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Brand building development through social media platforms

Brand building development through social media platforms: Case study of Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy

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Bachelor Thesis
Autumn 2021
International Business
Oulu University of Applied Sciences

ABSTRACT

Oulu University of Applied Sciences
Degree programme name, option name
Degree programme in International Business

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Title of the thesis : Brand building development through social media platforms
Thesis examiner : Sari Alatalo
Term and year of thesis completion: Autumn 2021 Pages: 56 + 1 appendix

Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy is a service company that has been established in 2015, however, the company still cannot meet the expected profit. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the service cannot be held face to face, instead, the services are conducted online. Hence a method needs to be formulated, to make the brand to be more recognizable as well as more profitable.

Based on the background, the goal of this thesis is to define guidelines for brand-building development through social media platforms. Since The reason for this is that not all companies have optimized the use of social media so that their brands can be better known by the wider community. Eventually, the companies especially the case company in this study, are expected to have a better understanding of social media management.

Desk research, benchmarking and interview are the research methods to seek the needed data and information in this study. At desk research method, all the information is taken from existing online articles using OAMK library and through Google Scholar as the search engines. Two companies involved in the same business as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy were chosen as the research object in benchmarking. One company is in Rovaniemi, Finland and the other is located in Las Vegas, USA. An interview was conducted with Mrs. Rundgren (owner of Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy) as the interviewee to get a view on the current use of social media in the case company.

The research results have defined three points. Firstly, brand building in social media is important in the current time because social media existence has impacted conducting business. Some elements such as entertainment; hashtag; influencer,story telling; rich media content and customer emotion can assist in brand building on social media platforms. Lastly, challenges that shall be faced when doing brand building on social media platforms

The research finding figures out the use of social media in the world which covers several areas. The global digital population can give an idea of how big the digital population compared to the world population. The information on countries with the highest number of users helps to understand which country can be targeted for social media brand-building development. Then coverage of most used social media platforms and social media popularity gives an idea on which social media has the most users. The given suggestions cover finding new formats brand building elements which can be applied easily by Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy. companies. The customer emotion, storytelling and hashtags elements should be included in the published content, lastly companies Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy better focus just on a limited number of social media platforms only.

Keywords : brand building, brand, brand awareness, social media

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1 INTRODUCTION

When the internet was first started in early 1960 in the United States, the purpose was to maintain communication links between distant locations in the event that the electrical route had been destroyed (Cohen-Almagor 2011,45-64). Then came the internet boom phase between 1995-2000 when only little companies did business via the internet and only 413M people or 6.7% of the global population had access to the internet (Naughton 2016, 5-28).

At the current internet phase time, there are significant changes in the ways the society infrastructure of the network has evolved to cope with the changes (Naughton et al. 2016, 5-28). With the boom of the internet, social media was also created first in 1997, called Six degree, and followed by the born of the blog site in 1999. As of today, there are many varieties of social media networking sites, and many of them are linked to each other, which allows for cross-posting (Hendrick 2021, cited 20.10.2021). Despite a tremendous number of social media, only a few are considered as the most used social media platforms. Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram are the most used social media platforms as of July 2021 (Statista 2021, cited 4.10.2021).

As of October 2021, there were 409 million new social media users, which equals 13 new users every single second (Reportal 2021, cited 5.11.2021). In Finland alone with a population of 5.54 million (Statistics Finland 2021, cited 5.11.2021), had 5.27 million internet users by January 2021 and 4,46 million social media users (Reportal 2021, cited 5.11.2021). The most common internet activities in Finland are for communication, following the media, shopping, and everyday errands (Statistics Finland 2021, cited 5.11.2021).

The rapid development of social media nowadays has brought up a good impact on people's daily activities. Nowadays, the organization can have easy access to the customer base across the world (Kaur, Dhir, Rajala, Dwivedi 2018, 205-221) and to the free service availability as well as a big number of audiences (Zimmerman &Ng 2017, chapter 1, understanding the benefits of social media). An online brand community is developed with the number of audiences without being geographically bound (Zheng, Cheung, Lee, Liang 2015, 90-106).

Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy, a service company located in Hailuoto, Finland has been running for several years. However, the company has not yet been able to reach profit and in addition to that, the pandemic situation limiting people's movement has had a considerable impact on the company. This research is expected to find out how the brand Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy can be built through social media platforms so that it can be widely known by a large audience.

What will be explored in this research is how to manage social media well, what kind of elements are needed to build a brand on social media, and how the challenges that arise can be faced. In addition, research was also conducted to find out what social media are popular in several regions and the number of social media users in some countries. For comparison, the two companies that have the same type of business as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy were chosen as the object of benchmarking research. This research focuses on how these two companies manage their social media and what elements they apply to build a social media brand. A semi structured interview was performed with Mrs. Rundgren (the company's owner) via zoom and 17 questions were asked in the interview. Based on three sources of information, suggestions were made to the case company about its brand building in social media.

2 MRS. SANTA CLAUS FINLAND OY IN A GLANCE

Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy is a service company offering a fairy-tale experience with Mrs. Santa Claus, and the provided services are dedicated to children and their parents. When visiting the venue, guests can do all sorts of activities offered such as handcraft, art workshop, berry picking, gingerbread decoration, and learning to draw, which are hosted by Mrs. Rundgren, the owner of the company. Previously the activities were done in the venue, however, due to the pandemic situation mostly the services are offered online only.

Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy has been operating since 20th June 2020. Previously the company was operated under Ritvamedia. Mrs. Ritva Rundgren, a retired elementary school teacher is the company's owner. She has her venue, which was designed as Mrs. Santa Claus's home, located in Finland, in Hailuoto Island known as the largest island in Bothnian Bay (Meriläinen-Hyvärinen 2008, 31-47). The business is run solely by Mrs. Rundgren, and occasionally her friends and relatives are involved with the activities whenever needed. To support the business, several social media accounts are owned by the company such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Spreaker (Podcast).



FIGURE 1. Mrs. Rundgren in Mrs. Santa Claus outfit.

The house in Hailuoto was built around the 1940s and has been renovated before Mrs. Rundgren bought the house four years ago around 2017. The decoration reflects a house of Mrs. Santa Claus with red color mostly dominating the house color, which is interpreted as Christmas color as shown in figure 1. Once the guests enter the house, the Santa Claus atmosphere is immediately well perceived, and the arousing feeling of it feels like home.

Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy is Mrs. Rundgren's company that provides a service to children and their parents. To stay in contact with customers, especially during this pandemic, the company's social media platforms are the tools used to interact with them; hence, the company owns multiple social media sites. The house on Hailuoto Island appeared to be Mrs. Santa Claus' home, with red dominating pretty much the entire house.

3 BRAND BUILDING

The brand has been existing since the old civilization of Mesopotamia and Greek, where people used marks to identify their offering. Then in modern civilization, the function becomes wider, the mark or brand has entered all aspects of human life for instance economic, social, cultural, sporting, and even religion (Maurya and Mishra 2012, chapter 1, Introduction).

Building a brand is not as easy as turning your hand from one side to another side. The journey could be uneasy and mostly unexpected situations will occur, especially for newcomers. As explained by Aaker (2010, 10) brand building is considered a long-term journey, especially for a new brand that needs hard effort to compete with the existing brands. One way to be able to build your brand successfully is by knowing your customers because the customer is one of the best company assets (Bernoff 2010,10). When we do not know our customers' wants and needs, then it will be difficult to market our brand to the market.

In this chapter, we will discuss three aspects of brand building. First is brand building on social media which is discussed the connection of customer relationships with the success of social media brand building. The second is about the elements used for brand building in social media, the third is about the challenges in social media brand building, and the last subchapter is about common social platforms

3.1 Brand building on social media

Currently, social media has changed the way the organization conducts the business over the last decades, this different situation has made social media marketing gaining its own identity. Customers nowadays are pampered with information for a specific product or service with just one click and have more trust in the public opinions than actual brand marketing information. The advantage brought by this situation is that the company's two-way communication is created, allowing the customers to interact with each other. Thus, to survive in this current market situation, it will be wise if the companies could build a customer-brand relationship via social media (Tanha 2018, 1-12).

Customer is one of the assets for an organization, therefore the company must be able to build trust and a good relationship with the customer. Since this matter could be a challenge in social media communication because of the need to keep up with the fast-paced technology development, companies should manage to convey valuable and interesting content involving the customer as the way to maintain good communication with the customer. (Oncioiu, Căpușneanu, Topor, Tamaș, Solomon & Dănescu 2021, 1702-1717).

Social media content could bring an effect on the customer relationship towards the brand because it could hold an important role in building customer brand attachment. Companies can create emotional content which could arouse the customer's emotions since emotional attachment is helpful to engage customers' emotional attachment to the brand. "Affection refers to consumer feelings of peace, love, and friendliness towards a brand" (Dwivedi, Johnson, Wilke, De Araujo-Gil 2019, 1176-1204).

Social media has changed how organizations run the business in recent days; on the other hand, the customer has been pampered with the ability to interact with the companies and other consumers. To survive in a competitive situation, companies must be able to build trust and good relationships with the customer, since they are the company's good assets. Then composing emotional social media content to arouse customer emotional bond on the brand for customer brand attachment.

3.2 Elements for brand building on social media

To be able to attract customer attention, several elements play important roles in brand building on social media. Entertainment is enjoyable for most people and easy to get people's attention, when the customer is feeling satisfied with the items, it may result in customer brand loyalty. Rich media communications help to form a stand-out content performance from a sea of social media ads. It is more interesting for recognition compared to text-only posts and hyperlinked text. Emotions and involvement in media consumption could result in customer brand attachment since consumers feel their emotions are involved in the content they observe. Sudden movement or sound can carry different emotions of viewers as well as very interesting messages help to attract emotional attention. The power of stories is huge on customer brand attachment because customers like storytelling, and product consumption could arise based on the brand-created story. A hashtag is a popular tool used mostly by social media platform users. Using Hashtags usually leads to a bigger theme

for getting hashtag followers' attention. An influencer has a certain number of followers in his or her social media account due to their alluring content. Typically, the followers favour using the product that has been reviewed by the influencers.

