complaints should be dealt with strategically and effectively. This issue requires detailed planning and professional training for the marketing/customer service department and will result in retaining the good reputation that leads to business's ability to hold competitive edge, even during and after severe crisis.

4. Content

The content of social media is one of the most significant impacts concerning IMC using social media. In order to stand out from the market, businesses put effort in creating personalized message, product and service, along with attractive and unique online content such as pictures, videos, slogans and promotional campaigns. Among the numerous types of posting for

restaurants' social media, images and videos of food and drinks remain the most beloved from customers' perspective, even more attractive to customers than discount events. Providing potential and existing customers menu's recommendations with not only clear, informative and unique descriptions, but also high-quality photos and videos on social media gives F&B service providers the competitiveness in nowadays dynamic world of business. As observe from Juicy Rolly social media, the pages' photos and videos are quite simple and uncreative, especially when compared to its competitors' social media. To improve the media's quality, it is also recommended that Juicy Rolly should purchase professional photography service, like a photographer or studio, to handle their images and videos. This is an investment the company might want to consider, since it will undoubtedly lead to visually pleasing content, better customer satisfaction and stronger reputation. In addition, Juicy Rolly should run promotional campaigns on social media offering customers beneficial values, such as discounts, coupons and giveaway events or contests once a month. According to the research findings, this is expected from local customers, making it a notable point for the case company to consider. The campaigns do not necessarily be major all the time, rather keep customers in engagement and constantly reach out to potential ones.

9 FINAL WORDS

The thesis had continuously been developed, researched and finalized from September 2020 to May 2021. During the process, the author has learnt a remarkable amount of knowledge regarding the topics of social media marketing, customer service, customer satisfaction and the F&B industry, as well as academic writing, research methodology and techniques, and academic presentation. The research's purpose and objectives remain relevant throughout the whole study, the author has found no major problems stay on topic and therefore, the thesis was well concluded and presented.

With the significant contribution from social media users located in the capital region of Finland, the empirical findings of this thesis including data from the survey and Juicy Rolly's social media have successfully been gathered and played an important part in determining the case company's problems and solutions. The theoretical background and empirical findings

remain parallel, hence there has been no crucial surprise during the research process. However, there is plenty of room for improvement on Juicy Rolly's social media, for which suggestions have been stated above in the summary and conclusions section. The case company should take into account the study's recommendations in exchange for better social media marketing outcome.

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APPENDIX 1

SURVEY ON CUSTOMER EXPECTATION ON RESTAURANT'S SOCIAL MEDIA

Hello survey respondents,

I am Giang Nguyen, an undergraduate business student at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. I am working on my thesis regarding the topic of social media impacts on customer satisfaction in the Food and Beverage service industry. The purpose of this study is to figure out customer expectation on a Food and Beverage service provider's social media.

It would take approximately 5 minutes going through 15 questions, and all information will be handled confidentially. Thank you for your participation, and let's get started!

General info:

1. Which age group do you belong to?
 - 15-29
 - 30-44
 - 45-59
 - 60-

Social Media use:

2. Which social media platforms are you using daily (or almost daily)? (You can choose more than 1)
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - Twitter
 - LinkedIn
 - Other, please specify:
3. How many hours do you spend on social media per day?
 - I do not use social media daily

- Less than an hour
- 1-2 hours
- Over 2 hours

Restaurant dining behavior

4. How often do you dine outside or get take-away meal?
 - Once a week or more often
 - 2-3 times a month
 - Once a month
 - A few times in a year
 - Very rarely or not at all
5. From where do you get suggestions for a place to eat? (You can choose more than 1)
 - Family and friends
 - Advertisement on the newspaper or magazine
 - Sponsored posts on social media
 - I use Google search
 - Places I notice on the streets/ in the mall
 - Other, please specify:
6. When ordering take-away, what is your most usually used method?
 - Phone call
 - Direct chat/message on social media or website
 - Online order from a restaurant's webstore or mobile application
 - Through a third party (Wolt, Foodora, etc.)
 - Other, please specify:

Social media customer behavior

7. Do you follow any restaurants on social media?
 - Yes, several restaurants
 - Yes, a few places that I am really interested in

- No
8. From restaurants' social media, what kind of content interests you most? (You can choose more than 1)
- Pictures and videos of the food and drinks.
 - Pictures and videos of the restaurants.
 - Pictures and videos of how the food and drinks are made.
 - Discount and give-away campaigns
 - Menu recommendations
 - Other customers feedback (the comment section, tagged posts, etc.)
 - Background info of food and drinks (origins, ingredients, culture related, etc.)
 - Others, please specify:
9. In your opinion, how often should a restaurant run discount, give-away or any other type of promotion?
- 2-3 times in a month
 - Once a month
 - Once in a few months
 - Only on special occasions
10. In your opinion, how quickly should a restaurant respond to their customer's online chat/message?
- About 10-15 minutes
 - From half an hour to one hour
 - In a few hours
 - Within a day
 - In a few days
11. How often do you try out a new place of which sponsored posts/ advertisements appear on social media?
1. Often or very often

2. Rather often
 3. Sometimes
 4. Rarely or not at all
12. How often do you read online ratings/ reviews on new restaurants or places you have already visited?
1. Often or very often
 2. Rather often
 3. Sometimes
 4. Rarely or not at all
13. How often do you give online ratings/ reviews for restaurants?
1. Often or very often
 2. Rather often
 3. Sometimes
 4. Rarely or not at all
14. How likely do the online ratings/ reviews affect your decision to visit or re-visit the places?
1. Very likely
 2. Somewhat likely
 3. Somewhat unlikely
 4. Very unlikely
15. How likely would you participate in restaurants' discount/ give-away promotional campaigns?
1. Very likely
 2. Somewhat likely
 3. Somewhat unlikely
 4. Very unlikely