Rigby and Ryan (2020, 34-48) say that "to be entertained is to be mentally occupied or diverted". The entertainment content easily attracts people because it helps to invite people's attention and interest with the result for satisfaction. Entertainment items are enjoyable for most people and customers could become loyal customers when they are enjoying the social media content. An entertaining activity such as games, video-sharing, and participation in a contest could attract the customer participation in the social media-based brand communities (Cheung; Guilherme Pires & Rosenberger 2020, 695-720).

A social media contents need to contain rich media formats to stand out from the crowd and to be able to attract more customer attention. For instance, using visual audio posts and dynamic animation could bring a great impact on customer attention because it could stimulate the viewer's senses. When compared to the text-only posts or hyperlinked text, dynamic animation and visual audio posts are more attractive because the text-only or hyperlinked text is considered as non-rich media content. According to Moran, Muzellec, and Johnson (2019, 533-545), two elements are contributing to the media richness, namely, breadth meaning a number of senses activated by message, and depth meaning the quality of the presentation. A more professional-looking content helps to raise presentation quality by reason eye-catching content which stands out from the crowd and at the same time attract viewer attention.

The customer's emotion can arouse brand attachment because emotions are biologically based actions (Laaksonen, Falco, Salminen, Aula & Ravaja 2019, 1-14). When a message contains negative messages and highly interesting messages, it could attract more attention from the viewers. Other factors which could appeal to the audiences are sudden sounds or movement in the videos, and the reason behind those strategies is that message content could influence the viewer's emotion.

In the marketing practice, storytelling could be utilized to the fullest for spreading the brand message to the public (Heath and Heath 2016, 811-826). Customers like storytelling and this is the chance for the marketers to utilize it for brand building as it has a great deal of power to attract customer attention. The advertising could include the content of fantastical and magical influence

which could be well absorbed by the customer, then at the end, they could create their own story when they consume the product based on the story offered by the brand.

In the current trend, the hashtag has been used by most social media platform users whenever they are posting content on their social media account. Different hashtags could be used in one post, and they usually contain different subjects but still have a correlation with the posted content. According to Omena, Rabello, and Mintz (2020, Revisiting the role of Hashtags), the use of hashtags has become part of digital life and usually will correlate with the content. The use of hashtag is structured and usually link to a bigger theme, thus the aim for using a hashtag is to invite the attention of consumers who follow the post for the specific hashtag (Rauschannbel, Sheldon & Herzfeldt 2019, 473-488).

Today, anyone can be an influencer in social media; whenever someone can gain certain followers in social media due to their attractive content, he or she could be considered as an influencer, and it could exist in any social media platform. Normally when an influencer makes a review or testimony about certain products, their followers will give huge attention and will tend to use the same products as their idols do. Currently, people put more trust in their friends and family's recommendation when coming into product recommendation rather than trusting an advertisement, and an influencer is considered as a friend from social media (Sammis, Lincoln, Pomponi & Rodriguez 2015, Defining influencer marketing).

Branding on social media needs some elements for being able to build customer brand attachment and each element will support each other. Entertainment factors are needed to attract people's attention with expectations for customer loyalty. Also, content needs to be in rich format because giving attention to it can enhance the influence on customer emotion as well as stimulate customer senses towards the brand. Everyone likes story telling and by including this factor in the content will make it easier for the consumers to absorb the brand message. Hashtag and influencers, two factors that are trending now could as well bring a strong impact to customer brand engagement

3.3 The challenge of brand building on social media

Every day new social media content is uploaded, and the rapid internet technology development is likely to act as the trigger for the challenges that exist. This section will explain further what the

visible challenges for branding on social media are, for example creating compelling content, evaluating, and selecting the proper channel, managing customer relationships, and customer negative sentiment.

Companies should be able to convey fascinating content for the purpose to attract audience attention because when content could fill a need of the audience, then people will be able to find and then most probably will consume the brand. The key to being successful could come in many forms, such as conveying attractive content for blog spots; videos, tutorials, podcasts, and organizing competitions (Cawsey & Rowley 2016, 754-776).

Running several social media campaigns is critical; it is wise when the companies could choose to develop the campaigns in a certain social media platform only. For example, Blogsite is more effective when dealing with customers in B2B rather than for B2C, often a prospect of potential purchase emerges from behind the customer research for products (Cawsey et al. 2016, 754-776).

The company must be able to provide accurate and detailed information. This is because customers tend to rely more on what they see, hear and experience from the contacts they have with retailers. Situations like this can lead to misleading perceptions because they are based only on assumptions that are raised rather than what they should expect (Larsson & Viitaoja 2017, 858-877).

Previously, the customer reacted towards a brand based on their purchase experience but in digital life, the customer reaction is no longer purely from brand purchasing. The negative sentiment received could be from the posted negative comments appearing in the social media platform which is more likely trusted by the consumers. The reaction for this negative sentiment could vary from brand switching, anti-brand and brand attack (Cooper, Stavros & Dobele 2019, 684-699).

Challenges are likely to be occurred while doing brand building on social media due to the rapid technology development as the trigger. Creating fascinating content for the audience is a challenge but when successful it is likely to make people find the brand easily. Several media platforms are usually used by the company; however, it will be wise if the company concentrates on specific social media platforms only. Customers may make assumptions about the brands based on what they see, hear and experience which probably is not the real fact about the brand. The negative

sentiment nowadays could come not just from the consumer but from the negative comment on social media and may lead to customer negative reaction.

3.4 Common social platform

The emergence of social media occurs almost every time but that does not mean that the existing social media has been abandoned by its users, on the contrary, the number of users is increasing from time to time. Facebook is one of the social media platforms that has been around for a long time with 2,853 million users as of July 2021, Facebook is in the highest order followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram (Statista 2021, cited 4.10.2021). This chapter will review some common existing social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. Due to the limited research sources on some social media platforms, the information given may not cover all aspects.

Facebook was established on 4th February 2004 created by Mark Zuckerberg which later on was joined by his four fellow students for Facebook development. It was first provided for students at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Brügger 2015, 78). In the business field, Facebook could be the company brand extension by presenting the same actual brand performance as presented by the company (Zarella & Zarella 2010, *Creating Valuable Content*) and it is affordable compared to the competing advertisement (Grow, Perotta, DelFava, Cimentada, Rampazza, Gilclavel & Zagheni 2020, e20653). For Facebook users, this platform gives users the flexibility to personalize the content shared and facilitate interaction between users (Escobar-Rodriguez, Carvajal-Trujillo & Monge-Lozano 2014, 136-151). However unclear information, manipulate information are the disadvantage factor found in Facebook (Ringelhan, Wollersheim & Welpé 2015, e0134389).

Instagram is an app that allows user to upload photos and videos, then share them with followers, and it also allows them to receive comments and give likes for other people's posts (instagram.com 2021, cited: 03.10.2021). Instagram users are not only able to see others shared content, but it allows the user to interact with each other (Wallace & Jun 2019, 217-234). When people want to find a product or service, they need to see the visual form before buying a decision, and Instagram is able to provide visual communication for users (Soedarsono, Mohamad, Adamu & Aline Pradita 2020, 108-118).

YouTube, founded in 2005, has become the largest video-sharing site that provides multiple useful advertising forms (Schwemmer & Ziewiecki 2018, YouTube and Influencer Marketing) YouTube has quite many users and this can be an opportunity for the company to communicate the brand to the user for brand engagement purposes (Kujur & Singh 2018, 184-197). However due to a large amount of video content, it will be difficult for users to distinguish between commercial and non-commercial content (Schwemmer et al. 2018, YouTube and Influencer Marketing).

“Twitter is an open service that is home to a world of diverse people, perspective ideas and information” (about.twitter.com 2021, cited 3.10.2021). Twitter has several advantages that can be used for brand image, such as low cost and organized. On Twitter, companies can get their message across to the larger brand community for a small fee (Culotta & Cutler 2016, 343-362). Twitter is organized because Twitter users usually manage their Twitter accounts into topic-based lists (Culotta et al. 2016, 343-362).

Each social media platform has its characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. Moreover, not all platforms can meet all the needs and desires of users due to the limitations of each social media platform. It can be concluded that each social media has the same goal in helping businesses, namely, to spread brand awareness campaigns to the public, with the hope that customers will develop brand attachments. Nonetheless, companies need to carefully select appropriate social media platforms that can help increase brand awareness to the public.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand and evaluate the social media brand awareness of Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy, there are three research methods conducted to gather the information needed. Firstly, desk research is employed to study the use of social media in general. To gather an insight overview of another company, benchmarking and studying the brand building of another company were conducted by taking two companies that are engaged in the same field as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy. Lastly, an interview with the owner of the case company was carried out regarding their social media usage.

Desk research is the methodology used to gain information for research; it is a research action to collect data from existing data collected by others (Moore 2013, chapter 10, Desk research). The most common activity in desk research is a literature review focusing on the analysis of actual research findings from several different sources. To ease literature review planning, types of material need to be put into consideration. Commonly the research starts with broad search terms followed by identifying the useful material, lastly filtering the more relevant material. Another important factor to ease the research activity is the keywords for finding the more relevant materials, and to help for data retrieval for later use, the collected data could be in printed documents form or the internet sources.

For this research, the sources were obtained mostly from online sources such as EBSCO, research gate and emerald.com with Google scholar and OAMK library are the two search engines used in finding the resources. Keywords used for data findings were brand building; brand; customer services and brand; social media and branding; social media and brand building; brand awareness and in correlation with keywords. Reading the provided descriptions on each source helps to find the relevant material either.

Benchmarking is a theory aiming to determine the performance gap in the production and consumption area, then followed by the theory for closing the gap (Kozak 2004, chapter 1, Overview of benchmarking theory). Two parties involved in benchmarking are the bench marker and the benchmarkee; these two parties would be the research study factors. The advantages of benchmarking for the company are such as helping out the company to understand their strengths and weakness during the changing of market conditions, fulfilling customer needs over new standards

and goals arrangement, as well as the employee's persuasion tool for facing future change and development.

Two companies have been chosen as the benchmarking object, one company is in Rovaniemi Finland and the other is in the USA. Both companies are engaged in a similar business area as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy. The study will be focused on how the companies utilize their social media platforms and overview the company brand building.

An interview is a method of face-to-face verbal exchange when the interviewer tries to obtain a piece of information from the interviewee (Brinkmann 2014, chapter 14, Unstructured and semi-structured interviewing). In qualitative research there are three types of research interviews: structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews (Brinkmann et al. 2014, chapter 14, Unstructured and semi structured interviewing) Structured interviews method is commonly employed in surveys and similar to the questionnaire; during interview the interviewer reads the script exactly as composed but does not provide any information beyond the script. On the other hand, the interviewer does not necessarily prepare questions in the unstructured interview but owns the capability to throw questions during the interview and will remain as a listener only.

In the semi-structured interview, the interviewer takes an action on critical subjects that are deemed necessary by the interviewee. The interviewer has a chance to be involved as an actor during the interview session and to ask questions based on the scripted questions only. The semi-structured interview is popular because has been proved as adaptable and adjustable (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson & Kangasniemi 2016, 2954-2965).

One interview session has been conducted taken place in Zoom on 10.09.2021, the interviewer was the author of this document, and Mrs. Rundgren was the interviewee and owner of Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy. The interview used a semi-structured interview with composed questions sources from the findings of the theoretical background on this document because questions in a semi-structured interview require previous study results in the topic area (Kallio et al. 2016, 2954-2965).

Desk research, benchmarking and semi-structured interview are the three research methodologies that were carried out to gather the information needed for this research. On the desk research

method, some numerical information was collected that described the most widely used social media platforms, the global digital population, countries with the highest number of internet users, and the popularity of social media popularity in various regions. Meanwhile, in the benchmarking methods, research was carried out on posts from Facebook and Instagram between December 2020 to January 2021 from the two object companies. The purpose of this study is to find out how the two selected companies apply elements to build a brand on social media in the social media posts they publish. In the interview session, questions were prepared to find out about social media management, implementation of brand building on social media, facing with challenges and future goals from the case study company.

5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter will describe research findings based on three different types of research methods and data. The desk research method presents the use of social media in the world aimed at knowing the target market and the right market share dimensions for the purpose of building a brand. The benchmarking area will focus on two companies working in the same field as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy, Santa Claus Office from Rovaniemi-Finland, and Santa and Mrs. Claus LV from Las Vegas-USA are the objects for conducting this research method with the aim to interpret how the companies apply theoretical background findings in business and social media management of each company. Moving to the interview research method by using a semi-structured interview method, the company owner is interviewed, and the questions are structured based on the findings of the theoretical background.

5.1 Use of the social media in the world

Focusing on the right target to build a brand by having knowledge of the number of social media users and the most used social media platforms will provide benefits for the company. The companies can understand the population size as well as the most used social media platforms in their destination countries, and the findings can help companies to create brand building plans on appropriate social media platforms. The discussion on the number of internet users in each country is intended to find out that not all countries have high internet users. The last topic is to understand the most used social media platforms around the world as well as in specific regions such as Europe, Asia, America and Africa.

5.1.1 Global digital population

In January 2021, there were over 4 billion digital media users worldwide, and about the same number also happens to be active social media users worldwide. Figure 2 shows that with a total of 7.71 billion people (geoba.se 2021, cited 4.10.2021) around 60% use the internet actively, furthermore, internet users are also social media users. The figure further explains that active mobile

internet users have more than 4 billion users and the same number also appears in active mobile social media users.

Global digital population as of January 2021

(in billions)

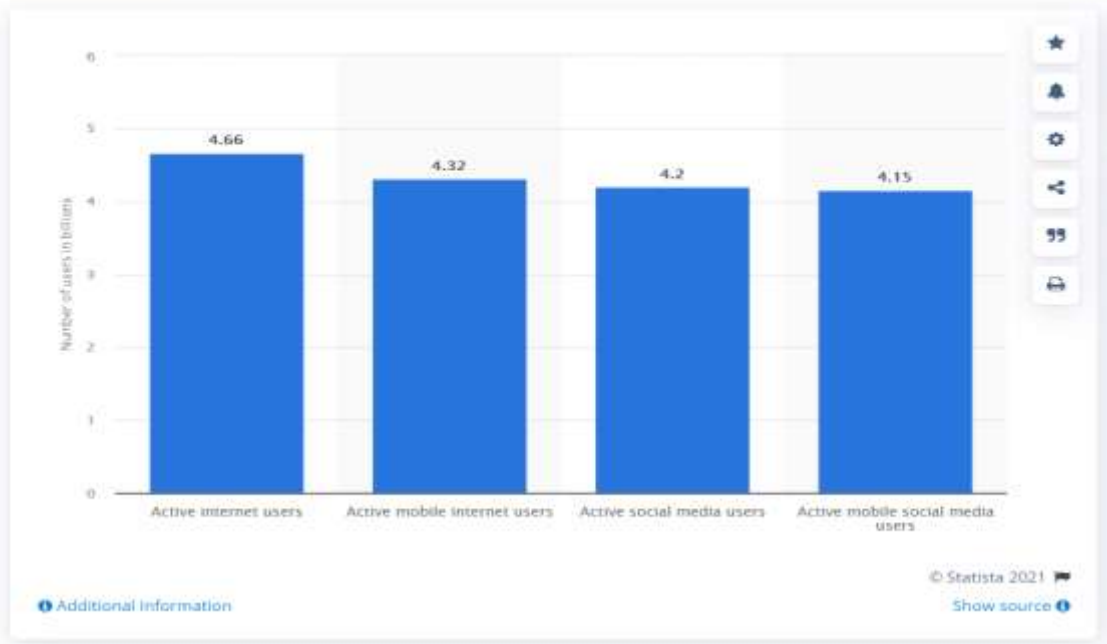


FIGURE 2. Number of internet users and social media users globally. (Statista 2021, cited 3.10.2021)

With 60% of the population as active internet users, it has been proven that the use of internet platforms and social media has become a daily lifestyle in human life. For companies, this figure helps to conclude that the use of social media platforms can be one way to build a brand. As mentioned in chapter 3.1 Brand building on social media, for surviving in this current market situation building a customer-brand relationship via social media is a wise way to take (Tanha et al. 2018,1-12).

5.1.2 Countries with the highest number of internet users

This chapter will look at the number of internet users in different countries with the top five countries being China, India, the United States, Indonesia, and Brazil. In the 1st quarter of 2021, the internet users in China reached over 8 million users, followed by India by over 5 million users.

Countries with the highest number of internet users as of Q1 2021

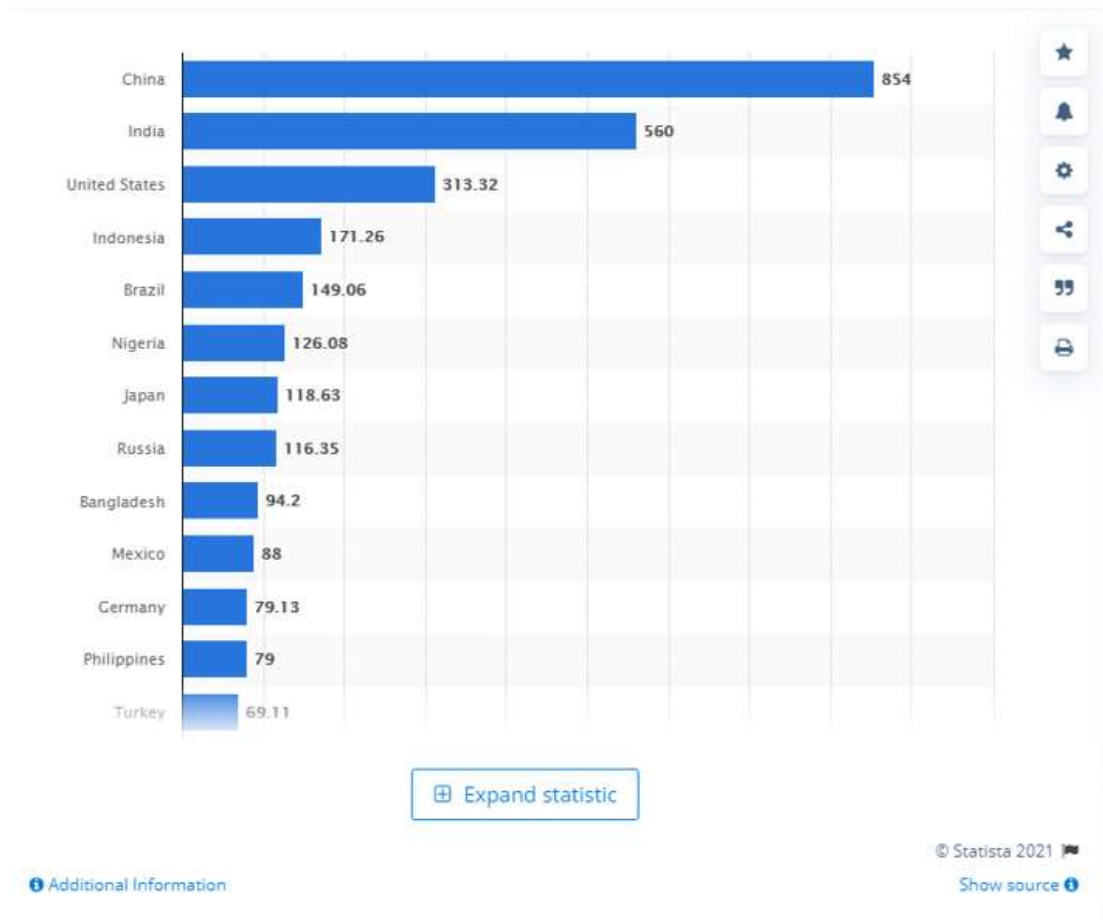
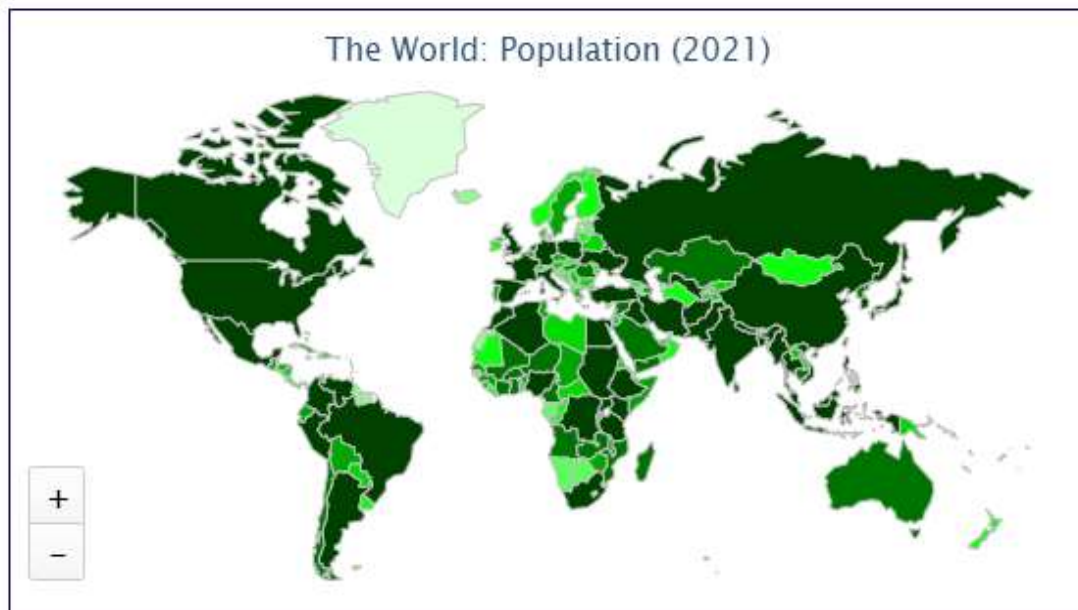


FIGURE 3. Highest number of internet user by country in Q1 2021 (Statista 2021, cited 3.10.2021)

When it comes to the figures of internet users in the world, the difference is very large between different countries, especially when compared to the top two and they stand out from the rest of the world. China and India alone have a number of users (1.425 billion), equivalent to the next twelve countries together. This may be caused by several factors one of which is the total population of that country or the low level or almost no internet access in a country. Unfortunately, the sources on the cause of the different numbers of internet users in each country are limited.

The ranks in the world population (see figure 4) and the ranks in internet users by country (refer to figure 3) shows similarities. Both figures show China is at the top position, and India, the United States, Indonesia, and Brazil take their position in the top 5 most populated countries in 2021. The rank similarity exhibits that one of the factors of the internet user differences is the country population. However other factors about the differences will need further study to find out what they exactly are.



Rank	Country	Population	Year
1.	China	1,387,640,576	2021 (Est.)
2.	India	1,340,451,200	2021 (Est.)
3.	United States of America	339,744,544	2021 (Est.)
4.	Indonesia	269,780,352	2021 (Est.)
5.	Brazil	224,545,616	2021 (Est.)
6.	Pakistan	216,642,256	2021 (Est.)
7.	Nigeria	212,826,576	2021 (Est.)
8.	Bangladesh	186,050,400	2021 (Est.)
9.	Russia	131,445,920	2021 (Est.)
10.	Mexico	125,799,016	2021 (Est.)
11.	Japan	125,133,232	2021 (Est.)
12.	Ethiopia	124,163,256	2021 (Est.)

FIGURE 4. Number of population by country 2021 (geoba.se 2021, cited 4.10.2021)

World population data demonstrate how large the market opportunity is in each country for the company to pursue the brand-building establishment. The data helps to analyse in which country the company has a bigger chance to market their brand and sends an alert if there is another suitable target country than the existing target market countries.

5.1.3 Most popular social media platforms worldwide

Despite the growth of new social media platforms, the pioneer platforms such as Facebook still have the greatest number of active users. The reason for Facebook being on top rank is because Facebook can cater to a wide variety of people and absorb many different aspects from photos to messengers compared to only text, and those features are not available on Twitter or LinkedIn for instance (Tracy 2020, cited 17.09.2021). YouTube as the biggest video sharing application has the ability to provide multiple useful advertising but due to a large amount of video can cause the user finds it hard to distinguish the commercial and non-commercial content (Schwemmer et al. 2018, YouTube and Influencer Marketing)

Most popular social networks worldwide as of July 2021, ranked by number of active users (in millions)

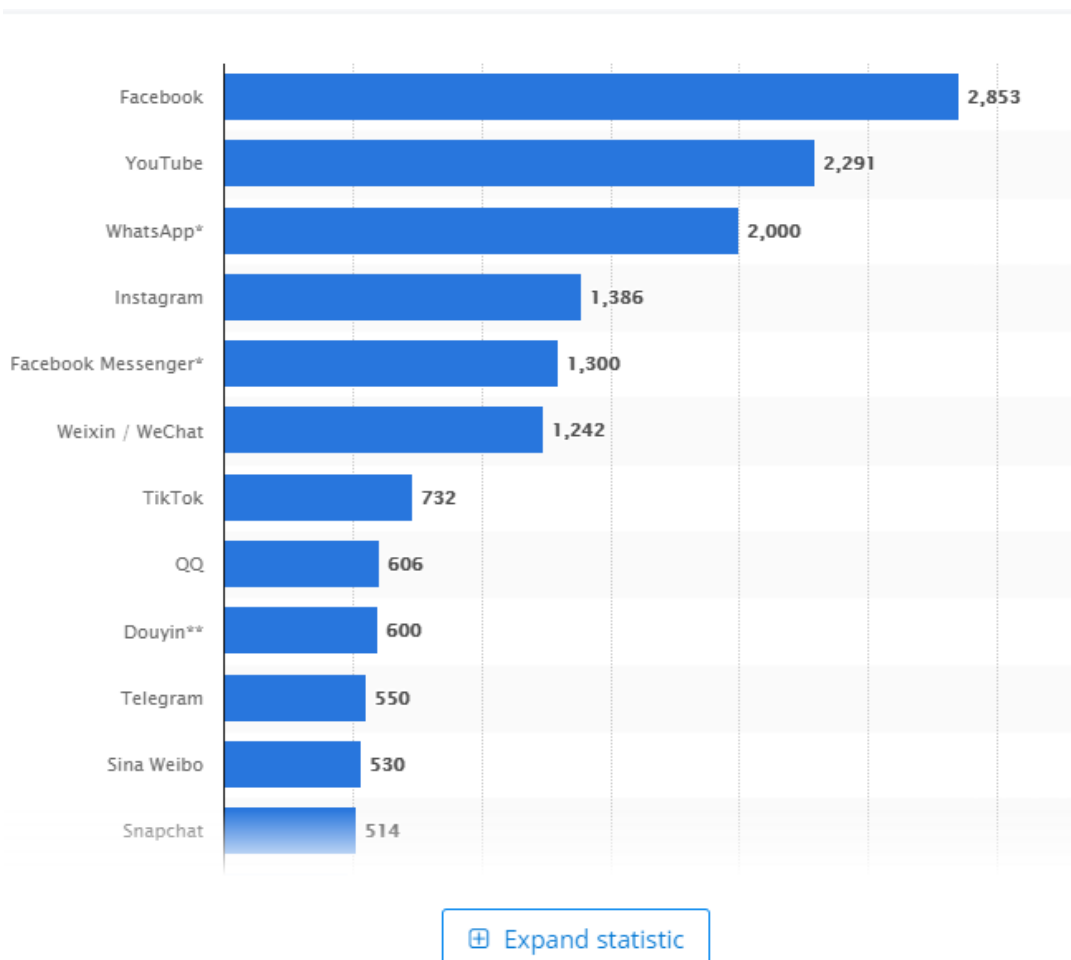


FIGURE 4. Most popular social media worldwide (Statista 2021, cited 06.10.2021)

The figure assists the company in choosing the suitable social media platform for brand development because choosing the unsuitable platform will result in not aiming at the appropriate target. However, as explained in Chapter 3.4 Common social platform, each social media has its characteristics, therefore one social media platform may not be enough to support brand development action, but several usages of social media platforms can accomplish the brand development action.

5.1.4 Social Media popularity in different regions worldwide.

The figures of most social media user countries have been discussed in the previous chapter and in this chapter, the rank of social media popularity in different regions worldwide will be studied by using data from September 2021. We will look at the popular social media platforms in each region, such as Europe, Asia, Africa, Finland, and the United States of America.



FIGURE 6. Most social media platforms used in Europe, Asia, Africa, Finland and United states of America as of September 2021 (Statcounter 2021, cited 15.10.2021)

In each region, Facebook still dominates as the most used social media platform and the number of Facebook users varies from 44.25% in Finland to 78.61% in Europe. In general, the figure is around 60% to 70% which makes Finland stand out. However, the results varied in each region for subsequent sequences as Europe with 6.21% put Twitter in second place, while Africa (9.5%) and Asia (10.4%) put YouTube in second place. Different scenes in Finland (16.71%) and the United States (12.34%) brought Pinterest in second place. Next in line, Pinterest dominates the third rank in Europe with 5.57%, but for other regions, Twitter is in third place with numbers between 8.61% to 16.3%. In rank 5 YouTube dominates Europe, Finland, and the United States with a value of 1.64% to 4.54%, then Instagram excels in Africa (1.6%) and Asia (3.64%). For the last order Tumblr

has a value of 0.35% in Africa and 1.94% in Europe, then in the United States with 1.01% and 3.17%, in Finland 6th place goes to Reddit.

5.2 BENCHMARKING

The benchmarking objects in this research are Santa Claus Office from Rovaniemi-Finland and Santa and Mrs. Claus LV from the Las Vegas-United States. The two companies are engaged in the same business as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy, and they use social media platforms to build brand awareness. These were the reasons behind their selection as the object of research. This study was conducted to find out whether the two companies apply elements to build brands on social media, namely entertainment, rich media communication, emotional engagement, story power, hashtags, and influencers.

5.2.1 Santa Claus Office, Rovaniemi. Finland

The first of the benchmarked company is the Santa Claus office in Finland. It offers a face-to-face meeting with Santa Claus for everyone with an environment built to represent the home of Santa Claus along with his loyal helpers, the elves, and reindeer. When meeting with Santa Claus, guests can take pictures with him as a memento and for those who cannot meet Santa directly, they can meet Santa Claus online via video call. Merchandises can be purchased offline on the spot at Santa Claus's office or online and goods can be shipped anywhere around the globe.

The company's use of social media is the focus of the benchmarking here. The company uses the official website, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Even so, the Twitter account is not as active as the Facebook and Instagram accounts; the last post on the Twitter account was made on December 22, 2020. The Facebook and Instagram accounts are updated regularly every week. The study timeline for Facebook and Instagram accounts is between December 2020 to January 2021 as Santa Claus time has its peak during this time with a total of 39 posts, the same amount on Instagram and Facebook platforms. The number of followers for both platforms (Instagram and Facebook) is 33,400 Instagram followers and 38,900 Facebook followers.

In the entertainment element, video sharing mostly dominated Instagram and Facebook posts. Santa Claus office posted 15 videos and, on the Instagram, and Facebook accounts. The number of view gain for this element ranges from 2,706 views to 10,729 views from Instagram and 129 likes to 1,400 likes from Facebook account. It started at the beginning of December 2020 with a video about early December reminder and continues until Santa Claus office situation after the hectic Christmas and New year events in January 2021 posts. There are three categories deduced from the uploaded videos, Christmas traditions, Fun outdoor activities and Santa's animal helper.

From a Christmas tradition category, one post from December 27, 2020, can be used as an example for this category. The post had been viewed 4244 times in Instagram, had 117 likes from Facebook; it is a video where two elves talk about Christmas meals and how much they missed them even though Christmas time has just ended since Christmas meal is special because it can only be eaten and found once a year during Christmas time only. One video with the highest viewer rating about Alpaca that could also be considered as an example for Santa's animal helper category. The video was posted on December 16th, it is about Alpaca being able to assist Santa, and the video garnered the highest Instagram viewer rating of 10,729, and it had over 350 likes on Facebook. Concerning the outdoor activity category, a video posted on December 5th, 2020, which had been viewed 5842 times on Instagram and 567 likes from Facebook, was taken as an example. At the outdoor activity category, the video illustrated two elves performing a snow angel movement on the snow, and at the end of the video the elves asked viewers to try a similar activity as well. An activity that can encourage viewers for doing the same activities is a new finding for entertainment element which was not found during theoretical background research.

As for the rich media element, the elves are the main characters in most company's social media content. There are no animations or dynamic images used in the video, only audiovisuals that are useful for activating the senses through messages (Breadth) and presentation quality (Depth) that can be felt well by the audience. The viewer ranges are between 4,210 to 7,596 views on Instagram and 516 to 1,400 likes on Facebook. There are three categories found, namely Elf voices; Beautiful Santa Claus sounds, and touching background music. The post on December 6, 2020, has been viewed for 7596 which is the second-highest viewer rating, and 516 likes from the company's Facebook account. The video illustrated two Elves talking about Finland's Independence Day which falls on December 6 and that was why they were holding the Finnish flag on that day. Their unique voices were able to bring out their cheerful character in every uploaded video. In the Santa Claus voice category, the video recording on December 22, 2020, received 5,914 Instagram views and

519 likes on Facebook, and in the video, Santa Claus sent his warm Christmas wishes to the audience. The calm and warm coming from Santa's voice was able to represent the peace and warmth of Christmas that can be felt by everyone. The touching background music video about winter atmosphere in Lapland was uploaded on December 17, 2020, the background music helps add extra spice to the created video (Depth) as viewers can feel the dynamic movements that the elves make while driving a snowmobile. The video has received 4,210 views on Instagram and 1.400 likes on the company's Facebook account.

When it comes to storytelling, there are four defined categories: Christmas gifts; December means Christmas; Santa Claus and the Children; Christmas decorations. Often a fairy tale Christmas gift can be requested from Santa by writing him a letter. The two elves demonstrated how they write letters to Santa about their Christmas wish list, in a video posted December 4, 2020, which attracted 3080 Instagram viewers and 147 likes on Facebook account. Normally, December is corresponding with Christmas and the elves show how happy they were as Christmas is approaching, in the video posted on December 14, 2020. It gained 4,830 Instagram viewers and 280 likes from Facebook viewers. The majority of Santa stories told Santa Claus loves children and vice versa. A photo from the December 24, 2020, post, presented a Santa who was ready to deliver gifts to all children around the world. The image exhibited Santa in his cart full of gifts with the reindeers about to embark on delivering the gifts. Christmas trees are one of the famous Christmas icons along with other decorations. The elves showed in the video how they decorated the Christmas tree and ended by placing on decoration Christmas tree topper. The video was uploaded on 20th December 2020, it gained 3545 views on Instagram and 165 likes from Facebook.

In the element of customer emotion, three categories were defined from the contents upload: Busy Christmas preparation, Christmas atmosphere in Lapland and after Christmas at Santa's place. Then for the total number of likes earned from this element is between 243 to 2,600 likes from Facebook, but no viewer ranges since only one video post falls into this element. Plenty of stuff needs to be prepared to welcome Christmas, for instance, Christmas presents. On 8th December 2020, a video about the situation at elf's place organizing presents to be sent out to all people around the world was uploaded and has attracted 2,761 Instagram viewers and 243 likes from Facebook followers. The video was able to provoke viewer's emotions to start preparing for presents too. In the category of Christmas atmosphere in Lapland, one of the examples is a picture posted on 18th December 2020 about a dark morning in the middle of December at the Santa Claus office. The picture sent out an interesting message that Winter is not identical to cold but also

darkness. After Christmas at Santa's place category represented by one post from 15th January 2021, and it illustrated an elf and a reindeer enjoying the snow under freezing weather. The image appeared to express that after hectic Christmas, things were calming down, and it is time to relax. This image has gained the most likes on Facebook for 2,600K and 2,258 like on Instagram account as the total number of likes.

Hashtags were mostly used in each company's social media content, there are some hashtags permanently used and also hashtags only used according to the theme's content. #santaclausoffice and #santaclausvillage are the two most used hashtags at Santa Claus office social media platforms. Besides two permanent hashtags, three hashtags were used often: #spectaculeofvanillaandminttu (used 17 times); #winter (used 6 times) and #articcircle (used 10 times). Several hashtags were used only once, for instance, #wintersolstice for 21st December 2020 post, #take a break for 19th December 2020 post, and #lastepisode on 31st December 2020 post. Then looking at the post with the highest viewers and likes based on hashtag came to a post on 16th December 2020 about Alpaca, where reached 10,729 Instagram viewers and 350 Facebook likes were gained for this post. For this post there are two hashtags only used once, which are #alpaca and #alpaca ofInstagram.

In the Facebook accounts, the 15th of January 2021 post gained the highest likes for a total of 2,600 and gained 2,258 likes on Instagram. Surprisingly, no hashtags were used for this post. This finding concludes that a hashtag is not always necessary to gain customer attention, however further study needs to be conducted to find out how a hashtag cannot do its magic to attract people's attention.

Santa Claus figure has already become the influencer for this company because its fame has been well known by everyone. However, the company has posted Santa's picture with some celebrities, such as Gordon Ramsay and friends posted on 17th December 2020. This is illustrated that even a famous character with huge followers still needs another famous figure for the brand building and this post gained 752 responses on Facebook and 2864 likes on Instagram.

Element	Category	Number of post	INSTAGRAM		FACEBOOK RANGE OF LIKE
			LIKES	RANGE OF VIEW	
Entertainment	Christmas tradition	9 videos		2,706 - 10,729	117 - 379
	Fun outdoor activities	4 videos		4,483 - 5,842	250 - 567
	Santa's animal helper	2 videos		4,088 - 10,729	179 - 350
Rich media	Elf voices	1 video		7,596	516
	Beautiful Santa Claus sound	1 video		5,914	519
	Touching background music	1 video		4,210	1,400
Customer emotion	Busy Christmas preparation	1 video		2,761	243
	Christmas atmosphere in Lapland	1 image	2,100		1,500
	After Christmas at Santa's place	1 image	2,258		2,600
Story telling	Christmas gift	1 video	3,08		147
	December means Christmas	1 image	4,83		280
	Santa Claus and the children	1 image	3,938		1,600
	Christmas decoration	1 image	3,517		165
Influencer		1 image	2,864		752

FIGURE 7. Summary of findings on 5 elements of social media brand building of Santa Claus Office, Rovaniemi, Finland

HASHTAG	USAGE COUNT
<i>#santaclausoffice</i>	31
<i>#santaclausvillage</i>	25
<i>#spectaculeofvanillaandminttu</i>	17
<i>#winter</i>	6
<i>#articcircle</i>	10
<i>#wintersolstice</i>	1
<i>#takeabreak</i>	1
<i>#lastepisode</i>	1
<i>#gordonginoandfred</i>	1

FIGURE 8. Examples of hashtags used and usage count for published social media posts (Instagram and Facebook) of Santa Claus Office, Rovaniemi, Finland

Santa Claus's office in Rovaniemi, Finland offers a face-to-face meeting with Santa. To build their social media brand, all the elements found in this research have been applied by the company (see figure 7 & 8). Video sharing has been carried out by the company with one of the videos showing an invitation to the audience to participate in doing the same activities as shown in the video. Dynamic animations and audiovisuals make up the elements of a rich media format, but they can also

be shaped by body language and the right sound effects. An image that can speak a thousand words can be used to provoke a customer's emotions in addition to a sudden sound. The storytelling element can also be used to introduce cultural traditions and as a tool to make it easier for customers to absorb the brand message. Then the hashtag helps to increase customer attention in brand development. Lastly, influencers are still needed, even by existing brands, to reach more customers' attention.

5.2.2 Santa and Mrs. Claus LV

Santa and Mrs. Claus LV is the second benchmarked object in this study. The company is located in Las Vegas, United States. Operated by two people act as Mr. and Mrs. Santa, the company offers services for virtual and home visits as well as parties and events. Facebook and Instagram are the two social media platforms used by the company and updates are done weekly though not on both platforms. From observation, Facebook accounts are updated more often than Instagram accounts, even though they have 441 followers on Instagram, while on Facebook they have fewer followers with 151 followers. The observation timeline is between early December 2020 to late January 2021 for the Instagram account and January 2021 for the Facebook account. The reason for the difference in dates is because the company only started using Facebook by January 17, 2021.

No Video posts were detected on Instagram or Facebook accounts. Posts are mostly in image format, based on company activity or quotes taken from other sources. The rich media format elements were formed by audiovisuals, and dynamic animations did not appear in the company's social media posts either. Thus, it can be concluded that the entertainment and rich media formats seemed were not applied by the company in their social media posts.

In the customer emotion element, three categories were defined: home visit; other activities of Mr. and Mrs. Santa; outdoor event. One Instagram post with 43 likes on December 6, 2020, featured a home visit activity by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. They took pictures with the homeowner including their two puppies. Although there is no sudden sound as a means of influencing the audience's emotions, the image sends a message that Mr. and Mrs. Santa are loved by all living beings. Other activities of Mr. and Mrs. Santa seemed well described. For instance, taken from the 13th of December 2020, post with 35 likes on Instagram and with the picture illustrating Mr. Santa is having

a break with a warm drink. Viewers seemed to be able to feel that Santa also needs a break before pursuing another duty. Outdoor events were also performed as illustrated in one of the posts from 17th December 2020 with 34 likes. Due to the current pandemic situation, outdoor event is more preferable with good health protocol actions, and the picture exhibited the action was followed well by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus LV. They both were wearing transparent mouth cover and kept a safe distance from the children. The viewer appears to get a clear picture of the company's responsibly preventing the coronaviruses from spreading out to others.

The storytelling element has Santa and children; Everyone loves Santa and Christmas celebration as three defined categories. Santa and children category was represented by a post from 9th December 2020 where two images exhibited a boy cheerfully sitting on Santa's lap and he had a nice chat with Mr. and Mrs. Santa. A figure of Santa was normally described as someone who is friendly to children and the image seemed to illustrate well enough that Santa's friendliness made children comfortable to sit on his lap and had a chat with Mr. and Mrs. Santa. This image gathered 38 likes. Everyone loves Santa category could be perceived from a picture posted on 20th December 2020 where an image with 33 likes showed a group of people from different age levels taking pictures with Mr. and Mrs. Santa and all people in the pictures looked happy and enjoying the moment. The Christmas celebration category's example is from the 1st of December 2020 image which showed Santa is sitting on a chair in front of a Christmas tree. This picture seemed to be a reminder of December month starting and Santa Claus coming for you. Since December is always identified with Christmas, and Santa Claus is one of the famous icons, the viewer can grab the message sent from the presented image.

The most used hashtags for social media posts by the company are #santa, mentioned 7 times, and #mrsclaus, mentioned for 6 times. Other hashtags were also used depending on the theme of the post, 15 hashtags were used only once for instance #lasvegasmunicipalpolice #cure childhoodcancer, and #doglovers. Then 49 likes are the highest number of likes on the company's Instagram account obtained through two posts, dated December 1, 2020, and January 19, 2021. Both posts did not include hashtags in the captions. For Facebook posts, the highest was 13 likes from two posts on January 17, 2021. Once again, proof emerged that the use of hashtags is not always able to attract more viewers' attention. About influencers, the company did not use influencers in their posts, as seen from all the content posted on Instagram and Facebook accounts.

Element	Category	Number of post	INSTAGRAM		FACEBOOK RANGE OF LIKE
			RANGE OF LIKES	VIEW	
Entertainment <i>Not Applied</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rich media <i>Not Applied</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Customer emotion	Home visit Other activities of Mr & Mrs. Santa Outdoor event	7 images 2 images 2 images	26-40 35 34-37		13
Story telling	Santa and the children Everyone loves Santa	4 images 2 images	26-40 34-40		
Influencer <i>Not applied</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

FIGURE 9. Summary of findings on 5 elements of social media brand building of Santa and Mrs. Claus LV, Las Vegas, America

HASHTAG	AMOUNT OF USAGE
<i>#santa</i>	7
<i>#mrsclaus</i>	6
<i>#lasvegasmopolitanpolice</i>	1
<i>#curechildhoodcancer</i>	1
<i>#doglovers</i>	1

FIGURE 10. Example of hashtags used and usage count for published social media posts (Instagram and Facebook) of Santa and Mrs. Claus LV, Las Vegas, America.

Santa and Mrs. Claus LV is a service company that offers virtual and home visits as well as parties and events. The company's used social media platforms are Facebook and Instagram, both of which have a different number of followers. Entertainment, rich media format, and influencer elements could not be found in the company's social media posts (see figure 9 & 10). However, the company implemented storytelling, customer emotion, and hashtags elements. During the timeline of December 2020 to January 2021, there were 18 Instagram posts, and the total Facebook post was 5 posts.

5.3 Interview result

An interview was conducted with Mrs. Ritva Rundgren via zoom meeting on 10.09.2021. Based on the interview result (Rundgren 2021), this chapter will describe more fully the company's activities in the social media platforms management (questions no. 1 to 5), the brand-building element implementation (questions no 6 to 12) and handling the challenges sectors (questions no. 13 to 17). The interview was conducted for about 30 minutes in a relaxed atmosphere where both parties were at their residences. The interview questions were sent ahead before the interview with a total of 17 questions to Mrs. Rundgren (see Appendix 1).

The company owns several active social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook; YouTube; TikTok; Flickr; Twitter, and Spreaker that managed solely by Mrs. Rundgren. The social media platforms are updated regularly once a week or at least once a month. Her favorite social media platforms are TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, one of the reasons being that "I Like TikTok because there are more viewers" (Rundgren 10.09.2021, interview). She also believes more viewers could be gathered from Instagram as according to Mrs. Rundgren people use Instagram and YouTube more nowadays, but she was not sure how many viewers she can obtain from both platforms.

Furthermore, on the social media platforms management, each platform has different uploaded contents, but an exception was made for Instagram and TikTok where both have similar content. The reason for putting different content for each platform is to make more varieties and make it more interesting. As for content material, ideas depend on the current situation and more on the personal opinion of Mrs. Rundgren. Concerning the target audience, at the beginning the company did not set up a target for social media platforms, and her reason was she just want to share the information she owned. Nowadays each social media platform has been set up with a different target audience, for example, TIKTOK aims more at young people because they use it more (Rundgren et al; Interview,2021) whereas, on Instagram and Facebook, she targeted more to her circle of friends. She mentioned further about wanting to focus on the parents as her target audience because she believes parents are capable to decide which is best for their children when the children are not mature enough yet when dealing with social media (Rundgren,10.09.2021, interview).

"I am not an entertainer; I feel more serious. I just want to be genuine and authentic", Rundgren said. Following the implementation of a brand-building element, from the entertainment element

only video sharing is applied by Mrs. Santa Claus Finland, on the other hand, games and participation in the contest were not implemented by the company. Mrs. Rundgren considers herself as an educator rather than an entertainer, therefore her social media content appears as knowledge sharing. Correspondingly with video sharing, one of the examples can be seen from an Instagram video dated 10th December 2020 picturing Mrs. Santa was singing a Christmas song inside the Organum sculpture in Hailuoto, Finland. She tried a live event once on Instagram and it was a success, and she is planning to have another live event with a lady from the USA in near future.

In the rich media format element, mostly the content did not use special editing. However, Mrs. Rundgren admitted applying a filter for the TIKTOK video, deliberately to enhance her appearance in the video. Although the contents do not adopt visual audio and dynamic animation, the social media contents have their own strength; trustworthiness, good personality, Finnish natural elements and the red colors that represented Mrs. Santa are the strength factors used to compile the social media contents.

At the customer emotion elements, although she did not use sudden sound to influence viewer's emotion, she seemed able to send an interesting message by her social media content, for example, a video concerning ice balls phenomena in Hailuoto, uploaded on Instagram, YouTube and TikTok dated between 7 – 8 November 2019. According to Mrs. Rundgren, this video appears to attract people's emotions because of the rare phenomena illustration which probably never happen in another part of the world. She received positive feedback from viewers and in contrast also negative feedback.

In the storytelling element, Mrs. Rundgren feels on each published content needs to have a story behind it. However, she admitted that she is not yet capable to apply it to all the published content and this is her weakness as admitted by her. Besides, Mrs. Rundgren prioritizes feelings in creating content because what happened today may not happen again tomorrow. In addition, she sometimes can become spontaneous when creating her social media content.

The hashtag is always used in each published content; however, she did not know the purpose of using hashtags. Yet, she realized by using hashtags she was able to generate more public visibility for the published content. She gave an example of her post on Mushrooms in Hailuoto; she published it on TikTok by using #Hailuoto and she received a good response of over 12,000 viewers

in a week. The most used hashtag is #Hailuoto and she is considering using #mrssantaclausfinland for her next material content as well.

Concerning the influencer element, Mrs. Rundgren explained she never had any thought of using influencers as she considers herself as an influencer. She will consider using an influencer when the influencer is able to appreciate her published content. Collaboration with the other content producers in the same genre is already on her list and probably for Christmas season publication.

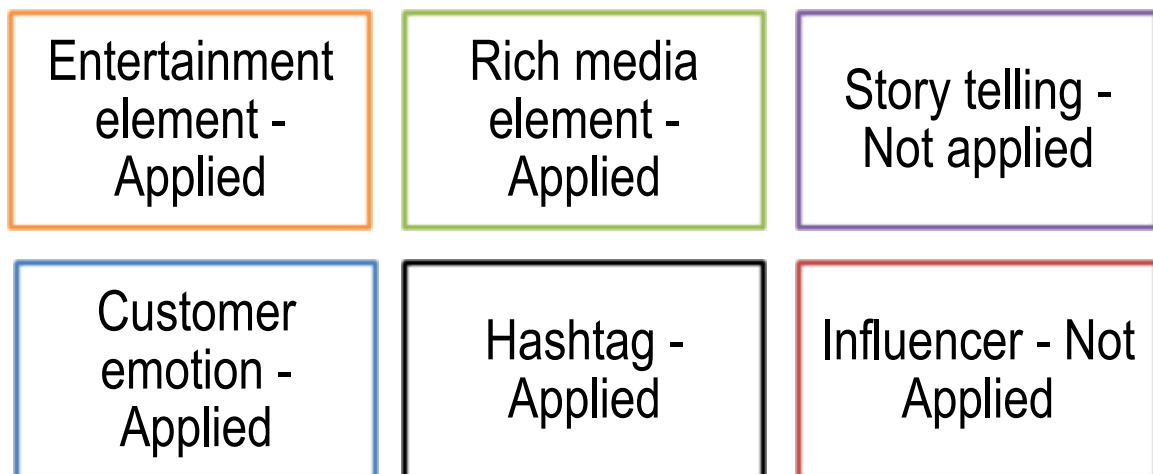


FIGURE 11. Summary of the implementation of brand building elements on social media, Mrs. Santa Claus Finland, Oy

When faced with challenges, she has several strategies to overcome them. Negative feedback is one of the challenges faced, usually Mrs. Rundgren will meet those who feel wronged and apologize for the unpleasant things that have happened. Then, she tried to be careful with her words and try not to make any promises. She also carefully selects the content to publish because she avoids exposing her family's private life to the public, as she is preferred to be known for her works. About the management of social media platforms, although the company has nine different social media platforms, she feels has no difficulty in handling them. Her strategy to keep up with current technological developments is to always study social media developments to keep up with current trends. From all the challenges faced, she will take lessons and learn from his mistakes.

As for the future goal, the content material will still focus on Mrs. Santa, and there is no plan yet to try something new. Also, she will concentrate on managing all the social media platforms that she

owns as well as try to structure the content productions for all of them. Most likely from her observation, more effort will be put on to platform with the greatest media visibility. She seemed to believe that TikTok and YouTube could have bigger media visibility in the future. Surely in the future, she will have someone to help with composing the contents but at the moment she prefers as a lone fighter.

Several social media platforms are owned by the company, and all are managed solely by Mrs. Rundgren. The contents are updated weekly or at least once a month. Different contents were uploaded to each social media platform. Concerning target audiences, each platform is targeted for different audiences. On the brand-building elements, entertainment; rich audio format; customer emotion and hashtags were applied in the published contents. The story telling and influencer element were not applied. Challenges were faced wisely, and she learned from the experiences for improvement. Going forwards, the material content will still focus on Mrs. Santa also observing which platforms have greater media visibility.

6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND GUIDELINES BASED ON FINDINGS

The theoretical backgrounds defined six elements (see figure 12) that play important roles in brand building on social media. *Entertainment elements* are easy to attract people's attention and interest, namely activities such as sharing video, games, and participating in a contest help to attract customer interest and attention (Cheung et al. 2020, 695-720). *Rich media format elements* such as visual audio and dynamic animation help to stimulate viewer senses compared to text-only or hyperlinked text (Moran et al. 2019, 533-545). *The Customer's emotion element* can be formed by negative or highly interesting messages, and sudden sounds and movement, this is because the emotions are biologically based actions (Laaksonen et al. 2019, 1-14). Everyone likes storytelling and this element can be useful for the companies to spread brand message to the public (Heath et al. 2016, 811-826). The hashtag element has become part of digital life and usually will correlate with the content (Omena et al. 2020, Revisiting the role of Hashtags). *An influencer element* can bring impact to a product because the influencer is considered as a friend from social media (Sammis et al. 2015, Defining influencers marketing) and people put more trust in their friends and family when coming into a product recommendation.



FIGURE 12. Six elements of brand building on social media

6.1 Summary of findings

In this chapter, the results found will be summarized together with suggestions to the case company. As for the findings from the desk research, it seems that despite the fact of growing number of social media, some existing platforms are still leading the way. For instance, Facebook has 2,853 million users as of July 2021 followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram (Statista 2021, cited 03.10.2021). All social media platforms appear to have the same goal in helping to conduct a business, for instance spreading messages to the public, and in return, the customers can develop a brand engagement.

A finding shows that 60% of the population are active internet users; furthermore, internet users are also social media users. China, India, the United States of America, Indonesia, and Brazil are the top five countries with the highest number of internet users (Statista,2021, cited 4.10.2021). On the other hand, the rank for world population shows data similarities as the top five countries with the highest number of internet users, i.e., China; India; United States of America; Indonesia, and Brazil, are stable on the top five list. This can be said that the number of population is one of the factors that influence the total number of internet users in each country.

Having some knowledge of the number of social media users and most used social media platforms helps the company for focusing on the right target for brand building. In each region, the social media popularity data differ in terms of the statistical data on the most used social media platforms. However, from the data found for Europe, Asia, Africa, Finland, and the United States of America, the winner remains Facebook

6.1.1 Benchmarking findings

There are two companies taken as benchmarking objects, Santa Claus office from Rovaniemi Finland and Santa and Mrs. Claus LV from Las Vegas USA. Both companies are service companies as well as using Facebook and Instagram for the social media platforms. However, Santa and Mrs. Claus LV is a small company compared to the Santa Claus office, since it operates only by two people where Santa Claus office is managed professionally by a group of people. The timeline for this study is December 2020 – January 2021 where normally Santa Claus's activities reach their peak. The total number of studied posts was 39 Instagram and Facebook posts for the Santa Claus

office. Then for Santa. and Mrs. Claus LV 18 Instagram posts and 5 Facebook posts. Not all the elements for brand building on social media at the Instagram and Facebook platforms are applied by both companies (See figure 13).



FIGURE 13. Implementation of social media brand building elements

From this research findings, six elements for brand building on social media were defined (see figure 12). However, on a deeper study, apparently not all elements were applied by Santa and Mrs. Claus LV. This company only applied customer emotion, hashtag, and storytelling elements but not entertainment, rich media format, and influencer elements.

About the customer emotion element, no sudden sounds which can provoke viewer emotion were used, instead both companies they were using images that appeared to spread interesting messages such as Santa loved by all living things. Three categories were defined in this element: home event category; other activities of Mr. and Mrs. Santa Category and outdoor event category.

As for the storytelling element, the image also seemed to be able to spread a fantastical and magical influence message. Taken from three published contents, there were posts where a boy is sitting on Santa's and tell Santa about his Christmas wish (Santa and children category); A group of people from different age levels took a picture with Santa (Everyone loves Santa category) and Santa is sitting in front of Christmas tree and ready for celebration (Christmas celebration category). These three examples appear to describe that Santa is a kind person to children and to people of all age levels as well as Santa Claus is identic with Christmas celebration.

The two most used hashtags #santa #mrsclaus and 15 other hashtags were used only once. The theoretical background defined that Hashtag is used to invite the attention of consumers who follow for the specific hashtag; however, two published posts from 1 Dec 2020 and 19 January 2021 gained the highest number of likes (49 likes) and both posts did not use the hashtag. A separate further study needs to be carried out to find out the disparity between the research and reality discovery.

The Santa Claus Office, Finland implemented all the six elements for brand building on social media, in the published posts between December 2020 until January 2021 with a total of 38 posts. In the entertainment element, there were three categories defined, the Christmas tradition category, Santa's animal helper category, and the fun outdoor activities category. One new activity was found which can be included in the entertainment element, where the elves asked the audiences to do the same activities as shown in the video.

In the rich media elements, no animation or dynamic images were found but only audio-visual was used, the same case as in Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus LV. Elves' voices category, beautiful Santa Claus voice category and the touching background music category were three defined categories in the rich media elements. In the customer emotion element, there is no sudden use of voice but was well and nicely represented by images and videos that seem to send an interesting message to the viewer. Also, three categories were defined in this element, busy Christmas category: Christmas atmosphere category, and after Christmas at Santa's place category. Where four categories were defined in the storytelling element, December means Christmas time category; Santa Claus and Children category; Christmas decoration category and Christmas gift category. All published posts included in each category seemed to send the fantastical and magical influence which could be well absorbed by the customer.

Hashtags were used in almost all published posts; two hashtags were permanently used #santaclaus and #santaclausvillage, three hashtags were used often, and several other hashtags were used only once. As the findings described, hashtag used to invite the attention of consumers is proven in this case but on the contrary, a Facebook post, dated on 15 January 2021, gained 2,600 likes even without hashtags. From these two cases and as well as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus's case, further study regarding the use of hashtags to invite customer attention is perhaps needed in separate research.

Coming into the influencer elements, the Santa Claus office has many followers on both Facebook and Instagram about 33,300 followers. However, the company still published a post where Santa took pictures with some celebrities (e.g.: Gordon Ramsay and friends). The posts gave the impression that a well-known account still needs another famous figure for publication.

6.1.2 Interview finding

Based on the interview, Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy owns nine different social media platforms. All of the social media platforms are solely managed by Mrs. Rundgren, the company's owner. The published contents are varied among platforms to make it more interesting, and they are updated regularly every once a week or at least by once a month.

The video-sharing form is applied from the entertainment element but not games and contest participation. Dynamic animation and audio-visual were not applied either from the rich media format. However, Mrs. Rundgren believes that the advantages she has, applied on the published posts (trustworthy, good personality; Finnish natural elements; and red color representing Mrs. Santa), will be able to attract viewer attention.

As in the customer emotion element there were no sudden sounds or movements were formed, however, an interesting video have been produced and published (e.g.: ice balls phenomena in Hailuoto). Storytelling element is needed in every published post, as Mrs. Rundgren believes that stories attract people's attention. However, she admitted that she is not yet capable to apply this element to all her published posts. She always uses hashtags in each published content; #hailuoto is mostly used hashtag. Mrs. Rundgren is also considering using #mrssantaclausfinland in the future. So far, using an influencer has not come into her mind yet but she may consider it when the influencer can appreciate her works.

Negative feedback is the challenge she encountered while managing the social media platforms. She did not encounter any difficulties managing all of them at once. Apologizing, be careful with the words and not exposing her family's private life are her ways to face the challenges. For future, the content will still focus on Mrs. Santa Claus, then but she will try to improve the content production structure while observing which media platforms which have the greatest media visibility.

6.2 Suggestions

From the study, some suggestions for the company are formed for further improvement of company's social media use. As in the entertainment element, the formats that make up this element are games, video sharing and participation in the contests. However, not all companies can implement this format for several reasons, such as limited human resources. While the core of the entertainment element is to attract people's attention and interest easily. Therefore, looking for other formats that still contain elements of entertainment can be an option, perhaps an activity that is fun and simple. One video post from Santa's office dated December 5, 2020, can be used as an example. The video told about two elves who are doing snow angel activities. At the end of the video, the elves invite the audience to do the same activity. The invitation can grab the viewer's attention and maybe the viewer will do the same as in the video. In other words, creativity is needed to form a new format in the element of entertainment when there are limitations.

Continuing from the example from the Santa Claus office post (dated 5th December 2020), it may also be possible to add an invitation for viewers to post their videos while doing the same activities as in the video. With the condition that in the caption to write a predetermined hashtag and do not forget to tag or mention the company name. In return, the company will post videos that meet the requirements on the company's social media. This practice can make the sender feel appreciated and proud because their videos or images are published on social media that are not their own. The entertainment element should be included in the published post as it brings attention to the viewers.

As for rich media elements findings from three studied companies, all of them did not represent dynamic animation as one of the formats. In the audio and visual, the Santa Claus office appears to be applied well in the published contents starting from the cute elves' voices to the touching background music. From the presented audio-visual, the company can send a message (breadth) and enhance the presentation quality (depth). When hindered by sources for producing dynamic animation, an appropriate voice-over or background music can come into consideration for rich media format. The rich media element is necessary to be included in the video's contents since the viewer will be more attracted when seeing more dynamic, creative, and fun rather than a plain documentary video.

Customer emotion element where negative or highly interesting messages, as well as sudden sounds, are the format to influence viewer emotion. Thus, this element should be included in the image and video format. However, Santa and Mrs. Claus LV posted images that seemed to be able to touch the customer's emotion (e.g., when Santa took a family picture with the homeowner and their dogs). Then, Santa Claus's office, besides videos, also posted an image of dark morning at Santa's office where the viewer's emotion is attracted because winter morning can be so dark and quiet. A picture can speak a thousand words when chosen the right images which can represent the message that is wanted to be spread out.

The other two elements: storytelling and hashtags should be included in the posted videos and images because everyone likes storytelling and hashtags usually leads to a bigger theme then it can attract more attention. The influencer is kind of a booming sensation nowadays but using paid influencers which can be costly and not all companies can afford to use influencers. With limited resources, the organization can take another way by enhancing the other element's structure by adjusting to the currently available resource and digging for another idea from the surroundings (e.g., competitors, books, or Pinterest).

During the interview session, Mrs. Rundgren mentioned her target audience. She focuses more on the parents as her target market because children are not mature enough when dealing with social media platforms. This idea can be explored further, for example by regularly publishing posts about parenting education without ignoring Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy's characteristics when it is presented. In addition, the importance of building trust from parents by consistently maintaining child-friendly content. For example, publishing content about respecting nature and the surrounding environment. The story telling element shall be applied on the published content because everyone likes storytelling, and it may help for the company to spread out the brand message.

No.	Case	Suggestions
1	Social media brand building elements that need to be included in published posts.	<i>Entertainment ; rich media format customer emotion: story telling & hashtag.</i>
2	Influencer can be costly	<i>Finding another way to enhance the other elements structure.</i>
3	Alternative format to form entertainment element	<i>Explore other activity format which are fun and simple to perform. E.g : Santa Claus office post dated 5th december 2020 (Instagram and Facebook).</i>
4	Limitations for applying rich media elements to content	<i>Inserting voice over or nice background music on the content.</i>
5	Parents as target audience	<i>Regularly publishing parenting education content. Maintaining child-friendly content to purposely build trust from parents.</i>
6	The implementation of story telling element	<i>Applied this element as possible to help spread out the brand message easily</i>

FIGURE 14. The suggestion summary

Social media platforms management is important for social media brand building, choosing inappropriate social media platforms can cause that the message cannot spread out to the proper target audiences. Each platform has its special technology which may take time to study to master the operational systems. This study encloses data for the most used social media platforms and on the top list is Facebook. The companies can use this data as a reference to decide on which social media platform they will concentrate for brand building because focusing only on certain social media platforms seemed a wiser choice.

7 DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss about the thesis writing process and the next step area of research as well as further study possibility. The thesis writing process will talk about how the thesis topic was found out up until searching for the necessary data and information. As well as the author's perspective while writing this thesis. The last chapter is about the next step of research and further research possibilities where the author gives her comments on what areas can be concentrated.

7.1 How the process went on

The research started from finding out for thesis topic which was discovered in Oiva and then a first contact was made to Mrs. Ritva Rundgren to ask if I could be involved in the research. Then, the next step taken was sending a thesis proposal to Mr. Jyrki Holappa as the head of degree program, and once it was approved the research process started. Ms. Sari Alatalo was appointed as the thesis teacher, and she gave directions and information needed for thesis writing. Several informal meetings between Ms. Alatalo and the author were held to discuss the thesis writing process.

Mostly the data and information were taken using desk research methodology where the sources were found online from EBSCO; ResearchGate and Emerald Insight. OAMK library and google scholar were two search engines used in finding the sources. The keywords used to find the sources were brand building, brand awareness, customer service; brand; social media and branding; social media and brand building awareness. While searching for the appropriate sources, the article definition which usually came along was very useful guidance. Also, three websites were used to find the statistical data for research findings, they were: Statista; Stat Counter, and geoba.se. For reference writing, RefWorks is used to assist writing with OAMK opinnäytetyö 2020 (uusi tylli) as the reference writing style

The next step was defining companies as the benchmarking objects; as suggested by Ms. Alatalo if possible, the company resides locally and internationally. One company from Finland (Santa Claus office, Rovaniemi-Finland) and the other company from the United States of America (Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, Las Vegas-USA) were chosen. Both companies are involved in the same

business as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy. Interestingly, the Santa Claus office is a bigger and more stable company compared to Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy and Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus LV.

The interview research method was also conducted with Mrs. Rundgren to study further how the company implements the brand-building element; social media management and handling the challenges. The interview was done online via zoom and the questions were sent ahead to Mrs. Rundgren and the interview took about 30 minutes. A visit to Mrs. Rundgren's residence in Hailuoto was also performed where a chance to know better between the author and Mrs. Rundgren. The residence is also the venue for Mrs. Santa Claus Finland Oy to administer the business.

The author's perspective on this research will tell on the problems found during the data findings and knowledge gained after thesis writing as well as other occurring faced problems. In the desk research method, the problem faced is finding the right source. The first time, the keywords used were too narrow, so the sources were not visible. Nonetheless, after trying with broader keywords and following the teacher's instructions to read the summary written under the title, it can help the author to find suitable sources. Other obstacles faced were difficulty in understanding unfamiliar terms as well as not all articles related to the thesis can be accessed.

In the benchmarking findings, it was not easy to find the object of benchmarking because not many companies are involved in the same area as Mrs. Santa Claus Finland, Oy. The author needs to modify the object companies twice until a suitable company was found. The next problems faced were analysing the data and interpreting it into a written document. As in the interview method, sometimes the answers given did not in line with the data and information that has been collected previously. This situation has made the author found obstacles when writing down the findings following the data and theories that have been found. In addition, the author needed to contact Mrs. Rundgren after the interview to clarify some answers to avoid any misinterpretation in the writing.

Writing this thesis has taught the author how to find data and information by using the right search keywords and reading each article's description along with the data analyzing process. Additionally, experience in writing scientific papers has provided insight that the format and use of words for writing should be precise and the description should be thorough so that what we want to convey can be understood and well received by readers.

7.2 Next step area of research and further study possibilities

There are several matters where a further study can be performed to find out the cause and solution for the issues. As in the entertainment element, finding out another activity format that can be included in this element can give companies more easy options to present this element in the video format. The format does not need to be complicated but easy to apply and doable.

Then about rich media elements, some organizations may deal with limited resources for presenting dynamic animation format. The same problems appear to occur in the customer emotion element when showing sudden sounds format where special techniques and tools are needed to perform. When another simpler format can be defined and can be applied easily by every organization, this can bring benefits especially for starter companies which usually have limited skills and resources.

Using hashtags for the published post is not always successful to attract viewer attention whereas the theory mentioned hashtags may lead to a bigger theme and attract more viewer's attention. This situation is proven during benchmarking process where a post from both two objects companies did not use a hashtag but gained the highest viewers or likes. A study for finding the cause of hashtag not always doing their magic can be done further.

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Interview questions with Mrs. Ritva Rundgren . Date 10.09.2021

Questions for social media platforms management.

1. How many social media channels does your company have? How many are actives?
2. Who responsible to manage the social media? How often you upload the new content?
Weekly basis or daily basis?
3. Do you have a favourite social media platform? Why?
4. Do you upload the same content on each social media platform? Or you will upload different content for each social media platform?
5. Who is you target audience for your social media channels?

Question for the elements of brand building

6. What is your social media content mostly about? Do you include entertainment content in it? Have you ever made a live event in social media which your viewers could participate directly?
7. Do you do special editing before uploading the content?
8. What is your content strength in order to attract a customer attention? What have you been done to get more viewers or followers?
9. Do you think your content has involved the viewers emotions and involvement when they saw your content? Have you got a positive feedback about it?
10. Do you create a special story fi each of your content?
11. Have you ever used hashtag? How many are them? What hashtag which you use mostly? Why do you use that hashtag or are there any special reason for it?
12. Have you ever thought about using influencer? Why? What is your opinion about influencer?"

Questions for handling the challenges sectors.

13. What kind of challenges have you ever faced? Do you still struggle with that challenge? What if your strategy to conquer the challenge?
14. Do you have difficulties in managing several social media platform at the same time?
15. Have you ever received a customer feedback about the content which is you think is misleading? The reason for this question since the customer has tendency to rely on what they see,hear,experience, so they could assume those factors are the facts about your company

16. Have you ever got a negative customer feedback? How you handle the feedback?
17. What is your future goal for your social media platform?